

Opinion

By Prof. Stefan Mateeff Mateeff, Dr. Sci. New Bulgarian University, Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, for participation in a competition for the academic position of associate professor, in professional field 3.2 Psychology, announced in SG No. 5/16.01.2024, with candidate assistant professor Dr. Evgenia Hristova.

Hristova submitted for the competition a complete set of the necessary materials - monograph, lists and texts of works, etc., as well as the tables that are required by ZRASRB and the NBU. She applied to the competition with her monograph "Life vs. Life: Moral Dilemmas in Allocation of Limited Medical Resources"

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

Hristova presents for the competition a complete set of the necessary materials - monograph, lists and texts of works, etc., as well as the references that are required by ZRASRB and the NBU. From them, it is clear that she meets and significantly exceeds the minimum national requirements under the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (groups of indicators A to E) for holding the position of associate professor. In groups G to I are the additional requirements of the NBU, which Hristova also covers. In conclusion, the scientometric reference shows that Dr. Evgenia Hristova meets and exceeds both the national requirements and the requirements of the NBU for the academic position of associate professor in the professional field 3.2 Psychology.

II.1. Evaluation of the monographic work,

In the monograph, Hristova introduces the concept of ethical dilemma and points out that the choice of a given alternative in the presence of a dilemma situation is closely related to the attribution of utility to the alternative. This theme has been developed extremely professionally. It shows Hristova's long-term experience in research (theoretical and experimental) of cognitive processes in humans when making a decision in favor of one or another alternative.

Hristova presents detailed information on the ways (standards and practices) in which the problems that arise in ethical dilemmas in medical care around the world are solved. At the heart of medical triage rules are formulated allocation rules based on the principles of utility maximization (utilitarianism), equality and priority for the most needy (egalitarianism). Hristova points out their advantages and disadvantages, presenting a competent analysis of these principles.

A large part of the book is devoted to Hristova's research efforts. The text is presented in a good academic style. We find an overview of the literature and results from different authors, formulation of the research objectives, the methods used and the results. In four different experiments, research participants were presented with ethical issues from real medical practice. They must choose (with forced choice) or rate (with Likert scales) their preferences for proposed alternatives. The studies represent a snapshot of the attitudes of the Bulgarian population towards the ethical principles that are formulated in the experiments. In summary, the results show that the majority of participants shared the utilitarian approach (maximizing the benefit of treatment), but a preference was found, albeit weaker, for the egalitarian approach (such as first-come, first-served). Service randomization is too weakly supported.

In conclusion, this is a very good book. The presentation is clear, competent and very informative. It shows Hristova's professionalism in scientific research. All necessary concepts are properly defined;

reasoning is supported by many examples. This makes the book valuable not only for specialists, but also for a wide range of readers. The text is an undisputed and up-to-date contribution to the psychology of decision-making.

II. 2-4

In her self-assessment, Hristova presents 16 publications published after 2007, indexed in Scopus or WoS. Another 9 works were published in collective editions. Hristova focused on the interesting and important issue of how people make decisions and make choices in conditions of various dilemmas. One of them is the "Trolley Dilemma". Moral judgments and the effects of various factors on utilitarian choices are explored. Another dilemma is the "Prisoner's Dilemma". A successful decision-making model for this dilemma is established, and ingenious manipulations of dilemma parameters and player roles are presented that lead to changes in gameplay and the level of cooperation.

Hristova did not limit herself to the registration of the decisions made by the subjects in the experiments. She applied psychophysiological approaches in the study of attention and affective processes in the participants of the experiments. She widely applies parallel registration of eye movements and also of skin conductance changes. She is the "pioneer" of eye movement research in the department. In this way, perception and evaluation of works of art, reading in children with dyslexia were studied.

The results of these studies have been cited 22 times in the literature, which provides a good visibility in the scientific community.

III.

Hristova teaches courses in the bachelor's program in Bulgarian and in English. She leads courses in the Cognitive Science master's program in English. She is very active in supervising bachelor's and master's theses - about 26 pieces after her election and for assistant professor. Names of her students appear in out-of-print publications. Takes an active part in organizing conferences on behalf of the DKNP. In the last 5 years, she has given invited lectures at universities in Poland, Austria and Serbia. He is a member of the Cognitive Science Society.

Hristova is seriously engaged in the practical application of the knowledge and experience obtained from her scientific activity. She is one of the leading trainers in seminars on augmentative and alternative communication for people with mobility limitations. Here I also note purely applied activities, such as contracts (on behalf of the NBU) for expert evaluations of the usability of websites of external users.

IV-V

In addition to the usual teaching and scientific activities, Hristova also performs a large amount of administrative duties. She has been Director and Consultant of the Cognitive Science Master's Program, Director of the Neuroscience Laboratory, and also Director of the Decision and Behavior Research Laboratory.

I know Evgenia Hristova for more than 20 years. She is a highly qualified and responsive colleague. She is an established teacher and scientist - a specialist in experimental psychology, in particular decision-making, consumer behavior and usability, successfully applying psychophysiological indicators.

In conclusion, the candidacy of assistant professor Dr. Evgenia Hristova meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff and the Regulations for its Application, as well as

the requirements of the New Bulgarian University. She is an extremely suitable candidate for the position announced in this competition. I strongly recommend the members of the Scientific Jury and the honorable Academic Council of the New Bulgarian University to elect her to the academic position of "associate professor".

06.05.2024

Reviewer:

Prof. Stefan Mateeff