

REVIEWER'S OPINION

on Competition procedure for the position of Associate Professor in the field

3.2 Psychology (Work Psychology)

Announced by Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Faculty of Philosophy in the State Gazette, issue 30 / 15.04.2022 and on the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski web

Author: Prof. Lyudmil Georgiev, DSc.

SU "St. Kliment Ohridski"

At the very beginning, I would like to share that the announced in the Official Gazette no. 30 of 04/15/2022 competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in professional direction 3.2 Psychology (work psychology), for the needs of the "Social, Organizational, Clinical and Pedagogical Psychology" Department at the Faculty of Philosophy of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", is essentially a contest that in academic circles we usually define as undisputed.

In this case, it is not about the fact that a single candidate submitted documents to this competition, but rather about the undisputed scientific, teaching and research qualities of this candidate - Ch. Dr. Vihra Naydenova, a long-established name in the psychological community in Bulgaria, and not only.

I allow myself to start my opinion with such a summary, because as the head of the department I know both the scientific creativity of the candidate and her teaching talent, which together have earned the respect and trust with which Ch. assistant professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova is used among colleagues - teachers and students.

As for the formal side of the competition, I will say that Ch. assistant professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova has submitted all the documents required by the law and its regulations for its application, that is, they fully correspond to the requirements of the ЗРАСРБ, ППЗРАСРБ and the Regulations for the conditions and order of acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in SU " St. Kliment Ohridski". In other words, from this formal point of view, the contest also turns out to be indisputable.

Here I can continue with the fact that the candidate is a graduate of the "Psychology" specialty at the "St. Kliment Ohridski", completing two specializations - clinical and counseling psychology, and work and organizational psychology, adequate for a master's degree. An important moment in her scientific biography is the defense of the scientific degree "Doctor" at the University of Bielefeld, Germany, with a dissertation on the topic: "Stress and health in Eastern European immigrants in Germany".

I can confidently say that the request made even then for a serious presence in science finds its real confirmation today.

Of course, if I move away from the evaluation of the formal requirements and return to my initial summary, then in support of it I would like to mention that in this competition ch. assistant professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova participated with an impressive scientific production. It is about her brilliant monograph on: "Employee Engagement and Learning. People in organizations - potential, development and contribution", which in this case fulfills the function of habilitation work; six articles that have been published in refereed and indexed Web of Science and Scopus scientific journals; 25 articles and studies published in Bulgarian specialized scientific publications on psychology, of which two are in English.

Here I should add the no less impressive fact that her articles in world-renowned databases of scientific information have been cited 289 times in Scopus alone, not counting those in WoS, and the total number of citation points - 2645, exceeds 53 times the required minimum, which really speaks for itself about the scientific qualities of the candidate.

If I continue with the reference regarding the scient metric requirements that have been so important in recent years for obtaining scientific degrees and occupying academic positions, in the case of "associate professor", I will say that the work of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova far exceeds the required number of points on the various indicators, especially since the scientific works presented by her were not included in previous procedures for academic career development. Perhaps it is superfluous, but I will add that there is no evidence of established plagiarism in the scientific publications presented by the candidate for the competition.

If I return to the summary shared at the beginning, as far as the teaching work of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova, I will say that she has too much experience in this very important segment in the academic activity of every member of the university community. For many years, she has been leading the seminar classes on occupational psychology in the bachelor's degree in the specialty "Psychology"; holder of a lecture course "Labor and Organizational Psychology" in the bachelor's degree majoring in "Sociology"; in

the course "Organizational culture and behavior" in the bachelor's degree in the specialty "Informal education".

In addition, the candidate has lecture courses in the Master's programs "Work and Organizational Psychology" and "Cross-Cultural Management", related to the problems of stress and health in organizations, and human resource management. At the risk of repeating myself, I will say one more time that thanks to his undoubted teaching talent, chap. Assistant Professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova has won authority and respect among the student community.

It is obvious, bearing in mind the impressive scientific output presented by the candidate, that a detailed analysis of the works within a necessarily limited opinion is impossible. Therefore, I will say just a few words about her habilitation work, dedicated to the seemingly trivial problems of the potential, development and contribution of employees from organizations in view of their commitment to the learning process.

The original approach of Ch. Assistant Professor Vihra Naydenova in this case comes down to the emphasis she places on researching the motivational factors for commitment and job satisfaction, as well as the position of the researched persons regarding their own training and development, that is, the feedback on work achievements and working conditions.

By the way, this emphasis is one of the main contributions of the candidate, especially since her results make it possible to see the dependence between the three components of engagement with different motivational factors. It turns out that the factors that correlate most strongly with each other are "finding meaning, usefulness and meaningfulness in work" with "learning, creativity and ideas", which is an extremely important point in the overall placement of people in work organizations, regardless of their specificity.

In other words, according to the author's summaries, the predictor with the highest weight for engagement in work is precisely the finding of meaning, usefulness and meaning, that is, among other things, professional fulfillment is also a specific existential experience, and this is also an important prerequisite for the practical work of the psychologist-consultant in labor organizations. In other words, both the overall work and the habilitation work of Ch. Vihra Naydenova, assistant professor, have not only important theoretical importance and contributions, but also carry with them essential instructions for the practical work of occupational psychologists.

One of the important requirements in the preparation of reviews and opinions for defenses of dissertation works and habilitation competitions is the degree of coincidence between the evaluation of the reviewer and the authors themselves regarding the contributions formulated by them. Over the years, I have participated in over a hundred such procedures, so

I can safely say: "I review, therefore I exist!". I have witnessed some paradoxical, to say the least, wording, as if the authors were applying for the Nobel Prize in Psychology, rather than the defense of a scientific degree or an academic position. In this case, I want to emphasize that there is a coincidence between the contributions that ch. Associate Professor Dr. Vihra Naydenova formulated my assessment of them as well.

Another important requirement is any remarks and recommendations that the reviewer may make to the applicant. In this case, I have no objections, and my wish, not a recommendation, is ch. Dr. Vihra Naydenova to continue her research and teaching activities with the same inspiration and dedication as she has done so far. I'm sure that will happen.

In conclusion, bearing in mind the rich general, psychological and research culture, her indisputable teaching and human qualities, I allow myself to confidently recommend to the esteemed members of the honorable jury to choose Ch. Dr. Vihra Naydenova, assistant professor, in the academic position of "associate professor" in professional direction 3.2 Psychology (labor psychology). I believe that this will be both an adequate assessment of her previous work and an incentive for her future creative achievements.

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Sofia

Author:

(Prof. Lyudmil Georgiev, DSc.)