

ACADEMIC REVIEW

by **Prof. Dr. Nadya Mironova, UNWE Sofia**

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition
for the academic position “**associate professor**”
in the **Higher School of Insurance and Finance**
by field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences,
professional field

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 participating - **assistant professor Dr. Victoria Gatzova** from the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

1. General presentation of the received materials

By order № 370 of 10.11.2022 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of “associate professor” at VUZF in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Organizational Leadership and Psychological Aspects of Management).

Only one candidate submitted documents for participation in the announced competition- **assistant professor Dr. Victoria Gatzova** from the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

The set of electronic materials, presented by asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova, is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff of VUZF and includes the following documents:

- Request;
- Autobiography;
- Copy of the diploma for the educational and scientific degree “doctor”;
- Habilitation thesis with summary;
- List of publications after the defense of the doctoral dissertation;
- Copies of all publications – monographs, book based on dissertation, one studio and articles;
- Summaries in Bulgarian and English of the publications after the defense of the doctoral dissertation;
- Certificate of the required academic experience under art. 20, paragraph 1, item 2 of the Regulations on the terms and conditions for holding academic positions at VUZF;
- Evidence of participation in a research assignment;
- Reference on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position “associate professor”;
- Reference to the scientific contributions in the candidate's works;
- Citation reference;
- Medical certificate;
- Criminal record certificate;
- Consent form for the processing of personal data in connection with participation in the contest.

The candidate, asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova, submitted a total of seven scientific papers, namely:

1. Two monographs, one of which is the main habilitation thesis. Two reviews are attached to them.
2. Book based on the candidate's dissertation work.
3. One studio with two reviews.
4. Three articles in non-refereed publications with scientific review.

The above-mentioned scientific works of the candidate Dr. Victoria Gatzova, published after the defense of the doctoral dissertation, are accepted for review, as they fall within the scope of the competition.

According to the minimum national requirements, Dr. Gatzova has a total of 220 points from Indicator D with the minimum required 200 points.

There is also a citation reference (without auto-citations), which includes 8 citations. The total number of points from Indicator E is 70 points, and the required minimum is 50 points.

Official notes certifying the academic workload of Dr. Gatzova, as well as her participation in a research task, are also presented.

I accept without remarks the attached references and official notes.

2. Brief biographical data of the applicant

Dr. Victoria Gatzova obtained a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a master's degree in Work and Organizational Psychology at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". In 2017 she obtained the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in Organizational Psychology again at Sofia University. Dr. Gatzova's education demonstrates consistency and focus in her research interests, as she focuses on organizational psychology issues, including human resource management, leadership, stress management and more.

Dr. Gatzova's academic career began in 2014 as a part-time lecturer. She led lectures and exercises on the disciplines "Economic Psychology" and "Consumer Behavior" at Sofia University. Dr. Gatzova also taught at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance more than ten disciplines, including "Social Psychology", "Organizational Consulting", "Organizational Culture", "Fundamentals of Business Psychology", etc.

In 2020, she became an assistant professor of Business Psychology and Leadership at VUZF and until now she teaches "Leadership and Management", "Business Leadership and Team Building", "Group Work and Group Effectiveness", etc. The listed disciplines testify to the candidate's scientific focus on the topic of organizational leadership and psychological aspects of management and correspond to the announced competition.

In parallel with the teaching activity, in 2020 Dr. Victoria Gatzova is actively engaged in administrative work as scientific secretary of VUZF. From February 2022 until now, she is the Dean of the Academic Program of VUZF. Dr. Gatzova is also the chairperson of the Academic Program Council, a member of the Academic Council and a member of the Quality Council at VUZF.

On the basis of the attached biographical data, it can be claimed that the candidate's professional, scientific and academic qualifications fully correspond to the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at VUZF.

3. General characteristics of the applicant's activity

3.1. Evaluation of the candidate's educational and pedagogical activity

From the presented academic workload report for the period 2014-2022, it is clearly seen that Dr. Gatzova is a lecturer in a wide range of disciplines (15 in number) in both the bachelor's and master's programs of VUZF. For the specified period, she conducted 2,065 lecture hours in a number of disciplines that are substantively related to the announced competition. The candidate's academic experience is also enriched by her work as a supervisor of graduate students and a reviewer of diploma theses.

3.2. Evaluation of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activity

The scientific works, presented by the candidate, fully correspond to the subject matter of the announced competition and are dedicated to research of the psychological aspects of management, among which are organizational leadership, people management, and job stress management.

The monograph “**Occupational stress and counterproductive behavior in the organization**” with a total volume of 160 pages is presented for the main habilitation work. It is an in-depth study of job stress and its relationship to counterproductive work behaviors. The researched issues are relevant for contemporary organizations, as the dynamic business environment creates conditions for the occurrence of high levels of stress. Dr. Gatzova skilfully performs the research tasks, achieves the main goal and convincingly proves the thesis.

Structurally, the monograph consists of an introduction, four chapters (three of them are theoretical and the last one is empirical), a conclusion and references. The author examines the nature of professional stress and emphasizes its sources. In the second chapter of the monograph, the dangerous consequences of stress are revealed and the possibilities for its management are explored, since stress management is one of the main psychological aspects of management. The third theoretical chapter draws attention to one of the serious consequences of stress for the organization, namely counterproductive work behaviors. The last chapter presents in detail the conducted empirical research. The structure supports the logical sequence in the unfolding of the conducted research, setting a sound theoretical framework and leading to interesting empirical results on occupational stress and counterproductive work behaviors, obtained by the author of the monograph. Each chapter ends with clearly formulated

conclusions from the relevant part of the study. The author's presence is clearly evident in the interpretation of the obtained results, as well as in the formulated recommendations as a result of the empirical data. For the purposes of her scientific research, Dr. Gatzova used a rich specialized literature in Bulgarian and English, consisting of 204 sources.

