

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Ivan Stoyanov, PhD, lecturer at the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. Cyril and St. Methodius" on the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" in: Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Area 3.2 Psychology (Positive Psychology)

In the competition for the position of "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, No. 96 of November 11, 2025, and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Pedagogy, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova participated as a candidate.

1. General review of the procedure and the candidate

By order No. RD-22-32 of January 9, 2026, issued by the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski," I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at Plovdiv University in: Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Area 3.2 Psychology (Positive Psychology), announced for the needs of the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Pedagogy.

Only one candidate has submitted documents to participate in the announced competition: Senior Assistant Professor, Dr. Dilyana Svetoslavova Angelova from Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski", Department of Social Work.

The set of materials presented by Senior Assistant Professor, Dr. Dilyana Angelova is in accordance with the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff of Plovdiv University, and includes the following documents:

1. Standard Application form addressed to the Rector requesting admission to the competition;
2. Curriculum vitae in the European format;
3. Higher education diploma certifying the educational and qualification degree "Master" with an appendix (original and copy) or a notarized copy;
4. Higher education diploma certifying the educational and qualification degree "Doctor" with an appendix (original and copy) or a notarized copy;
5. List of scientific works;
6. Scientific works;
 - 6.1 list of citations;
7. Statement of compliance with the minimum national and additional faculty requirements;
8. Self-assessment of contributions;
9. Declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
10. Certificate of work experience;
11. Documents related to academic work;
12. Documents regarding research work;
13. Documents in accordance with the additional requirements of the respective faculty;
14. Set of hard-copy documents from item 1 to item 17 – 2 copies;
15. Set of documents on electronic media from item 1 to item 17 – 2 copies;

For the purposes of this competition, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova has submitted a total of 18 scientific papers, including 1 habilitation thesis – a monograph, 1 book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the academic degree of "Doctor" and 16 scientific publications (13

authored and 3 co-authored), published in refereed and non-refereed journals with scientific review. Two of the scientific papers are in English, and the rest are in Bulgarian. 11 citations are submitted, which exceed the required minimum.

The candidate teaches courses in bachelor's programs such as "Positive Psychology", "Introduction to Counseling Psychology", "Child and Adolescent Developmental Psychology", "Development of Friendships", "Social Psychology" and "Psychological Foundations of Crisis Intervention" in the specialties "Psychology", "Social Activities" and "Preschool and Primary School Pedagogy". She also participates in two master's programs - "Social Cognition and Behavior". She has developed four programs and expanded her teaching qualifications through eight specialized training courses.

The materials presented give me reason to conclude that Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova has fulfilled and exceeded the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Law on the Prevention and Control of Corruption in the Republic of Bulgaria, the procedure was carried out correctly, in accordance with the legal framework and the procedural rules of Plovdiv University. No violations were found.

Brief biographical information

Dilyana Svetoslavova Angelova earned her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski". In 2007, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in "Primary School Psychology and Foreign Language", and in 2010, with a master's degree in "Counseling Psychology".

She defended her dissertation in a doctoral program in the field of higher education: Field of Higher Education: 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Area: 3.2. Psychology, "Pedagogical and Developmental Psychology".

The interdisciplinary interests of the candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor" are clearly demonstrated by the additional qualifications

and professional experience she has acquired, which build on and enrich her theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of psychology and pedagogical practice. In the period 2009–2010, she acquired a professional qualification of "child psychologist" at Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski", which has furthered her professional and scientific development in the field of child and pedagogical psychology.

Throughout her professional career, she has combines academic work with administrative and practical responsibilities in the educational system. From 2015 to 2021, she held the position of Deputy Director at the British International School Classic – Plovdiv, where she was responsible for the organization and control of academic activities, as well as for the coordination of the educational process.

Her academic development is linked to Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, where she held the position of assistant professor from 2018 to 2022, and has been a senior assistant professor since 2022. In parallel with her academic activities, she also carries out practical psychological work as a psychologist at PFC Lokomotiv – Plovdiv, which contributes to the integration of psychological theory with applied practice in the field of sports psychology.

She actively builds upon her scientific and professional competencies through participation in a number of national and international scientific conferences, forums, specialized training programs, as well as through academic mobility under the Erasmus+ program.

2. General description of the candidate's activities

The scientific papers submitted for review are distinguished by their thematic coherence and distinctly interdisciplinary nature, situated within the fields of developmental psychology, social psychology and pedagogical psychology. The author's research interests are focused on the phenomenon of friendship and positive peer relationships in childhood and adolescence, as well

as on the importance of positive education and psychological counseling as means of supporting socio-emotional development and well-being. Her research examines social relationships as a significant determinant of adolescents' psychological functioning, with a particular emphasis on the role of friendship in the formation of emotional closeness and socio-emotional competencies. A significant portion of her research is also devoted to changes in social relationships in the context of digital communication and social networks.

I accept the self-evaluation submitted by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova, regarding the formulated by her corresponding contributions on the two main thematic areas: "Friendship and positive peers relationships" and "Positive education and consultative practice".

Within the research area "Friendship and Positive Peer Relationships", the contributions can be summarized as follows: a well-reasoned theoretical framework of friendship has been established as an essential component of human relationships, interpreted through the lens of interpersonal theory, attachment theory, development and concepts of peer relationships, as well as in the context of emerging forms of communication, including the digital and virtual environment, online interactions and the influence of social networks on personality development. A systematization of a multidimensional theoretical construct of friendship has been carried out, encompassing key components such as contextual factors, features of interactions in social networks, parameters of relationships, personal characteristics of adolescents, specifics of the circle of friends and the dynamics of close relationships. A significant contribution is also the adaptation of psychometric instruments that enable empirical research into various aspects of friendship relationships in adolescence, including anxiety, conflicts, risks, as well as the positive effects of modern forms of communication.

Within the research area "Positive Education and Consultative Practice", the following contributing points can be highlighted: a comprehensive concept of positive education in the contemporary context has been developed,

encompassing core principles, models and educational practices, as well as a clearly defined role of the psychologist as a facilitator and bearer of the positive approach. Emphasis is placed on the need for a holistic approach to the educational environment, which integrates the development of various competencies and the implementation of programs aimed at comprehensive training and upbringing. Additionally, a comprehensive personal and professional profile of the school psychologist as an expert, consultant, supporting figure and mediator of the ideas of positive education has been established. Knowledge regarding practical consulting activities in an educational environment has also been expanded through the analysis of effective practices, comparison with foreign experience, and identification of opportunities for adapting these practices to the Bulgarian educational context.

Summary: The scientific output of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova demonstrates a consistent and well-structured approach to the study of the issue under consideration and is in line with the focus of the competition.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no remarks or questions regarding the scientific output. I would like to make some recommendations, which in no way diminish the overall positive assessment of her overall academic and scientific activity, namely that Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova should continue her research work and provide the courses she teaches with teaching aids.

CONCLUSION

After familiarizing myself with the materials and scientific works submitted for the competition, and analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions they contain, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and to recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Pedagogy for the election of

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Dilyana Angelova to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" in: Field of Higher Education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional area 3.2. Psychology /Positive Psychology/.

March 06, 2026

Opinion prepared by:

(Assoc. Prof. Ivan Stoyanov, PhD)