REVIEW

by Professor Georgi Stoyanov Karastoyanov, DSc, Rakovski National Defence College, Professional field: 3.2. Psychology,
for the dissertation work of Plamen Iliyanov Petkov
with title:"Socio-psychological determinants for the development of interpersonal trust in the sphere of friendly and business relationships"
presented for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional field: 3.2. Psychology, doctoral program "Social Psychology"

The review was assigned according to Protocol No. 1/10.12.2025 of the meeting of the Scientific Jury, selected by decision of the Scientific Council of the Institute for Population and Human Studies - BAS and approved by order of the Director of the Institute for Population and Human Studies -BAS No. RD – 6 – 466 of 8.12.2025. To prepare the opinion, I was provided with the doctoral student's CV, the dissertation, the abstract of the dissertation, electronic copies of the publications on the topic of the dissertation, a similarity check report, as well as other documents related to the doctoral student's training. The submitted documents show that Plamen Petkov has successfully completed the activities envisaged in the individual curriculum for the entire duration of the doctoral studies, has passed the necessary exams and has successfully passed the legal procedure for admission to defense for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in accordance with the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Rules on the conditions and procedure for acquiring science degrees and holding academic positions in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

The dissertation focuses on one of the most fundamental concepts not only in social psychology, but also in social sciences in general, namely interpersonal trust. This concept is among the relatively poorly studied by Bulgarian psychologists, and the proposed text definitely fills this gap in research in Bulgaria, and is a good basis for their continuation.

I believe that the topic "Sociopsychological determinants of the development of interpersonal trust in the sphere of friendly and business

relationships" corresponds to the main content of the text submitted for review. Structurally, the dissertation follows the classical model for psychological research - a theoretical overview of the research problem (first chapter), formulation of the empirical study (second chapter), analysis and interpretation of the results (third chapter).

The dissertation is presented on a total of 191 pages, of which 179 pages are text and cited literature, 12 appendices, which present the tools used, as well as two figures illustrating factor analyses, which allows for a more complete tracking of all stages of the empirical research. The data from the empirical research are correctly presented and illustrated through 60 tables and 15 figures. The literary sources used are 316, of which 14 are in Bulgarian. They are correctly cited in the text and include both classical works and contemporary research from the last ten years. The cited online sources were accessible upon verification.

The structure, volume and layout of the dissertation, submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor", correspond to the best research practices in the professional field 3.2. "Psychology". A good balance has been achieved in the presentation of the theoretical overview on the one hand (about one half of the total content) and the empirical research on the other. The introduction to the dissertation presents a general view of the problem of trust from the perspective of social sciences.

The first chapter provides a complete and in-depth analysis of the scientific literature relevant to the research problem, analyzing the main theoretical approaches to the problem, decomposing the determinants of

interpersonal trust and the antecedents for its formation. A precise analysis of existing research on the topic is made, and the dynamic nature of trust in the context of human relationships is also analyzed. The common and different aspects of trust in the sphere of friendship and business relationships are studied.

The in-depth theoretical overview has allowed in the second chapter to define the purpose of the empirical study, seven tasks through which it will be implemented, as well as six hypotheses that are theoretically justified from the point of view of the theoretical analysis of the research on the topic of the dissertation work. A model of interrelationships is presented, which actually represents the design of the empirical study. The organization and conduct of the study and the sample are described in detail. The research methods used are presented in sufficient volume, including data on reliability and validity. The empirical results obtained are analyzed and interpreted competently and correctly in the third chapter in accordance with the tasks set for verifying the hypotheses raised. The conclusions and recommendations made in the conclusion are justified in the context of the empirical data obtained. The factors that influence trust and the conclusions made are justified, both theoretically and from the results obtained from the empirical study.

The critical remarks made during the preliminary defense for admission to public defense are meaningful and taken into account in the text.

The results of the research on the topic of the dissertation are correctly presented to the critical eye of the psychological community with

three independent publications at international and national scientific forums, which is an indicator by which it can be judged that the scientific contributions in the dissertation are a personal contribution of the doctoral student. The publications presented cover the minimum national requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the professional field 3.2. Psychology according to Art. 2 b of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

I believe that the dissertation contains important scientific and scientifically applied results for revealing the interrelationships between socio-psychological factors and trust. They can be accepted as original scientific contributions, as the doctoral student claims in the abstract of the dissertation.

The abstract of the work is a synthesized and analytical summary of the dissertation with the main highlights in it, within 38 pages. It faithfully and accurately reflects its content and the results obtained and fully fulfills its functions in accordance with the the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Rules on the conditions and procedure for acquiring science degrees and holding academic positions in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

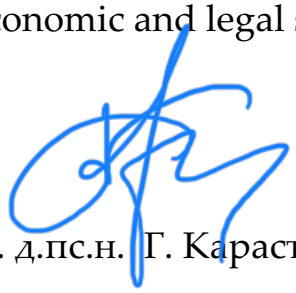
I have no significant critical remarks on the dissertation and its abstract.

I did not find any violations of academic ethics, incorrect citation or plagiarism in the dissertation submitted for review.

The submitted dissertation shows that Plamen Iliyanov Petkov has excellent theoretical training in the field of psychology, combined with very good methodological preparation for planning and conducting empirical research and analyzing the results thereof.

The overall assessment of the dissertation shows that it meets the requirements of the the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Rules on the conditions and procedure for acquiring science degrees and holding academic positions in the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor". Based on my positive assessments of the dissertation research, the publications presented, the demonstrated methodological preparation of the doctoral student and the undeniable scientific contributions, I propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to vote for Plamen Iliyanov Petkov, who presented a dissertation on the topic "Socio-psychological determinants of the development of interpersonal trust in the sphere of friendly and business relationships", to acquire the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the professional field 3.1. "Psychology" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences", doctoral program "Social Psychology".

София, 08.01.2026 г.



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