

## OPINION

by **Dr. Doncho Stoyanov Donev - Associate Professor at Burgas Free University**

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

by: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.2.

Psychology, Doctoral Program "Social Psychology"

**Author:** *Teodora Silvestrova Medneva*

**Topic:** *BURNOUT SYNDROME IN PERSONS IN FREELANCING: FACTORS, DIAGNOSIS AND PREVENTION OF PROFESSIONAL DISTRESS*

**Research supervisor:** *assoc. prof. Dr. Yuriy Yanakiev - Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski"*

### **1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student**

This statement was prepared in connection with order No. PD-21-2309 of 4.12.2023 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" and the decision of the Scientific Jury appointed with it to conduct a procedure for the defense of a dissertation work.

The set of materials presented by Teodora Silvestrova Medneva is in accordance with Article 36 (1) of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the PU. The opinion was prepared on the basis of:

resume;

dissertation work;

tutor;

4 scientific articles;

list of scientific production;

certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements

Teodora Medneva's enrollment in the PhD program "Social Psychology" and her choice of dissertation topic reflect her desire to upgrade her professional skills and competencies. From his first higher education, he acquired the qualification of engineer-technologist. Within the next 17 years, Teodora Medneva completed two master's degrees - Finance and Bank Management at Technical University - Gabrovo and Human Resources Management at Plovdiv University "Paisiy

Hilendarski". For five years, with some breaks, he held the position of expert in human resources management at Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski". He is currently head of department at the same university.

## **2. Relevance of the topic**

Research interest in burnout syndrome has traditionally been high. There are many theoretical and practical developments on the subject, which emphasizes its importance. Projections of professional burnout can be found not only in work and organizational psychology. The problem is significant for management theory, labor efficiency and productivity, and from there it connects to economics and health care. In the dissertation work, professional distress is examined in its multifaceted nature, essentially being placed in a clearly defined context - freelancing. This sets the research field of the development. The assigned tasks determine specific labor and socio-psychological factors as correlates of the burnout syndrome. Solving the set tasks would undoubtedly contribute to a better understanding and handling of this phenomenon, significant for science and practice.

## **3. Knowing the problem**

The theoretical analysis of the considered constructs is thorough and consistent. Introducing the concept of the gig economy and freelancing concretizes the research context, clearly delineating the research field. Theoretical statements about the nature and mechanisms of the burnout syndrome are discussed in detail. Various established models for its study are also presented. A critical analysis of the manifestations and factors provoking occupational stress and occupational burnout syndrome was performed. Resilience is constituted as a counterpoint and resistance to occupational stress. It is described in a theoretical and practical-applied aspect. The text of the theoretical analysis is distinguished by a clear and justified author's position.

## **4. Research methodology**

The concept of empirical research is clear, specific and coherently stated. The research objective and tasks fully correspond to the stated title. The stated research questions bring further specificity to the concept. 3 main hypotheses with a total of 10 sub-hypotheses, which are relevant to the formulated research tasks, have been raised. The diagnostic toolkit has the potential to assess the studied constructs and is suitable for the indicated target group. The proposed statistical-mathematical methods are relevant to the research objective and are suitable for testing the raised research hypotheses. Impressive is the extremely large group of people studied - 1231, with the

data collected from 1183 of them participating in the analysis. The analysis of the obtained data was carried out in a precise manner, and their interpretation was thorough and entirely in the context of the research concept.

### **5. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions**

The dissertation is structured in four chapters. The first chapter examines theoretical statements directly related to the constructs - the object of the empirical study. Previous scientific experience in their research is also analytically presented. The second chapter logically continues the exposition by describing the concept, methods and methodology of the research. In the third chapter, the empirical data corresponding to the operationalized constructs and the concept are presented and precisely analyzed. Based on the performed theoretical and empirical analysis, in the fourth chapter options for prevention and intervention of the burnout syndrome are proposed.

I believe that the contributions formulated in the dissertation work are clearly formulated and fully realized within the presented research. This gives grounds for the dissertation work to be considered author's.

### **6. Evaluation of the publications and personal contribution of the doctoral student**

The procedure presents 4 articles published in peer-reviewed publications in the period 2020 - 2022. Of them, three are with the sole author Teodora Medneva and one is co-authored. The publications are on the subject of the dissertation work.

### **7. Abstract**

The abstract accurately reflects the dissertation in terms of structure and content. It covers the main significant moments and results of the conducted research.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the materials presented in the present procedure, it is clear that the doctoral student has in-depth knowledge of the subject of the dissertation, as well as the necessary skills for theoretical and empirical analysis.

Scientific, scientific-applied and applied results are available, which represent an original contribution to science and meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation at PU "Paisiy Hilendarski".

I believe that all the necessary conditions have been met - on this basis I give my positive assessment - and I propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Teodora Silvestrova a Copper

educational and scientific degree Doctor in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences professional direction 3.2. Psychology (Social Psychology).

14.01.2024

Assoc. Prof Dr. Doncho Donev