

STANDPOINT

By Prof. D. Sc. Marin Alexandrov Paunov, UNWE Sofia

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
to occupy the academic position “**associate professor**”
of the **Higher School of Insurance and Finance**,
by field of higher education **3. Social, economic and legal sciences**
professional direction **3.7. Administration and Management (Organizational Leadership and
Psychological Aspects of Management)**

In the competition for “associate professor”, announced in the State Gazette, no. 52 of 05.07.2022 and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, there is one candidate - assistant professor Dr. Victoria Gatzova from VUZF.

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

In the announced competition, documents were submitted by one candidate - assistant professor Dr. Victoria Gatzova. After completing secondary education at 9 French Language High School-Sofia (humanities profile), the candidate acquires a Bachelor's degree (in Psychology) and a Master's degree (in Work and Organizational Psychology) at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski. She is a doctoral student at the same university and obtained the educational and scientific degree Doctor in 2017 (with the topic of the dissertation “Time perspective and management style of the organizational leader”).

The candidate worked for a short time at the Ministry of Education and Culture as an intern in the “Human Resources, Public Relations and Protocol” Directorate, after which, since 2014, she has been a part-time lecture at VUZF for 6 years. In the period from 2020 to 2022 she was the Scientific Secretary of VUZF. Since 2020 until now, she holds the position of assistant professor, and from 2022 she is the Dean of academic program at the same university.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's publications and contributions

The candidate assistant prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova has provided a reference for the scientometric indicators, related to the procedure of her application and her scientific works. It is clear from the reference that the candidate meets the national requirements for the necessary parameters and can participate in the competition.

The reference includes a dissertation work for awarding the scientific degree of doctor, a monograph presented as a habilitation thesis (Occupational stress and counterproductive behavior in the organization: “St. Gregory the Theologian” Publishing House, 2022), another monograph that is not presented as a habilitation thesis (Toxic leadership in the organization, Sofia: “St. Gregory the Theologian” Publishing House, 2022), a book published on the basis of the doctoral dissertation (The contemporary leader. Time perspective and management style, Sofia: “St. Gregory the Theologian” Publishing House, 2020). Three articles and one studio in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals were also submitted for review. Eight citations are also listed.

Regarding the content and contribution elements in the works submitted for review, the following can be noted.

The main work, presented as a habilitation monograph, is “Occupational stress and counterproductive behavior in the organization”. In practice, the monograph is a study of workplace stress and its relationship with counterproductive work behaviors. In the first two theoretical parts of this work the author makes a literature review on the subject of "Stress" and on this basis derives the methodological foundation of the research paradigms necessary for her purposes. In the third part, the study focuses on some of the leading negative consequences of workplace stress and, above all, on counterproductive behaviors. Special attention is given on Spector and Fox's model of stress. In my opinion, the empirical study in the last fourth chapter deserves the most attention in this monograph. The results of this research are interesting and significant in several directions: the most frequently encountered stressors at the workplace (burnout, work overload, and interpersonal conflicts); withdrawal from the work process and workplace aggression as two common forms of counterproductive work behavior; the confirmed existence of a relationship between stress at work and counterproductive behaviors of employees.

Another monograph, presented here additionally, not in the role of a major habilitation thesis, is "Toxic leadership in the organization". The topic is undeniably interesting and not

particularly developed due to its relative novelty, although from a purely pragmatic point of view it is markedly relevant, especially in immature management contexts like the Bulgarian one. It is primarily about the destructive behavior patterns of managers that lead to ineffective management practices. In this work, the candidate undertakes a theoretical-methodological review of the leading concepts of toxic leadership (including the so-called toxic triangle) and, at least for me, the attempt to build the psychological image of the destructive leader and exploring some of the types of toxic leaders is very interesting. This first part of the monograph further examines the destructive consequences of implementing toxic management models. Overcoming this type of leadership and, accordingly, the negative consequences, is summarized in the author's model on two levels - at the employee level and at the senior management level. A special place is devoted to the constructive leadership behavior, as opposed to toxic leadership, and to the situational determinants, including use of individual sources of power and application of communication, emotional intelligence, etc.

Another monograph, which was developed on the basis of the doctoral dissertation, defended by the author, is presented. The monograph is a theoretical-empirical work dedicated to the problems of leadership and the time orientation of the organizational leader with an emphasis on the time orientation as a personal predisposition of the leader.

One study (published in the VUZF Yearbook) and the candidate's three articles also fall within the scope of this opinion. They are dedicated to problems in the fields of:

- psychological analysis of some main challenges, accompanying the process of people management in contemporary organizations, including the problems of leadership, organizational-psychological climate, motivation and commitment, etc.
- Occupational stress and policies and practices affecting stressors.
- Group cohesion - the problem of cohesiveness and unity of a team with an emphasis on the correlation between group cohesion and the quality of work performance.

It can be summarized that the applicant's publications demonstrate an ability for independent, mature research thinking, scientific correctness and erudition, making them adequate to the expectations of the position applied for.

Apart from the works reviewed here, I would like to note the candidate's participation in three international and two national conferences, as well as approximately 20 published articles,

outlining the author's sustained and diverse interests in the field of psychology and human resources.

3. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no remarks. My recommendation to the candidate is to publish in world-wide refereed and indexed journals (however difficult it is in principle for Bulgarian author in these scientific fields).

CONCLUSION

Dr. Victoria Gatzova meets the regulatory requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of this Law, as well as the Regulations for the Terms and Conditions for Holding Academic Positions at VUZF. Therefore, I give *my positive assessment and propose to the members of the scientific jury to vote for the election of Victoria Gatzova to the academic position of “associate professor”* in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences and professional direction 3.7. Administration and Management (*Organizational Leadership and Psychological Aspects of Management*) at VUZF.

16.11.2022

Prepared the standpoint:.....

(prof. D. Sc. Marin Paunov)