

## REVIEW

**By Prof. Sevdzhihan Ahmedova Eyubova PhD,**

Professor in The Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences,  
Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology (Child and Adolescent Developmental Psychology)  
**Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen**

on scientific works for participation in a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor,  
in The Field of Higher Education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences,  
Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology, announced in the State Gazette, No. 41 / 10.05.2024,

**with candidate Senior Assist. Prof. Nadia Hristova Koltcheva, PhD, New Bulgarian University**



The competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology was announced by New Bulgarian University in the State Gazette issue No. 41/10.05.2024.

This review was assigned by a decision of the Scientific Jury, appointed by Order No. Z-RK-270/28.06.2024 of the Rector of NBU.

The sole candidate in the competition is Senior Assist. Prof. Nadia Hristova Koltcheva from New Bulgarian University. The submitted documents meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the academic position of "Associate Professor."

### **Information about the candidate**

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva is a highly qualified psychologist with solid academic training and professional experience in the field of psychology. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 2000 and continued with a master's degree, as well as specializations in clinical and counseling psychology, and developmental psychology. In 2006, she obtained the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in General Psychology. Additionally, she completed a master's degree in Human Resource Management and Development at NBU in 2008. Since the same year, she has been a registered psychologist and a member of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA). Dr. Nadya Kolcheva has undertaken numerous specializations, including at the University of Southampton and Erasmus University in Rotterdam. Her professional experience includes the position of Senior Assistant Professor in the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology at New Bulgarian University, where she has been working since 2009. Since 2021, she has also been the lead researcher at the Lachezar Tsotsorkov Foundation, where she develops tools for assessing children's social and emotional skills. She is also a member of the research team at the Center for the Study of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection at the University of Connecticut, USA. Dr. Kolcheva has participated in numerous national and international projects, including as an expert on early childhood development for UNICEF Bulgaria.

Her main research interests focus on the social and emotional development of children in early and preschool age. She examines the influence of parental behavior on the psychological adjustment of children and adults. Her research is centered on interpersonal acceptance and rejection, as well as sensitivity to rejection and its long-term consequences.

The educational profile and accumulated professional experience of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva in the higher education system as a lecturer, leader, and participant in research projects are in line with the requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.2. Psychology, in accordance with Article 60, Paragraph 1, Items 1 and 2 of the Regulations for the Application of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.



## **I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University**

The report on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva for the academic position of Associate Professor, according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB, and the requirements in Appendix No. 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at NBU, presents the following evidence:

**Group A. Indicator 1:** Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva holds a Ph.D. in the professional field of 3.2. Psychology, specializing in General Psychology.

**Group B. Indicator 3:** Habilitation work – monograph: *Kolcheva, N. (2023). Significant Others in Human Life. Sofia: New Bulgarian University Publishing House. ISBN 978-619-233-281-5*

**Group C:** The scientific output presented for review in this group of indicators includes 33 publications, consisting of:

- 2 articles and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific databases, one of which is co-authored;
- 5 published chapters from a collective monograph, 2 of which are co-authored;
- 3 solo studies published in non-referenced journals with scientific peer review or in edited collective volumes;
- 23 articles and reports published in non-referenced journals with scientific peer review or in edited collective volumes, 16 of which are solo publications, and 7 are co-authored.

The evidence presented in this group exceeds the minimum required points.

**Group D:** Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva presents 20 citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned scientific databases, or in monographs and collective volumes, as well as in non-referenced journals with scientific peer review. The evidence presented in this group of indicators exceeds the minimum required points.

**Group E:** This group of indicators includes evidence of participation in international and national scientific and/or educational projects, with Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva serving as the leader in two of the international projects.

In the indicators under Groups F, G, and H, Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva meets the requirements according to Appendix No. 2 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at NBU.

