REVIEW

by Prof. Violeta Dinkova Dirimanova, Agricultural University - Plovdiv

of the materials submitted for participation in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management", scientific specialty "Conflict Management"

In the competition for the academic position of "associate professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 30 of 27.03.2026 and on the website of the University of Agricultural and Rural Development - Plovdiv for the needs of the Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism" in the Department of Economics and Management, **Dr. Neli Nikolova Simeonova-Petrova** participated as a candidate.

1. Brief biographical data

The candidate, Neli Simeonova-Petrova, was born in Karlova and completed her secondary education there. She received her bachelor's degree from the "Paisiy Hilendarski" University, and her master's degrees are in the specialty "Accounting and Analysis" from the "Paisiy Hilendarski" University in 2003 and in the specialty "Health Management" at the University of Applied Sciences, Plovdiv in 2017. In 2025, she obtained a doctoral degree in the professional field 3.7 Administration and Management in the scientific specialty "Health Management" on the topic "Study of Management Methods for Prevention and Resolution of Conflicts between Employees in Healthcare Institutions" at the University of Security and Economics, Plovdiv.

She held the professional non-academic positions of manager at the Hisar Medical Center 2020-2021, and from 2021 until now she has been the director of the College of Health Care and Economics in Sofia.

She is a member of the Bulgarian Academic and Scientific Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology and of the professional organization National Union of Obstetricians and Gynecologists from Prehospital Care focused on the work of AG specialists. The main areas of scientific research are in the field of health management and administration and management.

2. General description of the submitted materials

The candidate doctor Neli Nikolova Simeonova-Petrova participated in the competition with:

- Monographs – 2 issues;
- Reports – 0 issues;
- Articles – 15 issues;
- Studies – 0 issues;
- Books – 0 issues.

The publications can be classified as follows:
By type:

- Studies - 0 issues;
- Articles - 15 issues;
- Reports - 0 issues.

By importance

- Articles in refereed and indexed publications in world databases with - 0 issues.
- Plenary reports - 0 issues.
- Award-winning publications - 0 issues.

By place of publication:

- Articles in refereed international journals - 0 issues.
- Reports in proceedings of international scientific conferences abroad - issues.
- Articles in national journals - 15 issues.
- Reports in proceedings of international scientific conferences in Bulgaria - 0 issues.
- Reports in proceedings of national scientific conferences, sessions and seminars - 0 issues.
- Reports in scientific papers of universities - 0 issues.

By language in which they are written:

- In English - 0 issues;
- In Bulgarian - 15 issues.

By number of co-authors:

- Independent - 15 issues;
- With one co-author - 0 issues;
- With two co-authors - 0 issues;
- With three or more co-authors - 0 issues.

The publications can be classified as follows: two monographs and 15 articles:

- The monographs are "Conflict Management in Healthcare, Prevention and Resolution Strategies" and "Analysis of Management Practices in Conflicts between Medical Personnel" published by "NSAGDP" Publishing House, Sofia, 2026.
- The articles are related to the quality of communication and conflicts in teams in healthcare institutions and ways of managing these conflicts. All articles were published in the journal Modern Medical Science in 2025 in issue 1 - 5 articles, in issue 2 - 5 articles and in issue 3 - 5 articles.

3. Reflection of the candidate's scientific publications in the literature (known citations)

- Total - 13 citations;
- From Bulgarian authors - 13 citations;
- From foreign authors - 0 citations.

The candidate, Neli Simeonova-Petrova, has indicated a total of thirteen citations for participation in the competition. All citations are in the field of health management of articles published in 2023 and 2024 in the journal Modern Medical Science. The total number of citation points is 65.

4. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

4.1. Educational and pedagogical activities

Dr. Neli Simeonova-Petrova has been the director of the College of Health Care and Economics in Sofia since 2021, which gives her the opportunity to participate in educational and pedagogical activities at the college. As a candidate for the academic position of "associate professor", she has significant experience in the field of management and organization of health organizations and their successful leadership. This gives her the opportunity to teach and present real examples from practice when working with students.

4.2. Scientific and applied scientific activities

The scientific activity of Dr. Neli Simeonova-Petrova is evidenced by scientific publications published in a peer-reviewed journal and two monographs. In the competition, Dr. Simeonova-Petrova, as the main habilitation work, is presented with a monograph entitled "Conflict Management in Healthcare, Prevention and Strategies for Resolving NSAGDP", published in 2026. The total volume of the work is 161 pages. The presented monograph provides a systematic analysis of conflicts in healthcare

organizations, examines the types of conflicts and management approaches, and develops an author's model for prevention and management. The work has both theoretical and practical value, which gives me reason to approve the presented habilitation work, required for participation in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" according to the National Regulations for the Implementation of the Act on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The work is structured consistently and logically and includes an introduction, thirteen chapters including theoretical foundations of conflicts, the causes of conflicts in healthcare, the role of leadership, communication and conflict management styles, as well as prevention and methods for resolving conflicts in healthcare organizations, empirical research and ends with a summary, conclusions and recommendations. The study combines theoretical analysis and practical focus, which makes it essential for both the academic community and healthcare management practitioners.

