

REVIEW

by Professor Kirilka Simeonova Tagareva, 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)

In the competition for "professor", announced in National Journal No. 96 of November 17, 2023 and on the website University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski 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, University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski.

To participate in the announced competition, Assoc. prof. Youri Pavlov Ianakiev from the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Education of the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski submitted documents.

The set of electronic and paper materials presented by Assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University of Plovdiv.

The candidate assoc. prof. Ianakiev, PhD, submitted a total of 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 handbooks. The distribution of scientific works in the country and abroad is as follows: 27 in the country and 4 abroad.

The candidate also submits: a certificate of compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements, annotations of scientific works - in Bulgarian and English; self-assessment of contributions - in Bulgarian and English; documents certifying educational and research activities, including work with PhD students and graduates, participation in projects, management of research projects, etc.

Documents for compliance with the additional requirements of the Faculty of Education in Plovdiv University are also attached.

The documents and materials presented by assoc. prof. Ianakiev, meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the 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".

From the scientometric report prepared for compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements, it can be seen that the candidate fulfills the quantitative requirements for all groups of indicators, with the total number of points exceeding two and a half times the required amount determined by the national and faculty requirements. Minimum required points for a professor (national and faculty) are a total of 660 points. The candidate's actual score is 1660.7 points.

2. Brief biographical data about the candidate

Assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, was born in 1970 in the city of Plovdiv. He defended his research master's degree (2000) and his doctoral thesis (2006) at the University of Pau and the Adour region - Academy of Bordeaux, France. Assoc. prof. Ianakiev, PhD, academic career began at the New Bulgarian University and the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski, where he worked since 2006 as a part-time lecturer. Since 2009, after a competition, he has held the position of assistant at the University of Plovdiv, and since then until now he has successively held the positions of chief assistant and associate professor of social psychology in the Department of Psychology of the Educational Faculty of the University of Plovdiv.

In the period 2015-2019, he was the vice-dean, scientific secretary (2012-2015) and faculty coordinator under the “Erasmus+” program (2011-2019) of the Faculty of Education at the University of Plovdiv Paisii Hilendarski. Currently, assoc. prof. Ianakiev is the head of the master's programs "Psychology of Leadership" and "School Psychology", director of the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology and Neurosciences, director of the University Center for Volunteers and editor-in-chief of the journal "Developmental Psychology". In addition, from 2021 assoc. prof. Ianakiev is the head of the “Psychology and Education” department at the Department for Qualification and Professional Development of Educational Specialists at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski".

The presented CV shows a consistent and upward educational, professional and career development of assoc. prof. Ianakiev.

3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

The teaching activity of the candidate assoc. prof. Ianakiev covers the disciplines of Social Psychology, Psycholinguistics, Social Knowledge and Behavior, Stress and Mental Health, Social Competence, etc. The academic courses taught correspond to the competition profile.

In his teaching activity, assoc. prof. Ianakiev demonstrates skills in presenting the content of the material in the taught disciplines, on the one hand, accessible and consistent with the previous knowledge of the students, and at the same time - at a high level of scientific knowledge of the new material for them. The presented ideas, positions and facts are in accordance with the new scientific achievements in the field of social psychology. In teaching, he successfully weaves the results of his own scientific research. Assoc. prof. Ianakiev knows how to inspire and motivate students for research work, as evidenced by dozens of student participation in the annual student forum at the Faculty of Education under his scientific leadership.

For the purposes of teaching students and doctoral students, Assoc. prof. Ianakiev created and published two textbooks for students, one handbook, two teaching aids. The content presented in them is scientifically based and skilfully adapted to the learning objectives. The textbooks and one of the university handouts support students in their preparation for the study subjects *Stress and Mental Health* and *Stress and Strategies for Coping with Stress*. The *Leadership and Group Behavior Handbook* is designed for students studying social psychology topics such as Leadership, Group Behavior, Effects of Group Dynamics. The textbook

Aggression, Violence and Prosocial Behavior provides students with an additional opportunity to upgrade knowledge with current theories and research of a number of authors through references to resources on the web (video materials, literature, electronic and audio books).

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev's work with students and doctoral students is diverse: he has supervised 18 successfully graduated graduates in "bachelor" and "master"; he taught visiting students at Plovdiv University under the "Erasmus+" program, majoring in a foreign language (French and English). According to the submitted documents, he is the supervisor of a successfully defended doctoral student: Mila Zlateva with the topic of the dissertation "Attitudes and discriminatory practices towards ethnically diverse children" in the doctoral program Educational and Age Psychology in 2021.