**There is clear compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of New Bulgarian University for the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology.**



## **II. Research activity and results**

1. *Evaluation of the monographic work, including evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the author.*

The presented monograph: *Kolcheva, N. (2023). Significant Others in Human Life. Sofia: New Bulgarian University Publishing House. ISBN 978-619-233-281-5*, contains all the requirements for a scientific work according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The monograph "Significant Others in Human Life" by Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva represents a significant scientific contribution to the field of psychology and the study of interpersonal relationships. The work stands out for its substantial scientific and applied value, providing an in-depth analysis of human relationships through the lens of the Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory). For the first time in the scientific literature, the development of relationships with significant others is systematized and traced across different stages of an individual's life—from childhood to adulthood. The monograph includes an analysis of numerous studies conducted in over 60 countries, as well as original research by Senior Assist. Prof. Dr. Nadya Kolcheva, which verifies the main tenets of IPARTheory in the Bulgarian context. The applied contributions of the work include the translation and adaptation of 10 questionnaires and scales for Bulgarian conditions, which are valuable resources for both researchers and practitioners. The monograph expands the theoretical foundation of IPARTheory by introducing a new tool for assessing interpersonal acceptance-rejection in an organizational context, which has been piloted and validated, offering opportunities for future international research. The monograph presented by Dr. Nadya Kolcheva has practical applicability in clinical and counseling practice, the educational system, parenting programs, courts, and other institutions, further emphasizing the significance of her scientific contributions.

2. *Evaluation of the contributions in the other attached publications made after the appointment of the academic position "associate professor".*

The total number of publications submitted by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva for participation in the current competition is 33. A wide range of topics within the field of psychology is covered, with the main areas including psychological assessment and diagnosis in early childhood, the influence of parenting styles on child development, social and emotional development in early childhood, and the adaptation and standardization of psychometric instruments for the Bulgarian context. These publications make significant contributions both to research and to practical areas related to early diagnosis, intervention, and the education of children. An important aspect of the applied contributions by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Kolcheva is the development and adaptation of an early childhood development assessment battery, providing validated tools for use in the Bulgarian context. The published chapters in collective monographs reflect Dr. Kolcheva's work on the standardization of screening tests and assessment instruments aimed at the social and emotional development of young children. These works are part of larger projects, such as EU-SELF, which significantly contribute to the development of European standards for early childhood assessment and development. The contributions formulated by Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva reflect tangible results that I fully endorse.



*3. Citation by other authors.*

The scientific achievements of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva are reflected in 20 citations in refereed and indexed publications in world-renowned databases, in monographs and collective volumes, as well as in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review.

*4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research and creative projects and application of the obtained results in practice.*

Dr. Nadya Kolcheva has significant experience in participating in and leading research and creative projects that have led to important scientific and practical achievements. One of her key contributions is within the framework of the Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory), where she has developed and adapted a number of questionnaires and scales for the Bulgarian context, which are valuable for both scientific research and practical use in clinical and counseling practice, the educational system, and other institutions. These instruments have proven their reliability and validity in various research projects and are applicable for assessing relationships in family, school, and organizational settings. The results of Dr. Kolcheva's research related to the perception of interpersonal acceptance or rejection show significant correlations with psychological adjustment in both children and adults, which is crucial for understanding the social and emotional aspects of human development.

Her work on the standardization and adaptation of tools for assessing child development in Bulgaria has been implemented in various educational and health practices, thereby providing support for young children and their families.

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Kolcheva's participation in various research projects has made a significant contribution to both academic science and practical applications in the field of psychology, through the development of new tools, their adaptation, and their implementation in different social contexts. These achievements have a direct impact on the quality of life of the communities with which she works.

### **III. Teaching and lecturing activities**

*1. Auditory and non-auditory employment, work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", provision of student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students.*

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva's teaching activities are carried out in the bachelor's and master's programs in "Psychology," including courses taught in English. Among the courses she teaches are PSYB008 Developmental Psychology, PSYB143 Project: Development in Childhood and School Age, and PSYB999 Project: Research Design in Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, or Developmental Psychology. She has arranged student internships and placements through agreements with various educational institutions, associations, and professional organizations in the fields of human resources and psychological research.

