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OPINION

by prof. DSc Antoaneta Hristova, IPHS - BAS

on the scientific works for participation in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, in the professional field 3.2. Psychology (Counselling Psychology - Personality and Addictions) - for the needs of the Section "Social and Counselling Psychology" at the Institute of population and human science, announced in State Gazette No. 58 of 09.07.2024. One candidate participated in the competition - PhD in Psychology Rositsa Racheva

The opinion was commissioned by the decision of the Scientific Council, reflected in the Minutes No. 13 of 05.09.2024 and by the Order No. RD- 6-445/05.09.2024 of the Director of the IPHS. The documents submitted by the only candidate, Assoc. PhD in Psychology Rositsa Racheva, meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the conditions and procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor at the IPHS.

Rositsa Racheva's educational background started as a Master's degree in Sociology from St. Kliment Ohridski University and a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology from NBU, continued at Said Business School in Ohford and at the University of Ohford with trainings and a Master's degree in Evidence-Based Social Intervention. Her PhD was defended at the IPHS-BAS as a Doctor of Educational and Adult Psychology. Her professional involvement is divided between academic and applied work. She is a senior assistant professor at the Department of Psychology of the IPHS-BAS and a lecturer at St. Kliment Ohridski University, lecturing on "Alcohol and drug use in adolescence" on the one hand, and on the other hand she is currently a clinical psychologist at the “St. Panteleimon" medical center and a member of the local commission for combating antisocial behaviour in minors, district "Lozenets".

Rositsa Racheva is a member of professional organizations such as the Bulgarian Society of Psychology and the Bulgarian Association of Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapy, as well as of the Council for Cooperation with the Scientific and Academic Community at the State Road Safety Agency, the State Public Advisory Commission on Road Safety Issues and the Association of Chivning Fellows (UK).

The candidate has been involved in 11 research projects so far and has a total of 8 years of experience as a Senior Research Assistant at IPHS-BAS.

The works with which he applied in the announced competition are the habilitation thesis "Personality characteristics in addicts to psychoactive substances", published by the Publishing House of BAS "prof. Marin Drinov", a book based on a defended dissertation with the title "Problematic use of psychoactive substances in adolescence" published by the Publishing hous of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences "prof. Marin Drinov", with 8 articles published in refereed and indexed journals, 6 articles - in non-refereed journals, 4 studies - in non-refereed journals and 7 citations in indexed journals. The works have not been submitted to other competitions for the award of scientific titles and degrees and are accepted for peer review.

The presented publications can be grouped thematically in 2 areas - problems of adolescents using psychoactive substances and cognitive characteristics of drivers in the context of risky behavior. The first thematic group is predominant, which makes the candidate fully relevant to the announced competition.

The monograph focuses on identifying the main characteristics associated with the personality profile of addicts and integrating them into a model that reflects the main forms of manifestation of the individual's psychological functioning. A comparative analysis of externalized and internalized personality characteristics in individuals with substance use disorders and individuals in the general population is presented. The book is structured in three chapters. The first chapter systematizes the basic concepts related to psychoactive substance use, abuse, and dependence. Chapter Two is devoted to the relationship between personality and psychoactive substance use disorders. Current models and approaches to personality research are discussed, including the popular and widely used five-factor model. The third chapter presents an in-depth analysis of empirical research on the most common externalized (antisocial behavior, impulsivity, sensation seeking, aggressiveness, and risk-taking) and internalized (emotional stability, self-esteem, anxiety, and depression) characteristics of individuals with substance use disorders. Particular attention is paid to studies that consider these characteristics as a symptom of a psychopathology that occurs alongside substance abuse or dependence. The utility of the monograph can be clearly outlined, namely to draw the attention of researchers, practitioners and institutions involved in policy making, in the field of addictions, to the potential of knowledge

about personality characteristics for the development of evidence-based prevention, treatment and rehabilitation programmes for substance use disorders.

All the presented publications are distinguished by research of high scientific precision and practical value. This is confirmed by the citation of the scientific production in Bulgaria and in refereed sources, which emphasizes the visibility of Racheva among the scientific community in the topics she develops.

The authorship of the candidate is undeniable. I accept the noted contributions. The monograph and publications are useful for both students and practitioners in the field of work with addicts.

My personal impressions of Rositsa Racheva are of a dedicated professional, honest, collegial, responsible, an excellent team player.

I confidently assert that Rositsa Racheva fully complies with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act and its implementing regulations. This gives me grounds for a categorical positive assessment of her candidacy and I propose that she be elected by the Scientific Council of the Institute of population and human studies - BAS to take the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology ((Counselling Psychology - Personality and Addictions) - for the needs of the Section "Social and Counselling Psychology" at IPHS-BAS.

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