

Peer review prepared in connection with the competition for occupation of the academic position of “Associate Professor”, announced in State Gazette, Issue 5/16.01.2024

PEER REVIEW

prepared by **Prof. YOANA DIMITROVA YANKULOVA**, Doctor of Psychological Sciences, Sv. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University, Faculty of Philosophy, Psychology Department

Regarding: Scientific works of Chief Assistant Dr. **LILIYA VITKOVA STOILOVA**

Submitted for participation in the competition for occupation of the academic position of “Associate Professor”, announced by Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv, State Gazette, Issue 5/16.01.2024

The competition is announced under Higher education field: 1. “Pedagogical Sciences”, Professional field: 1.1. “Theory and Management of Education”; 1.2. “Pedagogy”; 1.3. “Pedagogy of Education in ...”, Scientific specialty: “Psychology and Pedagogy”

I. Review of the submitted documents

This opinion is prepared in accordance with a decision of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order PД-27-048/14.03.2024, based on Article 25 of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as a decision of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Music Pedagogy at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts – Plovdiv (Minutes No 18/28.02.2024).

The announced competition meets the necessary teaching workload requirements (538 hours, equivalent to practical sessions). For her participation, Chief Assistant Dr. Liliya Stoilova has submitted the following materials for review: Monograph titled *“Motivational Determinants in Choosing the Teaching Profession Among Young People”* (habilitation work); Book titled *“Everyday Hassles, Coping Strategies, and Life Satisfaction in Old Age”* (published based on a defended doctoral dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”); Articles and papers published in scientific journals, referred to and indexed in world-renowned scientific databases (hereinafter in this text – *Indicator A*) – 5 pieces; Articles and papers published in non-referred journals with scientific reviewing or published in edited collective volumes (hereinafter *Indicator C*) – 24 pieces.

From the attached biographical reference, it is clear that Chief Assistant Dr. Stoilova holds two Bachelor’s degrees from Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University (“Psychology” and “Slavic Philology”), and later a Master’s degree in “Social and Legal Psychology” from Sv. Kliment Ohridski Sofia University. Since 2012, she has been enrolled in doctoral training at

Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University and simultaneously specialized at two foreign universities (in Slovenia and Russia). In 2014, she became a doctoral student at the Faculty of Psychology at St. Petersburg State University (Russia), and in 2017 defended her dissertation titled *“Everyday Hassles, Coping Strategies, and Life Satisfaction in Old Age”*. Between 2012-2016, the candidate carried out teaching activities at Paisii Hilendarski Plovdiv University and conducted practical sessions in “Developmental Psychology” across various specialties (“Elementary School Pedagogy”, “Social Pedagogy”, “Psychology”, “Social Activities”). Since 2016 to the present, Dr. Stoilova has been teaching at Prof. Asen Diamandiev Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts in Plovdiv, initially as a part-time lecturer. Subsequently, she was appointed as an Assistant on a half-time basis (2018), and after winning a competition, she has been Chief Assistant (2020), teaching various disciplines (“General and Developmental Psychology”, “Psychology of Art”, “Differential Psychology”, “Pathopsychology”, “Psychology of Giftedness”) to students in Bachelor’s and Master’s specialties. In addition to teaching, Chief Assistant Dr. Stoilova has a diverse research and publication activity, participation in scientific forums, as well as corresponding awards for achievements. All these indicate numerous facts that testify to her undeniable education and continuous efforts to constantly enhance and perfect her professional qualification in the field of psychological science and educational practice.

II. Brief description of the scientific works and contributions

The submitted habilitation thesis titled *“Motivational Determinants in Choosing the Teaching Profession Among Young People”* (161 pages) is both relevant and timely, considering that the values, beliefs, motivation, and career preferences of young people choosing the teaching profession have not been addressed for a long time. In this context, the theoretical framework illuminates the factors motivating young Bulgarians to pursue professional realization and career development in the field of education as teachers. The current state of the academic and professional preparation of future teachers is analyzed, highlighting the main reasons why they choose the teaching profession. These reasons are linked to the socio-psychological climate in schools, the specifics of administration and management of internal school processes, opportunities for participation in induction, mentorship, and professional support programs for new teachers, and the presence of effective measures to improve work quality, professional satisfaction, and the prestige of the teaching profession. The monograph also addresses the reasons why young people may be unwilling or decide to leave the teaching profession. These reasons are primarily related to the profession’s image in public perception, the working conditions and the material and technical infrastructure, the potential for adequate financial compensation considering high professional demands, the excessive professional workload, the psycho-emotional exhaustion, teaching difficulties, strained communication with parents, and challenges in student upbringing. The habilitation work presents the methodology, design, and results of an