She supports the participation of students from the bachelor's and master's programs in research projects and encourages their involvement in scientific forums and the preparation of publications. Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva also serves as a supervisor for the development of bachelor's and master's theses and acts as a reviewer. Additionally, she participates in the examination committees for state exams.



2. *Work with Erasmus students.*

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva has supported the participation of NBU students in Erasmus projects and mobilities carried out in Italy and Hungary.

3. *Student survey ratings.*

The average rating from student surveys over the last ten semesters is "Very Good" 4.32 (out of a maximum of 5.00), according to the information provided by the Center for Quality Assurance and Evaluation at NBU.

#### **IV. Administrative and public activity**

1. *Participation in NBU management structures.*

In Dr. Nadya Kolcheva's CV, there is no direct information regarding participation in collective governance bodies at New Bulgarian University (NBU). However, during the period 2010-2011, she served as the Director of the Bachelor's Program in Psychology at NBU, and she is currently the coordinator of the Test Library at the university (<https://kognitivna-nauka-i-psihologija.nbu.bg/bg/testoteka>).

2. *Public activity.*

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva has delivered public lectures on behalf of NBU and by invitation from the University Institute of Maia, Portugal. She has participated in UNICEF's work as an expert on the Early Childhood Development program.

Dr. Kolcheva has initiated and organized scientific events, such as the National Conference on Early Childhood Development at NBU, round tables, and thematic meetings to promote the professional activities of psychologists.

She is a regular member of the Bulgarian Psychological Society and the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA). Additionally, she serves as the President of the International Society of Interpersonal Acceptance and Rejection.

3. *Attracting students to the program.*

- Senior Assist. Prof. Nadya Kolcheva Ph.D., created opportunities for student participation in the international project "STEAM - Skills Development in Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe" (2021-2023) under the Erasmus+ program (KA220-HED - Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education). The inclusion of students in this international project aimed to provide them with practical experience and to develop their creative and critical thinking skills. The project emphasizes the promotion of creativity and digital competencies from early childhood education, while also giving students the opportunity to learn about best practices and educational approaches from six different European countries.
- She involved students in an international research project between the Center for Primary Health Care Research (CPF), Lund University, and NBU (2015-2019).

#### **V. Personal impressions of the candidate**

I have direct observations of Dr. Nadya Kolcheva's professional activities, and she is a well-established and respected expert in the professional and academic circles of psychologists,



both in Bulgaria and internationally. She is a distinguished lecturer, educator, and researcher, possessing remarkable organizational skills and exceptional work ethic, as evidenced by her successfully implemented national and international projects, numerous scientific publications, and the development of educational materials and resources for students and practitioners.

## **VI. Opinions, recommendations, and notes on the applicant's work and achievements**

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva stands out with her deep knowledge and significant contributions to scientific research, particularly in the field of interpersonal relationships and psychometric assessment. She impresses with her mentorship of students and junior researchers, creating opportunities for their active participation in international projects. She has developed numerous educational resources, including modern and electronic materials, freely accessible podcasts, websites, and Moodle courses, both for students and practitioners in Bulgaria and abroad. Dr. Kolcheva demonstrates exceptional ability in adapting and implementing international scientific tools within the Bulgarian context, as well as in developing new methods and instruments.

Considering the above points in this review, I draw the following conclusions:

The candidacy of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva meets the minimum national requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology, in accordance with the Appendix to Article 1a, Paragraph 1 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. She presents for review a body of scientific work with significant scientific and practical contributions. Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Kolcheva is recognized as a scholar, expert, and educator both in Bulgaria and internationally. All of this provides a solid basis for my positive assessment of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Nadya Hristova Kolcheva as a candidate for the academic position of "Associate Professor."

**In this regard, I recommend that the Scientific Jury, following the procedure adopted at New Bulgarian University, propose the appointment of Senior Assist. Prof. Nadia Hristova Koltcheva to the academic position of 'Associate Professor' in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology.**

22/08/2024

Signed by:

**Prof. Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD**