

# OPINION

by **Prof. Full Iren Yordanova Peltekova, PhD**

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**About:** competition for the occupation of an academic position "associate professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.6. Sport, Specialty "Sport" (Basketball) for the needs of the department "Basketball, Volleyball, Handball" at the Faculty of Pedagogy at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski", (Sofia).

The competition was announced in the Official Gazette, No 24 of 11.04.2023 r.

**Reason for presenting the opinion:** I participate in the composition of a scientific jury according to Order No ПД 477 of 30.05.2023 of the Rector of the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski"

To participate in the announced competition, the only candidate submitted documents: Chief Assistant **Maria Tzankova Tzankova-Kaloyanova, PhD**

## 1. Application data

The documents presented in the competition from chief assistant Maria Tzankova Tzankova-Kaloyanova, comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for the Implementation of the, and the Rules for the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions in the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski"

According to the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "associate professor" at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski", applicants must provide materials valued at 590 points. In the specific competition, the candidate chief assistant Professor Maria Tsankova-Kaloyanova, PhD participated with scientific production and sports achievements, which earned her 1006 points, with which she covers and repeatedly exceeds the minimum national requirements.

Her monograph "**Aspects of the technical-tactical preparation of adolescent women basketball players**" was checked for plagiarism with the software system Plagiat-Sistem Antiplagiat print Internet SRL and the check did not find any unacceptable limits of plagiarism.

The documents are carefully described and systematized, which greatly facilitates the evaluation of the submitted materials for participation in the competition.

## **2. Data on the candidate, teaching and coaching activities**

Chief Assistant Maria Tzankova Tzankova-Kaloyanova has been a teacher on an employment contract at National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski" since 2018. She developed and successfully defended her doctoral thesis on the topic: "Influence of sports preparation on the competitive performance of adolescent female basketball players". Over the years, she participated in and won competitions for the academic positions of assistant and chief assistant. All educational and scientific-educational diplomas of Maria Tzankova Tzankova-Kaloyanova are related to physical education and sports and sports training in basketball and are therefore in full sync with her participation in this competition.

From the official report on teaching employment, for a period of three years, it is clear that Chief Assistant Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova has the necessary annual teaching and learning workload - an average of 770 teaching hours for the years presented. She conducts practical, seminar exercises and exercises on teaching methodology with students in the OCS "Bachelor". He has additional teaching and academic employment related to the conduct of semester exams, examination of tests, management of coursework, gives consultations, participates as a reviewer of diploma work, is a member of the Expert Council and participates in project activities.

Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova is fluent in English and Spanish, which allows her to work successfully with foreign students on Erasmus+ projects.

After her appointment to the "Basketball, Volleyball and Handball" department, Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova began working with the representative women's basketball and 3x3 basketball team of the NSA "Vasil Levski". As a coach, with the teams she led, she always participated in the final matches for the gold medals in the University Championships. Since 2018, Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova has been registered in the MMS register, and over the years she has progressively occupied the positions of coach, assistant coach and head coach.

The competitive biography of Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova shows that she was a well-established basketball player for youth and women competitions. Participant in six European youth championships with national teams of the Republic of Bulgaria, two-time state champion in women's basketball, three-time medalist of the "Bulgaria" Cup tournament, silver medalist of the European Championship for women under 20, best scorer of the State championship for 2007 and best penalty shooter with the NSA team in the same competition year. During her professional basketball career, she played for both Bulgarian and Spanish basketball club teams.

My personal impressions of Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova I have acquired from her work as the head coach of the university basketball team (women) of the NSA. I can confidently say that she enjoys authority among colleagues and students, very modest,

respectful, quiet and at the same time she stands out with persistence, determination and desire for championship performance of the teams she leads.

