

S T A T E M E N T

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Penka Hristova,

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regarding the submitted materials for participation in a promotion procedure for the academic position of associate professor in professional area 3.2 Psychology,

announced in the "State Gazette", no. 41 of 10.05.2024

with candidate Dr. Nadia Hristova Koltcheva

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

Dr. Nadia Koltcheva meets and exceeds the minimal national requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 3.2. Psychology, as formulated in the Regulations for application of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), as well as the requirements of New Bulgarian University.

Dr. Koltcheva's publications are 78% and their citations - are 290% more than those required in 3.2. Psychology. There are 2 national and 3 international research projects reported with zero projects required for the position, and twice as many points on the additional NBU criteria (from the criteria groups G, H and I in the candidate's report).

II. Research activity and results

Dr. Nadia Koltcheva participates in the promotion procedure for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field 3.2. Psychology with one monograph and 33 publications, including 2 articles in journals indexed in Web of Science, 23 articles and 3 extensive studies published in non-peer-reviewed journals and 5 chapters of collective monographs.

Dr. Nadia Koltcheva's research focuses on understanding the relationship between parents and their children within the framework of Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory). Chapter 3 of the monograph "Significant Others in Human Life" (NBU Press, 2023) outlines the main differences between interpersonal acceptance-rejection theory and attachment theory. Some of them are empirically verified, and the respective research is presented in the subsequent chapters (chapters 4 to 7) of the monograph and 7 of the publications for the current promotion procedure. A vast battery of questionnaires (10 in total) developed within IPARTheory have been adapted into Bulgarian. In this manner, the theory has been tested in a Bulgarian sample, and the studies can be compared with those in over 70 languages. This is an indisputable contribution of Dr. Koltcheva's research work. Her research with adapted IPARTheory instruments confirms the correlation between perceived parental acceptance-rejection and psychological adjustment in both childhood and adulthood.

In addition, some interesting differences from research in other cultures are found related to specific dynamics in the rejection by parents (father/mother) and psychological adjustment of participants in early and middle adulthood, as well as between perceived teacher acceptance-rejection/control, grade point average, and student behavior. Within IPARTheory, this dynamic may be related to development or culture, but since Dr. Koltcheva's research is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, it is difficult to draw a firm conclusion. In any case, these data are consistent with the predictions of IPARTheory, but not with attachment theory, which must be modified to account for them. In this sense, the observed dynamics of acceptance-rejection correlations and self-reported psychological adjustment make a theoretical contribution to understanding the role of significant others in human life and would benefit from being described and published to be referenced by academics from abroad.

Among Dr. Koltcheva's other contributions is the work on the development, adaptation and standardization of child development assessment tools as well as research on training and career development of PhD students and young scientists in Europe. Dr Koltcheva's active project work is noteworthy. She reports 5 projects under this promotion procedure, including two international ones as a principal investigator.

All citations (20 in total) are in peer-reviewed journals, 5 of which are indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. Her most cited publications are related to the development, adaptation and standardization of questionnaires for child development assessment, which indicates the need for such instruments in Bulgaria and the practical application of Dr. Koltcheva's work.

III. Teaching activity

Dr. Koltcheva's auditorium and practice hours in NBU are impressively numerous. She has teaching experience also in universities abroad within international academic exchange programs. She teaches courses related to Child Development and Educational Psychology to psychologists and non-psychologists at NBU. Some of her courses are in the undergraduate Psychology program (in English), in which Erasmus students are enrolled too. The average student satisfaction with her courses is high.

Dr. Koltcheva actively works with students by involving them in her research work and research projects. Eight of the presentations at national and international forums were co-authored with students, and the number of successful undergraduate and graduate students under her research supervision is 19. Several student internship contracts have been established with her assistance.

IV. Administrative and public activity

Dr. Koltcheva reports active administrative and public activities alongside her extensive teaching and research activities.

She has been the Vice President of Eurodoc for one year, the Director of the BS Psychology at the NBU for 4 academic years, the Coordinator of the Test Library at the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology and a trainer at the NBU Learning Resources Center. She participated in organizing the first national conference "Early Childhood Development: Science and Practice" in September 2016 at NBU, which brings together scientists and

professionals in early childhood development until now. In 2015, she initiated and organized on her own until 2021 the monthly meetings of the seminar "Profession of Psychologist" for students in the programs of the Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology of the NBU.

V. Personal impressions of the candidate

I have known Dr. Koltcheva as a colleague with whom I have shared an office for several years. Her active work with students as a lecturer and supervisor is impressive. She is looking for and involved in her research and applied projects members of different NBU departments and from the NGO sector. The projects she is involved in are related to social issues, such as working with children and adults with special needs, inclusive education, social and emotional skills development, etc.

VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate

Dr. Koltcheva's contributions to scientific research are visible in her monograph for this promotion procedure, and her teaching and public activities are impressive in their scope. I have no substantial comments on the materials, and I have expressed my assessment of the candidate's accomplishments in previous sections.

In conclusion, Dr. Nadia Koltcheva exceeds the minimum national and NBU requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor in the professional field 3.2. Psychology. Based on this and her achievements in research, teaching and public work, I strongly recommend that Dr. Koltcheva be admitted to election by the Academic Council and elected as Associate Professor of Psychology at NBU.

Date: 5/08/2024

Signed:

Assoc. prof. ГЕНКА ГИГИОВА, PhD