

## Review

for a competition for the academic position "associate professor"

on PN.1.2. Pedagogy (Family pedagogy, Andragogy),

announced by SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" in SG, 12.12.2023,

for the needs of the Faculty of Pedagogy

One candidate took part in the competition - ch. assistant professor Yordanka Nikolova, Ph.D., Faculty of Pedagogy, SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

Her biography reflects a consistent development in the field of pedagogy. She graduated Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", speciality Pedagogy, with a second specialty "Bulgarian Language and Literature". She attended courses with different topics, through which she further developed specific pedagogical competencies. He has a doctorate in PN 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of education and didactics - Primary school pedagogy - Bulgarian language), 2015.

In professional-pedagogical plan, she has more than 20 years of experience as a primary school teacher. In the period 2017-2019, she worked as an assistant, and then as ch. assistant in the "Theory of Education" department, Faculty of Pedagogy, SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". In the period 2017-2024, she teaches in subjects in the profile of the competition such as "Family pedagogy", "Family and deviant behavior", "Andragogy", "Methodical requirements for the education of adults", "School for parents" /Bachelor degree/ and "Modern Marriage and the Modern Family", "Family Interactions and Deviant Behavior" /Master degree/.

The candidate participates in the competition with self-authored and co-authored publications. Some of them are directly related to the thematic orientation of the competition, while others have a peripheral and even unrelated

character, for example the article co-authored with D. Racheva "The rights of the child through the eyes of student teachers", as well as the self-authored articles "Working with gifted children in the teaching of "Bulgarian language and literature" in the initial stage of the basic educational degree" and "Innovations in school education through the eyes of students and teachers". It should be noted here that the first two articles are listed as indexed and referenced in the magazine "Pedagogy", without having a direct relation to the competition issue.

In view of the profile of the competition, the main part of the publications can be differentiated into two main groups - in the field of family pedagogy and andragogy.

In the field of family pedagogy, there are publications with titles: "Readiness of parents for the formation of communicative language competence to the child at the initial stage of the basic educational level"; "Modern approaches to raising the pedagogical culture of parents in an informal environment"; "Actual problems of children's upbringing in the Bulgarian family through the eyes of students from the Faculty of Pedagogy of the University of St. Kliment Ohridski"; "Alternative forms of interaction between school and family ("Circle, team building)"; "Improving the professional training of student teachers through the formation of skills for the implementation of teacher-parent interactions"; "Importance of families and schools for the formation and preservation of national identities in the context of globalization processes"; "Increasing the pedagogical competence of parents in the context of inclusive education"; "The roles of mother and father through the eyes of pupils and students"; "Formation of skills for active interaction with parents in students studying the discipline "Family Pedagogy"; The Readiness of Young People for Family Life (to be in a Relationship).

In this group of publications is also the monograph: "Perspectives for family life and parenting in the context of family pedagogy", in which J. Nikolova presents the results of research carried out with pupils and students in their quality

of self-reflection in the context of preparing young people for implementation of parent functions. Possibilities for organizing elements of this type of training in an educational environment, as well as those for increasing the pedagogical culture of parents, were considered.

The candidate's clear orientation towards some aspects of family pedagogy is visible, especially in the part of preparation for parenthood, increasing the pedagogical culture of parents, interaction with the family, and the preparation of students. The study of student opinion as a source of information about family relationships and the place of children in them, including the roles of the mother and the father, is an appropriate approach for reflexivity on the part of young people, but it still remains questionable whether, for example, "current problems of the upbringing of children in the Bulgarian family" have been researched (in one of the publications, where the author does not make sufficiently clear distinction between socialization in a family environment, specificity of family relationships and the upbringing of children in their context, which calls into question some of the conclusions drawn by her).

A similar conclusion can be drawn regarding the research with students related to national identity, where there is a discrepancy between the research toolkit and the conclusions that are drawn in relation to family influences. As for the results of a survey of parents' opinions, the findings related to the need for appropriate parental commitment for the success of the child's academic work deserve attention. It is noticeable the greater orientation towards researching the specifics of family relationships, including with a pedagogical character, rather through the prism of the status of a child (even when it comes to studied students), than the direct study of problems of family pedagogy. This leads to a limitation, which undoubtedly reflects on the commenting of contributing moments in the candidate's research, directly related to family pedagogy, and not through the

reflection of the point of view of only part of the subjects involved in family relationships.

As transitional between family pedagogy and andragogy, I define publications related to forms and methods of interaction with parents. Although stated rather in the context of family pedagogy, the comments in them are primarily andragogical. This in itself is not a problem because the andragogical aspect is well brought out as an explanation (but not so much as an argument). In these publications, the argumentative part related to the problematic of family pedagogy is not sufficiently represented, which limits their content.

Unlike the publications in the field of family pedagogy, the publications in the field of andragogy are very limited in volume. Among them are study on the topic "Learning cities in the context of the concept of lifelong learning (view of students studying the subject "Andragogy")" and articles - "Andragogic requirements for the education of parents in an informal environment", "Evening schools in the context of lifelong learning"; "Educational motivation of adult learners in evening schools".

