

STANDPOINT

by Assoc. Prof., Doctor Petar Kirilov Neshev, Trakia University – Stara Zagora, elected as a member of the Scientific Jury under the procedure for acquiring of the educational and scientific degree “Doctor” by Borislava Petrova Dimitrova, according to Order No. P-109-415/25.11.2024 y. of the Rector of Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”-Varna and appointed to prepare on standpoint on the basic of Protocol No. 1/06.12.2024 y.

Subject: presented dissertation work on the topic “Dynamics of generalized expectations in patients with depression” for the award of the educational and scientific degree “doctor” in the Field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.2. Psychology, Scientific subject “Medical Psychology” with author Borislava Petrova Dimitrova.

For the development of the standpoint, I was provided with a dissertation work, an abstract, the candidate’s curriculum vitae, publications related to the topic of the dissertation, reference on the verification of the authenticity of the dissertation work and publications related to it. The documents show that Borislava Dimitrova has successfully completed all the planned activities in the individual study plan for the entire duration of the doctoral studies and has successfully gone through the necessary procedure for admission of defense for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree “doctor” in accordance with Law of Higher Education, the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Conditions and The regulations for the development of the academic staff at Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”-Varna.

Borislava Dimitrova combines her scientific interests and research skills in field of medical psychology with her professional competencies in applied psychology and positive psychotherapy.

General characteristic of the dissertation work

The dissertation work is dedicated to a current and significant problem in the field of medical psychology. Its content is very well structured and systematized. The author has thoroughly studied various manifestations of suffering in patients with depression. She has focused her research efforts on the study of the main factors for the emergence of depression in modern society. The dissertation work consists of an introduction, four chapters, deductions, conclusion, references and 5 appendixes. The text is 132 pages long and contains 42 tables and 2 figures. 146 adequate scientific sources in Greek language and English language were used, of which 22 in Cyrillic and 124 in Latin.

Actuality and relevance of the research topic

In the introduction Borislava Dimitrova defines depression as a socially significant mental illness affecting millions of people around the world today (p. 6). The author accurately notes that depression affects all aspects of modern

man's life. Depression reduces a person's quality of life, impairs mental health and in some cases leads to personal disability. Depression has a negative impact on interpersonal relationships, professional development, physical health and life satisfaction. Borislava Dimitrova reveals the importance of the most important personal characteristics that can be used to reduce the impact of depression on the human psyche and behavior. She not only indicates the current state of researched problem, but also creates a research model with practical application in clinical and therapeutic practice.

Theoretical argumentation of the study

In the first chapter, entitled "Literature review", Borislava Dimitrova performs a successful comparative analysis of various scientific concepts and theoretical approaches to explain the essence and features of depression. The author examines in detail numerous definitions, typologies and aspects of the studied problem. Borislava Dimitrova presents classic and modern theories and models for therapeutic work with depressed patients. She also makes a successful own interpretation of studies on various types of depressive states. In the first chapter, the concepts of depression, mental health, personality, generalized expectations, motivation, locus of control, optimism, awareness of illness are precisely defined. The author has explained the causal relationships between depression and generalized expectations of the personality.

Psychological specificity of the research

One of the strengths of the dissertation work is in revealing the psychological specificity of the researched problem. The author has skillfully analyzed the change of basic of basic personality traits during different stages of the depressive illness. She has explained the central role of a long-term motivation in overcoming a depressive episode. It is through environmental education that students become aware of the interrelationship between the natural and social environment. Namely by supporting long-term motivation and optimistic expectations that the mental functioning of those suffering from depression can be improved. The skills of the psychotherapist to restore the depressed person's desire for well-being, to reduce negative expectations and to restore patient's desire for pleasure are also particularly important. The specificity of psychological help to patients with depression is expressed in reducing the negative effects on the mental functioning of the person and supporting the coping resources of the person in the treatment process.

Practical side of the research

In the second chapter "Methodology of the empirical research", the author presents the purpose, the research problem, the tasks, the hypotheses, the procedure, the research tools, the participants and the questionnaires of the empirical research conducted by her. The research is very well planned, organized and implemented in practice. The tools used is adequate to the goals and tasks of the study. Borislava Dimitrova has formulated 7 clear research tasks and 5 meaningful hypotheses. The research was conducted during the month of

April 2024 y. until August 2024 y. A total of 70 people with clinical evidence of depression between the ages of 18 and 65 were studied. Subjects were randomly assigned. Some of them underwent inpatient treatment in the Day Hospital at the Second Psychiatric Clinic, UMBAL "St. Marina" – Varna and outpatient treatment in MC "Medica Plus" – city Varna. The research goes through three stages at the beginning, at the course and at the end of treatment of the examined persons. The professional ethical requirements for the conduct of research were met and each of the participants filled out an informed consent form.

Applicability of the obtained results

The author has done comprehensive statistical, correlation and regression analyzes of the research results. The results are presented in an overview, arranged in tables and figures. Their relevance to the purpose, tasks and hypotheses of the research is shown. The results achieved and the conclusions drawn are valuable for the creation and implementation of therapeutic programs for working with depressed patients for each of the stages of the course of the disease. This, in my opinion, is one of the many merits of a dissertation work. The interrelationship of the used test methods and their practical applicability for the study of generalized expectations in patients with depression has been proven. In the course of the research, the dynamics of generalized expectations in the process of treating depression are clearly shown, with motivation being the main variable influencing depression.

The theoretical and applied achievements presented in the dissertation work are popularized in the author's scientific publications.

The abstract adequately and accurately presents the content, structure, scientific merits, leading ideas, achieved results and contributions of the dissertation work.

In the dissertation work, I did not find texts that were plagiarized by other authors, and no signals of this have researched me. All the texts that Borislava Dimitrova used were quoted correctly, following established standards.

I have no critical remarks about the dissertation work and the abstract to it.

Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work

1. A thorough theoretical analysis of depression was made.
2. The conducted empirical research indicates the interrelationships between generalized expectations and the dynamics of the course of the depressive episode.
3. An author's research model was created to study the change in motivation, locus of control, negative expectations and optimism in the different stages of the course of depression.
4. The achieved results prove the necessity of applying individualized approaches to alleviate depressive symptoms.

5. The psychological specificity of the researched problem is revealed and valuable guidelines are given for the therapeutic work of psychologists with depressed patients.

In conclusion – the presented dissertation work on the topic “Dynamics of generalized expectations in patients with depression” is theoretically grounded, very well structured, valuable empirical research has been conducted. The results are processed precisely and reasoned recommendations are made for the implementation effective interventions to improve the mental health of the personality. All this give me sufficient grounds to confidently express my positive opinion and categorically vote for Borislava Petrova Dimitrova to be awarded the educational and scientific degree “doctor of psychology” in the Field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.2. Psychology, Scientific subject “Medical Psychology”.

Sofia, 14.01.2025 y.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pe

Заличено на основание чл. 5,
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