independent study aimed at presenting and analyzing the specific motivational determinants for choosing the teaching profession among the surveyed young people, as well as the reasons for leaving the profession. In summary, the presented work is scientifically rigorous and theoretically applied. The analyzed results underscore the complexity of choosing the teaching profession through the motives, beliefs, and attitudes of young people aspiring to educate themselves and pursue professional careers in education. The style of presentation is scientifically appropriate, clear, readable, comprehensible, and significantly contributes to its high scientific value.

In the book *“Everyday Hassles, Coping Strategies, and Life Satisfaction in Old Age”*, the relationship between the daily hassles of elderly people, the coping strategies they employ, and their level of personal life satisfaction is theoretically presented and empirically tested. Based on the obtained results, an attempt is made to understand more about the nature of the mechanisms in the functioning and adaptation of elderly individuals to various life stressors and social challenges. The formulated conclusions can be of immediate benefit to both specialists and social institutions providing highly specialized care and protection for this specific age group. The book is extremely valuable not only from a scientific and applied perspective but also because the topic of elderly people, their perceptions, and experiences is not sufficiently clearly and comprehensively represented and deeply studied in the Bulgarian context.

Other scientific publications by Chief Assistant Dr. Stoilova focus on academic motivation among students, the impact of distance learning and teaching quality on it, stress factors affecting academic training, important motivational determinants in choosing the teaching profession, and the reasons for turnover and leaving the educational system (Indicator A/ No. 1, No. 2, No. 5; Indicator C/ No. 2, No. 5, No. 10, No. 12, No. 13, No. 14, No. 15, No. 16). Another relevant but extensively studied topic by Chief Assistant Dr. Stoilova is directed toward the study of social and emotional loneliness as a painful and alienating experience among elderly people, their understanding of words describing family relationships, and their perceptions regarding the possibilities of participating in choral singing to experience positive emotions and maintain social contacts (Indicator A/ No. 3; Indicator C/ No. 1, No. 3, No. 6, No. 7, No. 8, No. 9, No. 17, No. 18, No. 19, No. 21, No. 22, No. 23, No. 24, No. 25). There are also publications that explore the topic of “resilience” and its projections in the university environment (Indicator C/ No. 4, No. 20). Additionally, materials dedicated to creating a tool suitable for Bulgarian conditions for diagnosing the characteristics of organizational culture and examining its interrelations with career orientations towards the teaching profession are presented (Indicator A/ No. 4; Indicator C/ No. 11). The relevance and significance of the scientific achievements of Chief Assistant Dr. L. Stoilova are also supported by citations in various literary sources, which is evidence of the interest of numerous authors and researchers in her thorough and scientific work.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be noted that in the works submitted for review by Chief Assistant Dr. Stoilova, a high level of education and excellent professional preparedness for the in-depth and systematic scientific presentation of various theoretical-applied ideas, developed in contemporary psychology and responding to the current needs of social-educational practice, is demonstrated. Her research attests to her investigative competence to study topics of significant scientific and social interest, as well as to adapt, validate, and scientifically apply specific research tools that are of immediate benefit to the educational environment and work on socially significant topics

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. L. Stoilova's efforts to present and publish her achieved results at various scientific forums and in the pages of prestigious national and international journals are indisputable. Additionally, her teaching experience in an academic context is taken into account when discussing her appointment to the academic position of "Associate Professor".

Based on all the above-mentioned facts, I believe that the candidacy of Chief Assistant Dr. L. Stoilova for participation in the competition for occupation of the academic position of "Associate Professor" fully meets the legal requirements, as well as the established academic and scientific criteria for the implementation of such procedures. **In this regard, I recommend to the esteemed Scientific Jury to award Chief Assistant Dr. L. Stoilova the academic position of "Associate Professor" under Higher education field: 1. "Pedagogical Sciences", Professional field: 1.1. "Theory and Management of Education"; 1.2. "Pedagogy"; 1.3. "Pedagogy of Education in ...", Scientific specialty: "Psychology and Pedagogy".**

13.05.2024

Prepared by and member of the Scientific Jury:

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