The second monograph, with which the candidate participated in the competition, has an interesting and attention-grabbing title: **“Toxic leadership in the organization”**. The work, which has a volume of 118 pages, is an in-depth study of the destructive behavioral patterns of managers that lead to ineffective management practices with dangerous consequences for employees and the organization.

The study is structured in an introduction, two chapters, a conclusion and references. Chapter One introduces the problem of the dark side of leadership. Basic theoretical propositions and empirical data, related to toxic leadership in the organization, are presented and analyzed. The information, presented in the form of a variety of statistical data, which the author presents graphically and analyzes in depth, is valuable. The second chapter begins by arguing the need to address the problem of implementing toxic leadership models by examining the consequences of destructive leadership behavior. A major contribution of the author is the creation of a model for dealing with toxic leadership in organizations. It involves working in two directions (at the employee level and at the senior management level) and includes preventive measures and concrete strategies to overcome the problem.

Dr. Gatzova takes an interesting approach in the in-depth study of the dark aspects of management models by looking at the opposite leadership behavior, namely constructive leadership and the factors of effective management. Encouraging a constructive leadership approach, the author emphasizes the need to overcome the problem of toxic leadership.

Another significant study by Dr. Gatzova is her book based on her dissertation entitled: **“The contemporary leader. Time perspective and management style”**. Within 222 pages, the author presents a theoretical-empirical study of the problems of contemporary leadership and the temporal orientation of the organizational leader. The contribution nature of the work is in revealing the importance of the manager's time orientation for effective management.

Structurally, the book consists of an introduction, five chapters, a conclusion and references. The first three chapters are theoretical and are devoted to issues of organizational leadership and time perspective. The focus is on clarifying the essence of the two research constructs, building the psychological image of the successful contemporary leader, examining some basic leadership theories and theoretical statements about time orientations. The last two chapters, which are empirical, present in detail the research conducted and reveal interesting

interrelationships between the constructs. The theoretical and empirical information, presented in Dr. Gatzova's book, contributes to a deeper understanding of the personal predisposition “time orientation” that can contribute to leader effectiveness, enriches the psychological profile of the organizational leader, and expands the available empirical data related to leadership and its relationship to other constructs.

The studio and the articles that the candidate submitted for her participation in the contest are dedicated to current issues related to leadership, the challenges of people management in contemporary organizations, factors for building effective teams, stress management, etc. The problems, analyzed in Dr. Gatzova's scientific publications, fall within the scope of the announced competition.

3.3. Contributions and citations

I accept the distinct scientific contributions in the works of Dr. Gatzova, highlighting the author's contribution to the enrichment of scientific knowledge in the field of organizational leadership, effective people management and professional stress. When reviewing the scientific works, presented in the competition, the following more significant results and contributions of assistant professor Dr. Victoria Gatzova can be highlighted:

- An in-depth theoretical level study of job stress and counterproductive work behaviors and upgrading on the issues of occupational stress and counterproductive work behaviors with empirical data obtained as a result of the research conducted.
- Investigating the relationship between workplace stress and counterproductive work behaviors.
- Preparation of specific recommendations for successful management of professional stress in organizations and counterproductive work behaviors.
- An in-depth study of the problem of leaders’ toxicity, which is not usually an object of scientific research interest, and systematization and analysis of theoretical information devoted to the problem of toxic organizational leadership.
- Development of an author's model for dealing with toxic leadership in the organization, offering different strategies to overcome the problem both at the individual and organizational level.
- The importance of manager's time orientation for effective management is revealed.

- On a theoretical level, the relatively unexplored construct “time perspective” in Bulgarian conditions is presented in detail, emphasizing the model revealing the relationship between time orientations and leadership.
- Time orientations, which are predictors of transformational, transactional and liberal leadership styles, have been empirically established.
- Some of the contemporary challenges related to people management are presented and analyzed.
- The author's recommendations for building and stimulating group cohesion are proposed, based on the considered and analyzed factors that affect cohesion between group members.

The number and type of citations by other authors of Dr. Gazsova's scientific publications fulfill the minimum national requirements for occupying the academic position “associate professor” according to the provisions of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation.

4. Evaluation of the personal contribution of the candidate

According to the presented documentation, I can definitely point out the presence of a clear personal contribution of the candidate asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova in the relevant publications, as well as the fact that the formulated contributions and results obtained are her personal merit.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no significant critical remarks on the presented scientific works. My recommendation to Dr. Gatzova is to focus her efforts on publishing articles in scientific publications that are referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials, presented by asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova, meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the same law and the relevant Regulations of VUZF.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works, published after the materials used in the defense of her doctorate. The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions. Her theoretical developments have practical applicability and some of them are directly oriented to academic work. Dr. Gatzova's scientific and teaching qualifications are unquestionable.

The results, achieved by asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova in teaching and research activities, fully correspond to the Regulations of VUZF for the application of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific works, presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions contained in them, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Academic Council for the election of asst. prof. Dr. Victoria Gatzova for the academic position of “**associate professor**” at VUZF in professional field **3.7 Administration and Management (Organizational Leadership and Psychological Aspects of Management)**.

20.11.2022

Reviewer:

(prof. Dr. Nadya Mironova)