

## REVIEW

By Prof. Margarita Angelova Stefanova-Bakracheva, PhD

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

For awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”

In the scientific area 3.2. Psychology

Doctoral programme Pedagogical and Developmental Psychology

**Author:** Magdalena Milkova Gereva

**Title:** Creative motivation, flourishing and psychological types in adults with occupation in the field of arts and culture

**PhD supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Kirilka Tagareva, PhD

### 1. General description of the submitted materials

By order № PД21-2132 as of 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for providing a procedure for the defense of a dissertation on the topic **Creative motivation, flourishing and psychological types in adults with occupation in the field of arts and culture** for awarding the educational and scientific degree “doctor” in the field of higher education 3. social, economic and legal sciences, professional field, scientific area 3.2. Psychology, doctoral programme Pedagogical and developmental psychology.

The author of the dissertation is Magdalena Milkova Gereva - a part-time doctoral student at the Department of Psychology with PhD supervisor Assoc. Prof. Kirilka Tagareva, PhD from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The set of materials, provided by Magdalena Milkova Gereva, are in accordance with Section 36 (1) of the Rulebook for development of the academic staff of Plovdiv university and they include the following documents:

- a request to the Rector of the university for disclosure of the procedure for defense of the dissertation;
- autobiography;
- protocol from the department council, related to readiness to disclosure of the procedure and preliminary discussion of the dissertation;
- dissertation;
- abstract of the dissertation;
- a list of the articles related to the topic of the dissertation;
- copies of the articles;
- a list of citations;
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the documents.

### 2. Brief biographical data about the doctoral student

According to the attached biographical data, Magdalena Gereva is fluent in Russian and English. She graduated from Ivan Vazov High School with foreign

languages - Plovdiv. In 1990 she graduated from the Master's Degree in Psychology at the Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, the title of her master thesis is *Changes in the value system and social perceptions of students*. In 2012 she graduated from the Master's Program in Management of Security and Defense of the Military Academy "G. C. Rakovski. The title of her master thesis is: *Multicultural Identity - a Factor for Public Security*. Since 2018 she is a part-time PhD student at Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. For the period 2005 - 2012 she completed training in Positive Psychotherapy at the Bulgarian Society of Positive Psychotherapy, two specializations - in military psychology and psychological operations at the Military Academy G. S. Rakovski. She has also completed postgraduate studies in Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy of Depression. Since 1991 she has been working at the Institute of Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, as an expert and expert psychologist mainly in the field of human resource management, and currently as a chief expert in the Department of Culture, Archaeology and Cultural Heritage of the municipality of Plovdiv. The enclosed biographical reference shows the extremely rich experience of Magdalena Gereva as an expert in the social sphere and specifically in the field of culture and art in recent years, which is also linked to her research interest.

### **3. Relevance of the topic and appropriateness of the objectives and tasks**

The dissertation is within the broad perspective of optimal functioning, well-being, and self-realization. The doctoral student is addressing creativity as a path to flourishing in individual and social aspect in the paradigm of positive psychology. She expands the under-researched questions of the relationship between psychological type and creative attitude and flourishing and between creative motivation and flourishing.

The topic of creative motivation in relation to flourishing and personal disposition is highly relevant in the general paradigm of optimal development and functioning throughout the life cycle and the unfolding of personal potential, and is in the line of psychological well-being as prevention and transcending the concept of mental and general health, especially in a period of living in crisis. It has direct implications in a scientific-applied aspect and allows for development in research, academic setting, and counseling. The doctoral student integrates different research perspectives and outlines new possibilities and directions for further work in the domain.

Magdalena Gereva identifies the intersections in psychological approaches, clearly focuses her research and makes a sound statement of the subject, object and aim of the dissertation. The relevance the research is also highlighted by the choice of the age group addressed. The applied value of the chosen topic is also undeniable.

#### **4. Knowledge of the topic**

Magdalena Gereva covers an extremely broad field, succeeding to systematize and present in a meaningful and analytical manner the rich body of research. She skillfully outlines in a comparative perspective the approaches to the research of motivation and creative attitude, well-being, age-related personality development and psychological types. Also noteworthy is the very broad culture of the doctoral student, exceeding the field of psychology. Magdalena Gereva demonstrates an extremely thorough knowledge of the topic and the ability to work precisely with scientific literature. The dissertation is written in a very high academic style, with clear expression and excellent logical and content structure.

Outlining the creative attitude in relation to self-actualization and conceptualizing the creative impulse at the core of personal development, the doctoral student comes up with her own formulation of creativity as a multi-dimensional phenomenon.

#### **5. Research methods**

The research methods are accurately selected for the set research aim. Three instruments, adapted for Bulgaria, are included: the Meyers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (126 items), the Paul Torrance's Creative Motivation Scale (18 items) and the Ed Diener's Flourishing Scale (8 items), which the doctoral student considers as a general measure with two sub-dimensions - individual and social flourishing.

#### **6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation**

The dissertation covers 235 pages and is structured in the classic three chapters: theoretical, research design and results with introduction, conclusion, references and appendices. The results are illustrated with 62 tables, 12 figures and 16 diagrams. The references include a total of 171 sources, 46 in Cyrillic and 125 in Latin. It is worth noting the use of classical references, as well as rich body of new research and the inclusion of research on the subject conducted in Bulgaria.

In Chapter One the paragraphs are related to the three constructs, considered by the author. The doctoral student traces the development of the research and highlights the main points, building her research framework in a clear, focused and comprehensive manner.

