

OPINION

by Assoc. prof. Zlatomira Georgieva Kostova, PhD,

University of Plovdiv “Paisii Hilendarski”

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition

to occupy the academic position "**professor**"

at University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski

by: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences

professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Social Psychology)

The competition for "professor", announced in National Journal No. 96 of November 17, 2023 and on the website University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski is for the needs of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Education, the candidate is assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, from the University of Plovdiv “Paisii Hilendarski”.

1. General presentation of the received materials

By order No. RD-21-72 dated 16/01/24 of the Rector of University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, I am included as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "professor" in the University of Plovdiv in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Social Psychology), announced for the needs of the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education.

To participate in the announced competition, assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, - the only candidate in the competition - submitted documents.

The set of materials presented by Youri Pavlov Ianakiev is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Plovdiv.

The candidate assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, has submitted a total of 31 scientific works: 31 scientific works of which: 1 monograph, 1 published book based on a protected dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"; 2 studies, 22 articles, 2 university textbooks and 3 study aids. The distribution of scientific works in the country and abroad is: 27 in the country and 4 abroad.

Since 2009, assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, has been a teacher at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski", successively passing his academic development through scientific degrees in the field of Social Psychology to become an associate professor in 2015, in the department of Psychology. Over the years, he held various administrative positions in the Faculty: in 2011 - Director of the University Center for Volunteers; Vice-Dean (2015-2019); scientific secretary (2012-2015) and faculty coordinator under the Erasmus+ program (2011-2019) of the Faculty of Education; Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Developmental Psychology* (since 2020). Since 2021, he is the head of the Psychology and Pedagogy department and Director of the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology and Neurosciences (from 2022). He directs two master's programs: Management Psychology and School Psychology.

It is evident that the professional path of assoc. prof. Ianakiev is connected with an aspiration to build the academic vision of the Department of Psychology, both in a national and international context. The colleague's energy and creative initiative are enviable and unrelenting.

2. General characteristics of the applicant's activity.

Evaluation of educational activity and preparation of the candidate

The candidate has lectured in a bachelor's program: Social Psychology I and II part; Psycholinguistics; Stress and coping strategies, and in master's programs: Social knowledge and behavior; Stress and mental health; Motivation and Behavior; Psychology of optimal experience; Resilience. Three textbooks have been published, which correspond in terms of content to the study subjects taken by the candidate. For the last five years of academic activity, assoc. prof. Ianakiev has conducted scientific supervision of successfully defended: four graduates in the bachelor's degree, 14 graduates in the master's degree and one doctoral student. His activity is also related to teaching under the "Erasmus+" program, to visiting students at the University of Plovdiv in the French and English language specialty program.

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activity

The distribution of scientific works by relevant headings, in the country and abroad, is as follows:

- *By type*: monograph – 1; published book based on a protected dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" 1; articles published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - 4; articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes - 18; studies published in peer-reviewed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes - 1; studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes - 1; university textbooks – 2 and university aids – 3.

- *According to the language of writing*: in Bulgarian – 25; in English - 5 and in French - 1.

- *By number of co-authors*: independent – 13; with one co-author – 11; with two co-authors - 7.

Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied) and citations

The contributions in the presented scientific works can be united in several thematic areas: psychosocial dimensions of stress and burnout syndrome; aggression, stereotypes and discrimination in the school environment; Interpersonal relationships; creativity and social identity.

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev presents as the main habilitation thesis: *Diagnostics of burnout syndrome among educational specialists. Strategies for coping with chronic stress in the workplace* (2023). The monograph, which is a second, revised edition, brings together two previous studies, large-scale in nature. Their relevance is related to both the topic and the time of the event - in the last five years. These studies, by their very nature, are an integral and systematic approach for diagnosis, prevention and management of psychosocial risks of burnout syndrome for the development of psychological resilience in educational specialists. This approach is conceptually the first of its kind related to a nationally representative study in Bulgaria. Evidence of the applied contributions in this work (in a national and international context) is the creation of a manual for diagnosis and application of techniques, exercises, trainings and strategies to increase the psychological resilience of teachers, which has been translated into English, Italian, Greek and German language. Tools have been developed and validated to study the levels of burnout and self-assessment of resilience among teachers. The

candidate brings out a central concept of the feeling of happiness in the personal and professional life of the teacher, which inevitably reflects on the quality of the learning process and hence on the well-being of his students. This is a socially significant topic, since the reduction of psychosocial risks and stress in the workplace and the building of psychological resilience in pedagogical specialists is crucial for the professional motivation and fulfillment of teachers and their retention in the education system, subsequent career development and personal and family prosperity.

A contribution to the scientific understanding of the psychosocial dimensions of stress and burnout syndrome is the published university textbook, which provides access to the methods and tools established in practice to deal with psychosocial distress in the everyday life of modern people. Another contribution is the publication of a university textbook tailored to the content of the *Stress and Mental Health* subject. The candidate participates in joint research in a team with specialists from clinical medical specialties, investigating the dimensions of stress in conditions of Covid-19 and in oncology patients. His co-authored article: *Burnout Syndrome in Physicians 2019*, has been cited 21 times in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in a global database.

Another contribution of scientific and applied importance is the large-scale national study of students from the first to the twelfth grade to distinguish the forms of aggressive behavior and study the attitudes of school leaders in Bulgaria regarding the creation of a safe and positive school environment.

Current trends that occur in the family environment in the context of global psychosocial changes are revealed. Functionalities to improve group cohesion in interpersonal relationships have been demonstrated.

A scientific contribution is the approach of researching artistic creativity linked to personal development and the processes of maturation and old age in the article: *Artistic creativity and personal development: Rembrandt's self-portraits as a visual autobiography* (2016).

There is a total of 100 citations presented. The candidate's citation index for the last five years is 3. Content-wise, **25** of the citations are in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information. **31** of the citations are in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes. **44** citations or reviews in non-refereed

peer-reviewed journals by participants in student forums. The latter makes an impression on the exceptional activity of assoc. prof. Ianakiev in his work with students.

3. Evaluation of the personal contribution of assoc. prof. Ianakiev

The overall presented scientific production is distinguished by a high academic culture and competences in the field of social psychology. His skill in working with scientific facts, analysis and interpretation of the results obtained from his research activity is valid. His significant scientific and practical contributions are based on this.

4. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no recommendations.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by Assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law and the relevant Regulations of the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a **significant** number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the PhD degree and associate professor academic position. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, a representative part of which has been published in journals and scientific collections issued by international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, and some of them are directly oriented to academic work. Assoc. prof. Ianakiev's scientific and teaching qualifications are **unquestionable**.

The results achieved by the candidate in the competition in the educational and research activities **fully** correspond to the minimum national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Education, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv for the application of the academic law.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my **positive** assessment and **to** recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Education for the election of associate professor Youri Pavlov Ianakiev, PhD, to the

academic position "Professor" in the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" in: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal, professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Social Psychology).

04/03/2024

Member of the Scientific Jury:

(signature)

Assoc. prof. Zlatomira Kostova, PhD