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OPINION

about the application

on

Dr. Zornitsa Totkova,

Chief Assistant Professor in the "Psychology of Personality and Cognitive Psychology" section - Institute for Population and Human Studies at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (IPHS - BAS),

to participate in a competition

for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in professional field 3.2. Psychology (Transport Psychology) for the needs of the "Personality Psychology and Cognitive Psychology" section at IPHS - BAS, announced in the State Gazette No. 46/26.05.2023.

Prepared the opinion:

Valeri Stoilov Stoyanov

Professor at professional direction 3.2. Psychology, Doctor of Science

Varna * 2023

1. General presentation of the candidate and the received materials for the competition

The competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Transport Psychology), has been announced for the needs of the "Personality Psychology and Cognitive Psychology" section at the IPHS - BAS, announced in State Gazette No. 46 of 26.05.2023.

The opinion was assigned according to the decision of the Scientific Jury, determined by Order No. RD-6-367/21.07.2023 of the Director of the IPHS - BAS.

The only candidate in the competition is Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, chief assistant professor in the "Personality Psychology and Cognitive Psychology" section - IPHS-BAS.

Dr. Zornitsa Totkova holds a bachelor's and master's degree in psychology, obtained at the Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar".

In 2014, he acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional direction 3.2. Psychology at the Department of Psychology, IPHS-BAS.

Her professional path began in 2012 as a psychologist at the DZZD "Reflex Astarta", where she was responsible for conducting psychological research necessary for professional drivers to acquire a category, checking, analyzing the results and formulating a conclusion about the psychological fitness of the candidates. After obtaining the scientific degree "Doctor" of the National Academy of Sciences, he currently holds the academic position of "chief assistant professor" in the Department of Psychology, Institute for Population and Human Research at the BAS. During this period, he participated as a researcher in a number of projects corresponding to the thematic field of the current competition, financed both by national funds and by European structural funds.

As a young scientist, Dr. Z. Totkova received awards for scientific achievements from both the BAS and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

The documents submitted by the candidate under the competition meet the basic requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor".

Dr. Professor Zornitsa Totkova offers 30 scientific works in connection with the competition, as follows:

1. Habilitation work: Totkova, Z. (2023). Transport psychology. Personality and driving behavior. BAS publishing house "Prof. Marin Drinov", ISBN 978-619-245-293-3 (Print), ISBN 978-619-245-294-0 (Online).

2. Published book based on a protected dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "doctor": Totkova, Z. (2023). Parenting style and attachment. BAS publishing house "Prof. Marin Drinov", ISBN 978-619-245-313-8 (Print), ISBN 978-619-245-314-5 (Online).

3. Articles and reports published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - 4 in English, of which 2 are independent and 2 are co-authored.

4. Articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes or in specialized publications for classified information - 21 scientific articles, of which 8 are independent, and the rest are co-authored. Of them, 1 is in English.

5. Studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes or in specialized publications for classified information - 3 co-authored, of which 2 in English.

A report on the noticed citations, as well as the other required documents for participation in the competition, is presented. It is noteworthy that there are works by Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, which are also cited in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information, which makes her a recognizable scientist not only in our country, but also abroad.

The scientific works presented in the competition are outside the works specified in the abstract of the dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" and are accepted for evaluation. The published book based on a protected dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" is not evaluated, but participates in the formation of the opinion of the candidate's compliance with the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor".

With the scientific works submitted for participation in the competition, the obtained PhD and the noticed citations, Dr. Zornitsa Totkova meets the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor", field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology, according to the Appendix to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (New - SG No. 56 of 2018, in force from 07.06.2018) - Minimum national requirements for scientific, teaching and/or artistic or the sports activity of the candidates for acquiring a scientific degree and for occupying the academic positions of "Chief Assistant Professor", "Associate Professor" and "Professor" in field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology.

At the same time, the educational profile and accumulated professional experience from Zornitsa Totkova, PhD, as a practicing psychologist and researcher, are consistent with the requirements for occupying the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional direction 3.2. Psychology, according to Art. 53, para. (1), item 1 and item 2 of the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and are a prerequisite for further professional development.

2. General characteristics and assessment of the candidate's scientific production, scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The scientific production of Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, with whom she participated in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor", meets the requirements for the presentation of scientific works and contributes to the transfer of modern scientific and scientific-applied achievements in the field of transport psychology and psychology of development in social practice and in teaching psychological knowledge in higher education.

The scientific activity of Ch. Assistant Professor Zornitsa Totkova, PhD, is mainly concentrated in the thematic field of:

Transport psychology: the emphasis is on revealing the influence of personal factors on the process of driving motor vehicles, the clearer definition of the construct "driving style", its operationalization, as well as the creation and validation for the Bulgarian cultural context of tools for psychological measurement for transport psychology needs;

Developmental psychology: parenting styles and attachment in early adulthood have been studied; the students' motivation for learning according to the teachers was revealed, and the attitudes towards applying

approaches that arouse students' interest and understanding of the practical value of the studied material were investigated; adapted for the Bulgarian cultural context are tools for psychological measurement.

