

OPINION

from: Assoc. Prof. Stoil Mavrodiev, D.Sc., South-West University "Neofit Rilski"
on the dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" Field of
higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences Professional direction: 3.2.

Psychology Doctoral program: Positive Psychology

Author: Kristiana Eneva

Topic: "Positive cognitive processes and satisfaction with romantic relationships in early
adulthood"

Scientific supervisor: Professor Doctor Yurii Pavlov Yanakiev, Plovdiv University "Paisii
Hilendarski"

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

The dissertation work of Kristiana Eneva is developed within the framework of the doctoral program in Positive Psychology at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski". The doctoral student demonstrates a deep interest in positive psychology, with a focus on the relationship between positive cognitive processes (optimism, hope and mindfulness) and satisfaction with romantic relationships. The procedure for developing the dissertation has been conducted in accordance with academic requirements, with all formal and scientific standards observed. Kristiana Eneva shows high motivation, professionalism and skills for independent scientific work, which is reflected in the in-depth analysis and original approach to the researched issues.

2. Relevance of the topic

The topic of the dissertation work is extremely relevant in the context of contemporary psychological science, especially in the field of positive psychology. The study of the relationship between cognitive processes such as optimism, hope and mindfulness and satisfaction with romantic relationships is of importance both for theoretical research and for practical applications in counseling and therapy. In the conditions of increasing challenges to interpersonal relationships, Eneva's work offers a valuable contribution to the understanding of the factors that contribute to well-being in romantic relationships.

3. Knowledge of the problem

Kristiana Eneva demonstrates in-depth knowledge of the researched problem. The theoretical part of the dissertation includes an extensive literature review, covering key concepts such as optimism, hope and mindfulness, with an emphasis on their role in the context of romantic relationships. Authoritative sources from leading researchers such as Snyder, Seligman and others are used, which shows good familiarity with international scientific literature. The doctoral student successfully integrates theoretical frameworks with her empirical research, demonstrating the ability for critical analysis and synthesis of scientific data.

4. Research methodology

The research methodology is well structured and meets high standards for empirical work in psychology. Three validated scales are used: the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) for measuring optimism, the Adult Hope Scale (AHS) and the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). The sample includes 541 participants aged between 18 and 65 years, which ensures representativeness for the population in adulthood. Statistical methods such as factor analysis, correlation analysis and significance tests are applied, which guarantees the reliability and validity of the results. The doctoral student notes the limitations of self-report methods, which emphasizes her critical attitude towards the methodology.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation work is voluminous (345 pages) and well structured, with a clearly expressed logical sequence. It includes a theoretical part, empirical research and analysis of the results, which allows a comprehensive consideration of the topic. The main contributions are: The dissertation work has a classical structure. The introduction presents the topic, goals and significance of the research. It is well structured, clearly outlining the context of positive psychology and the need for research on romantic relationships. The hypotheses are clearly formulated and logically linked to the research goals. The introduction successfully lays the foundation for the theoretical and empirical analysis, but it could include a more detailed presentation of the Bulgarian context. The theoretical part is extremely voluminous and in-depth, covering key concepts such as optimism, hope and mindfulness. The chapters devoted to these constructs (for example, pages 14-72 for optimism and hope, pages 101-124 for mindfulness) demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the literature and ability for synthesis. The theoretical review is supported by references to leading researchers (Snyder, Seligman, Kabat-Zinn), as well as an analysis of the relationship between these processes and romantic relationships. The strength of this part is in the systematization of knowledge about the respective concepts. The methodology chapter is well developed, with a detailed description of the sample (541 participants), instruments (LOT-R, AHS, MAAS) and statistical methods (for example, factor analysis). The choice of validated scales and a representative sample is a strong point, but the limitations of self-report methods deserve a more detailed analysis, especially regarding potential biases. Results: This part presents the results of the empirical research, including factor analysis, correlation analysis and tests for differences by demographic characteristics (for example, gender, age, duration of the relationship). The results are presented clearly, using tables and graphs, which facilitates their understanding. The discussion part synthesizes the results and connects them to the theoretical framework, emphasizing the links between positive cognitive processes and satisfaction with romantic relationships. The conclusion summarizes the contributions and offers directions for future research. This part is valuable because of the integration of empirical data with theory. The dissertation is well balanced between theoretical depth and empirical rigor.

6. Assessment of the publications and the personal contribution of the doctoral student

Kristiana Eneva is the author of publications related to the topic of the dissertation, which shows her commitment to the dissemination of scientific results. Her personal contribution is significant, as she has developed the research independently, including the design, data collection and analysis. The use of validated instruments and the application of complex statistical methods emphasize her analytical skills. In addition, her communication with international researchers (for example, Doctor Michael Scheier) to obtain permissions for the use of scales demonstrates professionalism and initiative. The self-assessment of the contributions formulated by the doctoral student is accepted. They can be summarized as follows:

- Testing and adaptation of methodological instruments: Scales for measuring optimism (LOT-R), hope (AHS), mindfulness (MAAS) and satisfaction with romantic relationships (RAS and FSAS) have been adapted and tested for the Bulgarian population. This allows their application in a local context with high reliability (Cronbach's alpha).
- Empirical data for the Bulgarian population: Current data have been collected on the levels of the studied constructs among individuals in early (20–40 years) and middle/late adulthood (over 40 years), which allow comparison with international studies and reveal cultural specifics.
- Establishing links between the constructs: A positive correlation has been proven between positive cognitive processes and satisfaction with romantic relationships. In particular, mindfulness stands out as a key factor for the duration of relationships (higher levels in relationships over 15 years).
- Influence of demographic factors: Differences by age (higher levels of positive processes in more mature individuals), gender (men show higher mindfulness and cognitive satisfaction) and presence of children (lower satisfaction among parents) have been revealed. There is no significant relationship with the presence of a relationship, but its duration affects mindfulness.
- Theoretical model and practical applications: A model for the relationship between the constructs is proposed, which can be used in education (for developing skills), clinical practice (interventions for couples) and social services (support for vulnerable groups). This contributes to improving well-being and reducing divorces.

7. Abstract

The abstract is prepared in accordance with academic requirements and provides clear and concise information about the goals, methodology, results and contributions of the research. It is well structured and facilitates the understanding of the main aspects of the dissertation.

8. Recommendations

for future use of the dissertation contributions and results The results of the dissertation work have potential for application in the following areas: psychological counseling, educational programs, further research.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation work of Kristiana Eneva represents a significant contribution to positive psychology and the study of romantic relationships in early adulthood. It demonstrates a high level of scientific rigor, originality and practical applicability. In view of the quality of the research, methodology and contributions, I give my positive evaluation and recommend to the other members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to Kristiana Eneva in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction: 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral program "Positive Psychology"

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Prepared the opinion:

Assoc. Prof. Stoil Mavrodiev, D.Sc.