

OPINION

by Prof. Milena Velichkova Aleksieva, Ph.D.,
St. Cyril and St. Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo,
professional field: 1.3 Pedagogy of teaching in...,
area of science: Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports
Training, member of the scientific panel

Subject: Selection process for obtaining an academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 7.6 Sport, speciality “Sport” (Basketball) for the needs of “Basketball, volleyball, handball” department in National Sports Academy (NSA) “Vassil Levski” - Sofia.

Information about the opening

The selection process opening for obtaining the academic position “associate professor” was published in State gazette, issue 34 from 11.04.2023 and was announced for the needs of department “Basketball, volleyball, handball”, in accordance with a decision of the Faculty Council of “Pedagogy” faculty, described in Protocol 6 from 18.05.2023.

I am chosen to be part of the scientific panel for the selection process, in accordance with Order №447/30.05.2023 of the Rector of NSA “Vassil Levski” - Sofia.

Applicant's data

The only applicant for the opening is Senior Lecturer Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D., who meets the requirements set in article 24 of the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for application of the Law for Development of the Academic Staff in Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations of NSA “Vassil Levski” about the terms and conditions for awarding academic ranks and obtaining academic positions.

Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova has earned a bachelor's degree in Physical Education from NSA “Vassil Levski” with a second specialty “Basketball coach” and in 2013 she also earned a Master's degree in Physical Education and Sport in the middle stage of Secondary Education.

In 2017 she defended a Ph.D. thesis “Influence of sports preparation on the competitive realization of adolescent female basketball players” in department “Theory and Methodology of Physical Education” in University of Veliko Turnovo “St. Cyril and St. Methodius”.

In September 2017 she started working at NSA “Vassil Levski” as an Assistant Professor and was promoted to Chief Assistant Professor in 2018.

She has been a professional basketball player and basketball coach from 2007 to 2016 in basketball clubs from Bulgaria (“Neftohimik”, “Montana 2003” and “Beroe”) and Spain. She has won a number of national and international awards for basketball – national champion for women with BC “Neftohimik” in 2010 and 2011, university students’ champion in 3x3 basketball with the representative team of University of Veliko Turnovo “St. Cyril and St. Methodius” in 2016 and 2017.

The facts mentioned above give me a foundation to think that on the basis of her practical experience, she successfully interprets the theory of physical education and sport, and of basketball in particular.

She has the necessary computer literacy and has a good command of both written and spoken English and Spanish.

The applicant has behaviour, which is constructive for successful teamwork, she takes an active part in performing certain tasks and activities maintains professional and dialogic relationships with colleagues from the scientific field, respecting the academic rules for communication.

The set of materials, presented by Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova on paper, is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff. All of them are prepared and presented in full and they are also very precisely designed.

Short characteristics of the presented scientific works

The willingness of the applicant to participate in the selection process is evident from the scientific works, proposed for recension. The main areas of research from Senior Lecturer Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D., are basketball, individual and team competitive efficiency of 15 to 18-year-old female

basketball players, the occurrences of stress in adolescent female basketball players and the state of physical capability of students.

The applicant has published her monographic work on the topic of “*Aspects of the technico-tactical preparation of adolescent female basketball players*”, which consists of 173 pages. The material is divided into five sections, which comprise the motive qualities, sensitive periods in development and technico-tactical preparation of adolescent female basketball players.

The work defines some substantial generalizations, which I deem scientific contributions.

It also includes exercises suitable for inclusion in the training process.

The author suggests exercises for control of the preparation of female basketball players from the age group 15-16.

The work also looks into the influence of operative thinking in the process of building up a perennial preparation in basketball.

The author has applied a suitable set of tools, which allows correct processing of the data, taken down in authentic environment and subsequently to define the correlative structure of the physical development, and of the technical and tactical preparation of the NSA team in the age bracket of 16 to 18 years old.

The work also reveals the average levels and variability of the signs of physical development, physical capability and specific preparedness of adolescent female basketball players.

It also outlines the stress-factors which have impact on the sports realization of the group subjected to examination.

The interest in the applicant's scientific output is also evident from the quotations found in 22 works of authors of monographs and articles.

Notes and recommendations

The achievements of Senior Lecturer Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D., in the pedagogical, research and sports activity fully correspond to the subject of the selection process.

In my opinion, the monographic work would have benefited if instead of reporting common knowledge definitions for technical knacks and tactical activities in basketball, the applicant had turned her attention towards deepening and concrete specifics of their refinement in the age examined age group. In order to follow the sense of correctness, I would like to point out that in my humble opinion in picture 6 on page 47 there is an inaccuracy regarding the demonstration of triple threat.

Conclusion

I consider that the quantity and the quality of the scientific works presented by the applicant Senior Lecturer Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D., combined with her pedagogical practice and activity, correspond entirely to the criteria, requirements and conditions for obtaining the academic position “Docent” in the announced selection process.

On these grounds, I give my **positive assent** and suggest that the esteemed scientific panel propose to the honourable Faculty Council to choose **Senior Lecturer Maria Tsankova Tsankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D.**, for the academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 7.6 Sport, speciality “Sport” (Basketball) for the needs of “Basketball, volleyball, handball” department in NSA “Vassil Levski” - Sofia.

4.08.2023 г.

Author of the statement:

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