Opinion
from
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Institute for population and human studies
for dissertation of
Maria Hristova Sokolova
on the subject:
ATTACHMENT STYLE AND PARENTING PRACTICES OF MOTHERS - VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
for the award of PhD in the professional field 3.2. Psychology
Scientific supervisor: Assoc. Prof. D. Bakalova, PhD
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1. General Description of the Presented Dissertation

The presented dissertation and scientific works of the doctoral candidate Maria Hristova Sokolova, as well as the accumulated credits during the education, demonstrate compliance with the regulatory requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree of "doctor". The dissertation consists of 184 pages, structured in a classical format, including 7 figures and 59 tables. The list of used literature includes 204 sources (41 in Cyrillic, 163 in Latin). Additionally, five publications (articles and conference papers) directly related to the subject of the scientific research are attached.

Maria Sokolova, as a part-time doctoral student, successfully combined practice and work on the dissertation during her doctoral studies, which explains the focus on a topic oriented towards injuries and the direct application of the results in practice.

2. Statement on Significance and Convincingness

The main goal of the dissertation research is to examine the influence of attachment style on the parenting practices of mothers who are victims of domestic violence, taking into account the role of types of experienced violence, social support, and the psychological functioning of the victims, with the aim of outlining and reducing the risks of violence towards their children. The increasing cases of domestic violence, widespread aggression in schools, and the overall backdrop of social, economic, and political crises that catalyze negative manifestations make the topic extremely

relevant. The consequences for society's development and social well-being from the observed trends towards increasing violence and aggression are negative. This naturally places the theoretical model in dependence on the traumatic approach and focuses on children's experiences.

In its final version, the doctoral candidate compiles a questionnaire with 140 items, consisting of: Questionnaire for Studying Parenting Practices, Attachment Measurement Questionnaire, Scale for Measuring Types of Domestic Violence, Scale for Studying Psychological Functioning, and Questionnaire for Measuring Social Support. The methodology used is appropriate to the formulated research goal, tasks, and hypotheses of the dissertation research. Correct statistical methods are used: Independent Samples T-test, One-Way ANOVA with Scheffe Post Hoc tests, correlation analysis (Pearson's r), regression analysis, mediation by Model 4, and moderation by Model 1.

It can be concluded that the doctoral candidate has clearly and consistently structured the text in the dissertation work and her skills in formulating hypotheses, their statistical testing, and deriving scientifically grounded conclusions should be emphasized. The work concludes with summaries and conclusions outlining profiles of mothers who are victims of domestic violence, correctly acknowledging the limitations of the study, as well as possible directions for further scientific work on the formulated topic. I fully support the formulated contributions of the dissertation work.

3. Assessment of the Quality of the Scientific Publications

The five publications presented in the form of articles and conference papers represent a part of the scientific research on the topic of the dissertation. Three of them are co-authored and two are independent. They meet and exceed the scientific metric requirements. Three of the publications are theoretical, and two include partial presentation of the results from the dissertation work.

4. Conclusion

The dissertation "Attachment Style and Parenting Practices of Mothers - Victims of Domestic Violence" leads to the conclusion that Maria Sokolova possesses excellent skills and professional experience for the successful realization and publication of scientific research. Taking into account

the overall qualities of the dissertation work and its contributions to the professionally developed topic, I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Maria Sokolova the educational and scientific degree of "doctor" in the professional field of "3.2. Psychology".

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