The candidate has also submitted a second additional monograph for review entitled "Analysis of management practices in conflicts between medical personnel", also published in 2026. This monograph analyzes real management practices in conflicts among medical personnel. The approaches and strategies for personnel management in healthcare organizations are studied. Good practices and deficits are also identified. Models for improvement are proposed. The work contributes to the applied aspect of management.

4.3. Contributions (scientific, scientifically applied, applied)

The contributions of the publications presented are both theoretical and practical and are focused on the methods of conflict management in healthcare organizations. They were evaluated in terms of their scientific novelty, applicability and degree of confirmation of existing scientific publications.

Dr. Neli Simeonova-Petrova has submitted a report in which she makes a self-assessment of the originality and structure of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions in her publication activity. Based on the scientific publications presented in the competition, I define the following contributions:

- In terms of original scientific contributions, the main contribution is the development of an author's conceptual framework for conflict management in healthcare. It integrates the specifics of medical activity, organizational hierarchy and intensive interaction between different professional groups. This is an attempt to adapt the general principles of conflict management to the specifics of the healthcare system, which enriches existing scientific knowledge.

- A significant contribution is also the proposed integrated model, which considers communication, conflicts and organizational effectiveness as interconnected elements of a single management system. The model builds on traditional approaches by offering a comprehensive view of the factors influencing the functioning of healthcare organizations.
- The development of methodological tools for assessing communication processes, conflicts and management practices has scientific and applied value. The created tools can be used both in future scientific research and in diagnosing the organizational environment in healthcare institutions.
- A significant contribution is the adaptation of the concept of diversity management to the conditions of the Bulgarian healthcare system. Although the concept is well known in international literature, its application in the context of Bulgarian healthcare expands the possibilities for its use as a means of limiting organizational conflicts and improving teamwork.
- The proposed management solutions for conflict prevention, improvement of intra-organizational communication and management of different teams have a clearly expressed practical focus. They create prerequisites for improving management processes and the quality of the organizational environment in healthcare organizations.

The confirmatory contributions are based on the conducted empirical research and complement the theoretical results. Through an analysis of the collected data, statistical dependencies between the quality of communication, the frequency of conflicts, organizational climate, staff turnover and the quality of medical services have been established. In this way, established statements in the theory of organizational behavior and health management are confirmed.

Of particular importance is the empirical validation of the influence of management practices on limiting organizational conflicts and on improving the organizational climate. The results confirm that effective leadership and good internal communication are among the main prerequisites for increasing the effectiveness of healthcare organizations.

In general, the contributions are distinguished by good logical consistency and a clear distinction between theoretical and applied scientific results. The strongest aspect of the candidate's published work is the integration of communication, conflict management and organizational effectiveness into a single conceptual framework, supported by empirical evidence. This gives the research both scientific value and high practical applicability for the management of healthcare organizations. In summary, it can be concluded that

the contributions are relevant, possess scientific novelty in the field of conflict management in healthcare and have the potential for practical application in improving management processes in healthcare organizations.

5. Assessment of the candidate's personal contribution

From the submitted reference for scientific contributions and a list of published articles in which Dr. Neli Simeonova-Petrova is the sole author, it can be concluded that:

- The candidate demonstrates a clearly expressed scientific research potential, possessing the necessary knowledge, competencies and methodological preparation to independently conduct in-depth, reasoned and scientifically based research in the field of health management
- The scientific publications have established expertise and in-depth knowledge in the field of health management, which create a solid foundation for both the effective transfer of scientific knowledge to practice, as well as for successful teaching and scientific-supervisory activities in the training of students and doctoral students.

6. Critical notes

I do not personally know Dr. Neli Simeonova-Petrova, a candidate for the academic position of "associate professor" at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts - Plovdiv. Based on the documents submitted for participation in the competition, I have gained a clear idea of her professional and scientific research activities. They convincingly show that Dr. Simeonova-Petrova is a researcher with consistent scientific interests, high professional motivation and in-depth knowledge in the field of health management. The scientific works presented are distinguished by the relevance of the issues under consideration, methodological consistency and practical focus, and the results obtained and the formulated scientific contributions have undeniable scientific and applied value.

Regardless of the high scientific level and the significance of the presented monographic works and scientific publications, some recommendations can be made with a view to the future development of the candidate's scientific research activities. It is recommended that the empirical basis be expanded in subsequent studies by including a wider range of quantitative analyses, comparative studies and practical cases. This would contribute to increasing the evidentiary value of the conclusions drawn and would expand the possibilities for their practical application. At the same time, it is desirable for some of the future scientific results to be published in prestigious international

scientific journals, indexed in globally recognized databases and with an impact factor, which would increase the international visibility and scientific impact of the research.

7. Conclusion:

Considering the above, I propose **that Doctor Neli Nikolova Simeonova-Petrova be elected as an "associate professor"** in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", professional field professional field 3.7. "Administration and management", scientific specialty "Conflict management" for the needs of the Department of "Regional Development, Agribusiness and Tourism" in the Department of Economics and Management.

30.06.2026 Jury member:

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