Dr. Zornitsa Totkova does not simply speculate on known theoretical models in the above-described thematic areas of scientific interest, as is the common practice in us in the scientific publications for participation in such competitions. The positive thing in this case is that it systematically empirically investigates current and significant social phenomena with the clear idea of explaining them more comprehensively, as well as finding the practical application value of scientific findings.

Without pretensions to comprehensiveness, in a summarized form the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, can introduce themselves as follows:

In the field of transport psychology:

1. The influence of individual-demographic, cognitive, psycho-motor and personal factors on the behavior of drivers of motor vehicles was studied, with an emphasis on the negative consequences of driving, operationalized as violations of traffic rules, revocation of driving licenses and involvement in traffic accidents. On this basis, the profile of motor vehicle drivers with dangerous driving behavior is outlined. (See publications I.1., III.3., IV.2., V.1., V.2., V.5., V.6., V.8. from a list attached by the candidate).

2. A definition and operationalized structure for the psychological construct "driving style" is proposed, and typical driving styles in Bulgaria (eight in number) are empirically outlined. The interrelationships between driving styles and negative driving consequences are analyzed.

(See publications I.1., III.1., III.2., V.4. from the list attached by the candidate).

3. Psychological measurement tools for the needs of transport psychology have been created and validated for the Bulgarian cultural context, including for a reliable assessment of personal factors related to dangerous behavior on the road and driving style for the Bulgarian cultural context, as well as cognitive factors related to the process of driving a motor vehicle (See publications I.1., III.2., IV .1., V.1. from a list attached by the applicant).

In the field of developmental psychology:

1. The existing understanding of parenting has been enriched, by revealing different combinations of parenting styles within the family and the leading position of one of the styles, outlining that responsiveness in the relationship with the parent is decisive, especially evaluated by the distance of time, as well as that the parenting style has a significant influence on the formation of a sustainable model of partnership of the person with the people close to him.

(See publications III.4., IV.15., IV.16., IV.17., IV.19, IV.20., IV.21. from a list attached by the candidate).

2. The leading motivations for learning among students from the lower secondary and high school stages of education in our country have been established. Teachers' attitudes towards applying approaches that arouse students' interest and understanding of the practical value of the studied material are revealed, the preferred style of interaction between teachers and students is revealed and approaches to motivate students are outlined.

(See publications IV.9., IV.10., IV.11., IV.12., IV.13., IV.14. from a list attached by the candidate).

The conceptualized models in the works proposed for review from Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, the analyzed data from empirical studies and the created and adapted instruments for psychological measurements, are a serious base of knowledge in the field of human behavior and the functioning of people in a social context.

The results of these studies contribute to the enrichment of modern knowledge in transport psychology, personality psychology and developmental psychology and for the practical and applied purposes of specialists who work "in the field".

In their totality, they represent a solid basis for further fundamental and scientific-applied research, especially in the field of transport psychology, as well as to optimize the system for evaluating motor vehicle driver candidates, their training, additional training to correct the behavior of risky drivers on the road and their retesting.

I have not noticed and have no information about plagiarism in the scientific works submitted for the competition. Literary sources, in my opinion, have been used correctly.

3. Personal impressions of the candidate

I have known Dr. Zornitsa Totkova since she was a student at educational and qualification degree "Bachelor" from my courses in "Experimental Psychology" and "Organizational Psychology", as well as from educational and qualification degree "Master" - courses in "Psychodiagnostics" and "Computer Systems in Psychodiagnostics". My impressions were of a student with a deep understanding of the operational structure of concepts and a good knowledge of the systematicity of hierarchies of concepts in the thematic field of psychology, as well as an interest in research methodology. Even then, my advice to her was to focus on scientific work. Today, reading her scientific output, I see an already formed scientist with a very good methodological culture, with her own handwriting and a depth of penetration into the systemic relationships of the studied phenomena.

I am convinced that the "Psychology of Personality and Cognitive Psychology" section at the IPHS-BAS would benefit from the appointment of Dr. Zornitsa Totkova to the academic position of "Associate Professor" and this would enable her to develop her potential as a qualified person.

CONCLUSION

Bearing in mind the above stated in the opinion, I draw the following conclusions related to the candidacy of Dr. Zornitsa Totkova, for holding the academic position "Associate Professor", area of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology:

1. Ch. Assistant Professor Zornitsa Totkova, PhD, meets the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position "Associate Professor", field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal sciences, professional direction 3.2. Psychology, according to the Appendix to Art. 1a, para. 1 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

2. He has accumulated professional experience as a practicing psychologist and researcher in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor".

3. Offers for review scientific production with significant scientific and practical-applied contributions.

4. She is recognizable as a researcher not only in our country but also abroad.

All this gives me grounds for a positive assessment of Ch. Assistant Professor Zornitsa Totkova, PhD, as a candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor".

In this regard, I recommend to the Scientific Jury to propose, according to the procedure established in the IPHS-BAS, Dr. Zornitsa Totkova for the academic position "Associate Professor" in professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Transport Psychology) for the needs of the "Personality Psychology and Cognitive Psychology" section at the institute.

17.08.2023

City of Varna

Prepared the opinion:

Prof. D.Sc. Valery Stoyanov