### **3. Synthesized evaluation of the scientific works submitted for the competition**

The scientific works of Chief Assistant Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova, PhD are mainly involved in the problems of multi-year sports training in basketball for girls. It concerns painful and still unresolved issues related to both physical, technical-tactical and competitive preparation, as well as psychological preparation, the manifestation of stress and competitive readiness among adolescent female basketball players in our country. The focus of her developments is also the creation of a regulatory framework for the control of training and team competitive performance in girls. Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova does not limit her scientific research only to the basketball preparation for teenagers and girls. Her interests include historical analysis of the men's and women's national teams of Republic of Bulgaria and the competitive performance of these teams and reach the best players from the NBA, USA. Along with narrow basketball issues, the candidate as an academic specialist who works with young people is interested in the "modern" problems of these people related to their immobility and the negative impact of this immobility on their physical and mental health and last but not least in her scientific developments, the phenomenon of Covid-19 with its impact on the effectiveness and quality of practical learning and teaching activities finds a place.

*The articles and reports* submitted for participation in the contest are evaluated with 501 points according to the Ministry of Education, which fully meets the requirements.

The monograph entitled **"Aspects of the technical-tactical preparation of adolescent women basketball players"** was published in 2023, contains 174 standard pages and has been reviewed by two reviewers. The content is organized into five chapters, appendices and bibliography. The monograph is an original author's text with a theoretical, methodical and practical-applied nature. It is a basic work that has a significant contribution character, and the contributions of the work, in my opinion, are concentrated in the fourth and fifth chapters, central to the study, undoubtedly the most informative from a methodological and scientific-research point of view. The fourth chapter "Technical-tactical training in adolescent female basketball players" has a pronounced theoretical-methodological contribution related to the conduct of basketball training, while the fifth chapter "Investigation of technical-tactical training in adolescent female basketball players" has a scientific-research contribution. It presents the results of the variation and correlation analysis of the physical development, physical fitness and technical-tactical training of teenage basketball players. Another main contribution of the monographic work is the clarification of the importance of operational thinking in adolescent basketball players for their successful preparation and the study of the sensitive periods of development. Ignorance of these sensitive periods leads to great disappointments, because coaches demand from adolescent basketball players overwhelming and incomprehensible game decisions for their age.

I like the author's choice to use both Bulgarian and English terminology when presenting basketball technique, tactics and practical exercises. This modernizes the

basketball literature presented by Bulgarian authors, makes these elements of the game more discoverable in the Internet space and more understandable when young coaches participate in international coaching courses where the main language is English. Any author's interpretations of translations into the Bulgarian language often create double terminology for the same movement and this brings confusion to students and less experienced coaches.

The monographic work is readable, written in an understandable and at the same time scientific style, well-illustrated and logically presented. As a specialist, it was a pleasure for me to familiarize myself with the content.

After the analysis of the presented scientific works, it can be summarized that the candidate Chief Associate Professor Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova, PhD participated in the competition with the necessary scientific production in terms of quantity and quality. Publications can be conditionally grouped into three main areas, namely:

- Theory of the preparation of students - specialists in "Basketball"
- Methodology of basketball training for youth athletes
- Forming a healthy generation and leading a healthy lifestyle through sports

The scientific contributions are expressed in updating and expanding knowledge in the following areas: theory and methodology of multi-year training for teenage basketball players; baselines for the influence of sports preparation and competitive performance; specific dependencies between signs of physical development and technical-tactical preparedness in girls; the role of stress and psychological preparation of both athletes and coaches in improving sports performance.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the presented monograph "Aspects of the technical-tactical preparation of adolescent women basketball players", the scientific articles, the project activity, the work with graduates, the participation in scientific forums, the citations, the teaching and coaching activities, the realized scientific researchers are convincing evidence that the candidate Chief Assistant Maria Tzankova-Kaloyanova, PhD, is an established specialist in the academic field; she combines in her scientific growth practical skills, theoretical training, research activity, coaching activity and the quality of education at National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski".

Relying on the above, **I give a positive assessment** to the candidate **Chief Assistant Maria Tzankova Tzankova-Kaloyanova, Ph.D**, to occupy the academic position of "**Associate Professor**" in professional direction 7.6. Sport, Specialty "Sport" (Basketball) and I make a proposal to the members of the scientific jury to make a decision to award it to her.

04 August 2023 г.

Prepared the opinion:

/ Full Prof. Iren Peltekova, PhD/