Magdalena Gereva examines creativity and creative motivation from a comparative perspective, tracing the relationship to the meaning of life, happiness, well-being, self-fulfilment, interpersonal relationships, social recognition, locus of control, self-perception and interaction with the environment. She summarizes models for the study of creativity and creative motivation, the humanistic and positive psychology perspectives, and draws parallels between creativity and the

flow state, mindfulness, the multicultural approach, and positive psychotherapy and reconstruction of personal experience and perceptions.

In terms of well-being, she clarifies the cross-points of the conventionally differentiated hedonistic and eudemonic perspectives, the concept of social well-being and their integration into the concept of flourishing, the models of which she describes. She explicates the multidimensionality and overlap of the different approaches and terminological mixing. The overview is also very extensive in developmental terms, as the doctoral student systematizes the various theories, including that of emerging adulthood; further she addresses the aspect of passing through normative age crises, solving developmental tasks, considering the period of adulthood in the line of individuation and achieving integrated wholeness.

A particular mention should be made of the excellent mastery of the concepts and their clear understanding and presentation. The incredibly rich literature review is well systematized and correct links are made to the doctoral student's own focus - the creative impulse as a basis for personal development. Magdalena Gereva brings an impressively broad perspective, encompassing not only an in-depth analysis of psychological dimensions, but also philosophical discourse in tracing the dimensions of happiness and well-being. She differentiates the views and highlights their intersections, comprising them within the framework of person-environment interaction.

In applied perspective, the doctoral student also focuses on the place of art therapy and the arts as a foundation for creativity, stimulating creativity and experiencing and feeling oneself in new ways to enhance flourishing and pays detailed attention to therapy and therapeutic effects.

Chapter Two describes the aim, objectives, hypotheses, sample and instruments used. The aim is clearly defined and operationalised in specific research objectives and hypotheses. The direction of the search is on the links between psychological type and creative motivation, between creative motivation and flourishing, whereas the doctoral student suggests a difference in psychological types and levels of individual and social flourishing in the groups of artists studied depending on the artistic field. Her interest is directed to artists with a distinct artistic profile in search of an answer to the question of what underlies motivation and what are the common points and differences in four art groups - dance art, literature and creative writing, musicians and singers, and visual artists. The sample consists of 308 volunteers and in addition 10 prominent artists. The sample is balanced by groups, with a predominance of women and participants under 40 by age.

Chapter Three contains an analysis and interpretation of the results. The doctoral student consistently describes the results for each of the four groups of artists - psychological type, motivation and flourishing. Different profiles and specificity of relationships are outlined depending on the artistic area.

## **7. Contributions and significance of the dissertation for science and practice**

Scientific novelty can be outlined in research terms in highlighting the links between creativity and flourishing. Of high importance is the theoretical review and the integration of classical and new approaches to creativity, creative motivation and self-actualization. A new point in Magdalena Gereva's research is the study of the understudied links between creativity and flourishing and the identification of specificity in the profiles of artists from different fields. This offers opportunities for incorporating the results into academic disciplines, further extending the data and analyses and application in research, counselling and therapy. I acknowledge the contributions that relate to the scientific, methodological, academic and practical relevance of the results.

## **8. Evaluation of the publications related to the dissertation**

The doctoral has submitted six publications that have been published and are related to the dissertation topic. Five of them are authored and one is co-authored. Outside of these, there is one other co-authored publication.

## **9. Personal contribution of the doctoral student**

I believe that the obtained results and the formulated contributions are personal work of the doctoral student, supported by their evident relation to her academic and professional development.

## **10. Abstract of a dissertation**

The dissertation abstract comprises 43 pages and meets the requirements; it describes the main results implemented in the dissertation research.

## **11. Critical remarks and recommendations**

Consideration might be given to abbreviating the theoretical part, the detailed description of the adaptation of the methods outside this study, and of the parts that describe the data processing procedure in detail without being informative. The content of Chapter 3, paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 could be without subdivision into sub-paragraphs. There is an error in the authorship of the model on p. 8 in the abstract and p. 35 in the dissertation, and the numbering of tables and figures in the abstract and dissertation are not consistent, and in general No. 48 is referred to 2 times, No. 21 is not found. It is not clear why there is a division of charts and figures. The research model in Figure 1 is not informative enough. Some tables are not informative and could be abbreviated (22, 27 and similar). The percentages shown also by rows and columns in the cross-tabulations hinder understanding.

A recommendation can be made for the data processing. At this point there are no statistical analyses and levels of significance, specified for the differences in the distribution of psychological types across the four groups of artists, the impact of psychological types on flourishing and motivation, and that of the individual variables. Furthermore, a control group outside of those involved in arts and culture could be included in future research.

## **12. Personal impressions**

My personal impressions are based solely on the materials submitted for review, but they give me sound grounds to conclude that Magdalena Gereva is a goal-oriented researcher with her own vision, very broad culture and research competence. From the CV and the information contained therein, she is clearly consistent in her interests and their expansion.

## **13. Recommendations for future use of the dissertation contributions and results**

My personal opinion and recommendation is for further development of the presented dissertation research in two directions - additional processing and analysis of the dataset and publication of a book that would be useful for specialists, students and wider readership.

## **CONCLUSION**

The dissertation contains scientific and applicable results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law for Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the respective Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The dissertation shows that the PhD student has high research motivation and the ability to independently and competently conduct scientific research.

Due to the abovementioned advantages, I give my positive assessment of the research presented by the reviewed dissertation, abstract, results and contributions, and I propose the scientific jury to award Magdalena Milkova Gereva the educational and scientific degree 'Doctor' in the professional field 3.2. Psychology, doctoral programme: Pedagogical and developmental psychology.

17<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Reviewer:

Prof. Margarita Bakracheva, PhD