The mentioned study is of interest from the point of view of promoting the concept of the so-called learning cities and the starting point of the research on the importance of an integrated approach to the city as a place for education and culture, shaping ways of life. The interest in the specifics of evening schools expressed by the candidate is commendable, this is a poorly researched issue in Bulgaria, so here, contributing moments can be commented on, but still conditionally. For example, the article "Educational motivation of adult learners in evening schools" presents the results of an interview with a principal and a focus group with students in an evening school. The factual information is interesting, but I have reservations about the analysis, in which the different types of motivation are not differentiated well enough. There is a feeling of incompleteness of the analysis and insufficient consideration of the specifics of

this type of school, which are within the framework of formal education, where the diagnosis of the need for learning has its undoubted specifics compared to training in other forms of non-formal adult education, which not commented on in the text.

Some of the articles are aimed at the professional-pedagogical training of teachers, for example: "The presentation of good practices to future teachers - an opportunity to increase their professional training"; "Master classes" and their role in increasing the professional training of future teachers, Guidelines for overcoming challenges in the professional daily lives of novice teachers of adults. Insofar as the students are adult learners, it could be tentatively assumed that these are publications in the andragogic field, but in terms of content, this is not prominent and visible in the texts of these articles. This raises the question in what capacity these articles are actually proposed for participation in the current competition, it should be answered by the candidate himself.

About citations. 24 article citations are indicated, mainly in articles by authors published in conference proceedings, 3 of them are in monographs. The more frequent citation by some authors of the candidate's publications is striking.

The candidate has participated in several scientific projects implemented at the Faculty of Pedagogy. She was the scientific leader of a two-year project on the topic "Researching the experience of innovative schools in Bulgaria and presenting good practices to future teachers". She had visits to universities in Lithuania and the Czech Republic, as well as two visits to Norway and Iceland within two projects of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". She has participation in projects related to "educational ecosystems" and "early identification of students at risk of prematurely leaving the education system". The mentioned projects are not directly related to the competition.

From the presented reference, projects with the names: "Readiness of young people for family life and parenthood", "Evening schools - "mission education"

or why adults return to school" are more directly related to the competition. It can be seen that the candidate has concentrated her efforts in research activities rather in areas outside the thematic focus of the competition, which is not insignificant in terms of publication activity as a result of this type of activity. This gives the feeling of a kind of uncenteredness of research efforts in direction of results directly related to the academic subjects of the competition.

The candidate has not completed teaching mobility at a foreign university.

She was a supervisor of two graduate students on topics related to family pedagogy, as well as 28 course works.

Regarding the contribution reference. Of the 5 groups of contributions indicated in the table, the first 4 groups are directly related to the competition. The way of defining the fifth contribution is rather outside the scope of the competition. The review of the publications referred to it partially confirms what has been said, some of the publications could be summarized within a contribution, if the applicant had derived such a definition of contribution that would be relevant to the competition.

I partially accept the first described contribution from the point of view of the empirical research carried out and its results. However, for me, some interpretations of the candidate remain questionable in their quality of contributions, for example that "the increasing number of disintegrating family ties" has as a "result a reduction in the educational potential of the family, implying the appearance of increasingly serious behavioral problems in children". The relationship thus indicated can be questioned in the context of modern concepts interpreting the calm educational environment useful for the development of the child, after divorce or separation of the parents, from the point of view of the interruption of traumatic experiences of the child within a maintained marriage for the sake of the him. I think that the candidate should be more moderate in commenting on her contributions regarding her research, about

which she states that "an analogue of which is not found by the author in the European and world scientific literature", from which a question arises to her - on what basis does she draw such a conclusion in relation to world scientific literature?

The second contribution is well described. As for the third, I accept it in part, given the way it is worded. I have a note regarding some expressions in their quality of findings, for example "the only learning city in Bulgaria - Plovdiv" (here the candidate puts emphasis on a concept that carries semantic definiteness, exceeding its parameters, thus resulting in the least an ambiguity that can be contentiously contested, since from the point of view of the concept of learning cities, many other cities in Bulgaria can also be defined as such). It can be said that the text related to the concept of learning cities sounds one-sided in places, even due to the fact of choosing the respective translation of the concept into Bulgarian. As far as evening school research is concerned, there are certainly points of contribution here. The fourth listed contribution can be combined with the third. I would accept part of the fifth contribution if it were redefined in the context of the competition, the "andragogy" part. As it is, it lacks the necessary argumentation for contribution in the context of this competition.

Other notes and related with them recommendations:

- To approach more carefully the typology of the articles, including from the point of view of interpreting "world-famous databases with scientific information" in the Bulgarian context. Some of the articles indicated in the table of publications are not of the value of those published in Web of Science and Scopus and cannot be ranked next to publications, for example, in the magazine "Pedagogy", ed. "Az Buki". This is also related to the placement of articles not published in Web of Science and Scopus in indicator G of the prepared reference. What has been said also applies to two of the citations that are scored in the first part of the table under indicator D.

- To participate more in research projects directly related to the academic subjects that she teaches and the profile of the competition.

- To improve her foreign language knowledge, including in the direction of opportunities for teaching mobility in a foreign university, which at the moment is practically absent.

- The insufficiency of the publications directly centered on the competition in the "Andragogy" part diverges from the expectations for the necessary publication effectiveness of the candidate in this field.

Based on everything stated so far, I give a positive conclusion for selection, taking into account the achievements of the candidate for associate professor under the announced competition ch. assistant professor Yordanka Nikolova, PhD, as well as the indicated critical remarks, and I remain hopeful that in the future she will take into account the recommendations made in order to improve her research and publication activities.

30.03.2024 г.

Signature:

Sofia

/Prof. Dr S.Chavdarova - Kostova/