The publications submitted for review, as we indicated above, are distributed as follows: a total of 31 scientific works, of which 1 monograph, 1 published book, 22 articles, 2 studies, 2 textbooks and 3 manuals. Exactly 25 of them are written in Bulgarian, 5 in English and 1 in French. There are 13 independent scientific works; with one co-author – 11; with two co-authors - 7. The issues treated in them correspond to the profile of the announced competition and show the purposefulness of the author in his research activity, focused around the problems of social psychology.

The articles and reports submitted for review have been published in prestigious Bulgarian and international publications.

The materials submitted for review do not repeat others with which assoc. prof. Ianakiev participated in a procedure for occupying the academic position of "associate professor".

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev's habilitation thesis is: *Diagnosis of burnout syndrome in pedagogical specialists. Strategies for coping with chronic stress in the workplace*. Plovdiv: "Paisii Hilendarski" University Publishing House, 193 pages. ISBN 978-619-202-836-7. In it, the author presents his own original research, carried out in the light of the theories of Hans Selye, Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman, Christina Maslach, and others. The theoretical basis of research chosen by the candidate is in accordance with the historical tradition in studying the problems related to psychosocial distress, burnout and resilience and gives the opportunity to add a modern reading and successfully continue a research-theoretical tradition in this direction.

Three fundamental topics are analyzed - psychosocial distress, burnout syndrome and psychological resilience. A separate chapter of the monograph is dedicated to each of them. The theoretical parts discuss etymology and definitions of concepts, typologies, symptoms, diagnostics, etc. The empirical study is presented in two parts. The first part is dedicated to the diagnosis of the level of burnout syndrome among pedagogical specialists in our country, and the second - to the diagnosis of psychosocial risks and stress in the workplace and the development of psychological resilience among teachers in our country and in countries such as Austria, Bulgaria, Greece and Italy. The methods that assoc. prof. Ianakiev chooses to apply in his empirical research allow him to achieve the set goals and objectives. These are: a certified method for assessing work stress; author's questionnaire on the influence of the factors of the professional, family and social environment on the occurrence of burnout syndrome among educational specialists; questionnaire for self-assessment of resilience. They represent a serious contribution to research and diagnostic practice. The obtained results enrich the existing models of stress, burnout syndrome and resilience and give grounds to implement specific activities to reduce the negative aspects of psychosocial distress in the work of pedagogical specialists and build resilience.

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev has published a book in French: *Voyage sémiotique vers L'île du jour d'avant d'Umberto Eco* based on a defended dissertation, in which he presents the results of the dissertation research for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor".

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev offers for review four co-authored articles in referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific information databases. Three of them were published in medical journals: *Medicine*, *Folia Medica*, *Frontiers*, and one in *Pedagogy* journal.

Three of the presented publications are the result of joint research in a team with specialists from clinical medical specialties. In a joint publication with T. Deneva and D. Keskinova (Deneva, T.; Ianakiev, Y.; Keskinova, D. (2019) Burnout syndrome in physicians - psychological assessment and biomarker research) the psychological parameters of burnout symptoms in association with biomarkers of stress among physicians with different medical specialties. Another publication (Deneva, T. and Ianakiev, Y. (2021) Assessment of anxiety, depression and biological markers in healthcare professionals with burnout syndrome) studies the levels of burnout, anxiety and depression in healthcare professionals working 24 -hourly shifts under extraordinary conditions. Levels of stress, anxiety, and depression were examined along with salivary cortisol and glycated hemoglobin as biomarkers of stress in emergency medical professionals. A publication with T. Deneva and O. Boykinova (Deneva T., Ianakiev,

Y. and Boykinova, O. (2022) Biomarkers of mental stress in saliva of patients with COVID-19) provides evidence that salivary biomarkers are promising tools for research on stress related to COVID-19. In the study together with M. Zlateva (Zlateva, M., Ianakiev, Y. (2021) Educational multicultural awareness. Validation of a scale for the study of teachers' attitudes towards ethnically diverse children in education) it is established that multicultural attitudes are influenced by demographic factors and the psychosocial factors of the professional environment.

The publications show the development of the candidate with the inclusion of topics, complementing his main research focus.

Assoc. prof. Ianakiev's publications of a theoretical and research-applied nature are in several areas of scientific knowledge:

Psychosocial distress and burnout syndrome. In this field, the psychosocial dimensions of stress have been studied: essence, mechanisms, factors, risk, diagnosis, coping and building psychological resilience. Results of a study of pedagogical specialists, doctors, social workers, cancer patients and patients with COVID-19 were analyzed.

The first of its kind in our country an integral and systematic approach for diagnosis, prevention and management of the psychosocial risks of burnout syndrome for the development of psychological resilience among pedagogical specialists is proposed.

Adjustment disorders and chronic workplace stress have been studied by examining a number of serum and salivary biomarkers to assess stress in physicians. Data were analyzed in connection with the study of burnout syndrome in doctors in our country, stress in patients with COVID-19, biomarkers of stress for the assessment of depression and anxiety in medical professionals with burnout syndrome.

Models of psychosocial distress, anxiety and depression in oncological patients at the operative stage of treatment are described, in which a distress thermometer adapted for work in a clinical environment in our country was used.

School environment: aggression, stereotypes and discrimination is another area that attracts the attention of assoc. prof. Ianakiev. Forms of aggressive behavior among students from the first to the twelfth grade are described. Distinguishing the forms of aggressive behavior and the causes of its occurrence help to prepare specific recommendations for improving the school organization.

The attitudes of school leaders in Bulgaria regarding the creation of a safe and positive school environment were investigated with a questionnaire for the study of the school environment and the degree of aggression. School leaders of 35 educational institutions from all over the country participated in the research. Recommendations were made to improve the school organization and create conditions for a safe and positive school environment.

Interpersonal relationships. The topics discussed here are related to the influence of gender stereotypes on leadership styles in the modern Bulgarian family; influence of hope on relationship satisfaction within the couple and building quality relationships and attachment. Current trends that occur in the family environment in the context of global psychosocial changes are revealed.

Creativity and social identity. Articles that reflect the main applications of bio- and neurofeedback methods and methods of non-invasive brain stimulation to unfold the potential of neurotechnologies as tools for personal development and stimulation of creativity in people with disabilities are proposed for review. Four cases of application of EEG biofeedback in children with special educational needs are presented - disorders of the autism spectrum, attention deficit, mental retardation and difficulties in social adaptation. Post-therapy improvements in psychosocial environmental factors such as social skills, self-regulation, attentional control, neuromuscular coordination are described in detail.

In the publication "Flow and creativity: strategies, methods and trends in the study of the state of flow in the creative process" the conditions and strategies for achieving dynamism in the flow experience in the creative process are described.

In two separate articles, aspects of the genius artistic creativity of Rembrandt van Rijn and Salvador Dali, which are linked to their personal development and their attitude to the processes of maturation, social conflicts and old age, have been studied.

Numerous theoretical and empirical studies in the four outlined areas are characterized by precision, availability of sufficient empirical evidence, use of modern statistical methods for data processing and adequate conclusions. A large part of them have serious practical application possibilities for diagnosis and can be used in practice by psychologists and other researchers.

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

In the evidence presented by the candidate, a self-assessment of contributions was made, which I fully accept. Assoc. prof. Ianakiev's contributions to the research fund of social

psychology significantly enrich knowledge about interpersonal relations, stress and burnout syndrome, aggression, stereotypes and discrimination in a school environment, creativity and social identity. The created author's methodologies and the adapted ones are in a form that is fully applicable in practice and provide an opportunity to deploy and verify research hypotheses and to carry out diagnostic and research work "on the ground" by psychologists facing various problems of this nature. They are especially valuable given the ever-increasing need to create and adapt research and diagnostic tools.

The significance of the results of the theoretical research work of Assoc. prof. Ianakiev is recognized not only at the national, but also at the international level, which is proven by the publications in refereed and indexed editions and by the presented citations. There are a total of 100 citations presented. Of these: 25 citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases with scientific information; 31 citations in monographs and peer-reviewed collective volumes; 44 citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

The quantitative indicators of the criteria for occupying the academic position "professor" have been fully met.

4. Evaluation of the candidate's personal contribution

The presented scientific works are original scientific developments. The majority of research conducted was independently conducted, and those that were collaborative demonstrated teamwork skills in planning, conducting the research, and summarizing the results.

The deposited documentation, including the noted citations, are in order and meet all the criteria in terms of the procedure for conducting the current competition.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I recommend to assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, to continue developing his research potential in the modern directions of social psychology.

Personal impressions

As a person and colleague, assoc. prof. Ianakiev is characterized by a calm and controlled character, collegiality and patience, responsibility and consistency. He is an esthete and an intellectual. Has excellent presentation skills and the ability to inspire and motivate colleagues, students and PhD students.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials presented by assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the this low, the Regulations of the Plovdiv university "Paisii Hilendarski" and Additional Faculty Requirements of the Faculty of Education of the University of Plovdiv.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defence of the PhD degree and the competition for the position of "associate professor". 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. The scientific and teaching qualifications of assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, are unquestionable.

The results achieved by assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, in the educational and research activities fully correspond to the minimum national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv for the application of Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

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 Pedagogical Faculty "Paisiy Hilendarski" PU for the election of assoc. prof. Youri Ianakiev, PhD, to the academic position of "Professor" at the University of Plovdiv "Paisiy Hilendarski" in: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Social Psychology).

05/03/2024

Reviewer:

(signature)

Professor Kirilka Tagareva, PhD