

REVIEW

by Full Prof., Vanya Matanova ,PhD,DSc

of a dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific degree **PhD**

in the field of higher education . 3. Social , economic and legal sciences

professional field ,. 3.2.- Psychology

doctoral program -*Clinical psychology*

Author : Violeta Kamenova Azis

Topic : " **Personal profiles in patients with cardiac and cardiac surgery interventions**

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The topic of the dissertation " Personal profiles in patients with cardiac and cardiac surgery interventions" presented by Violeta Azis is of particular importance as it is related to quality of life and autonomy. Emotional functioning affects on health and forms its ability to function independently and supports stable connections with significant others.

The presented dissertation has a volume of 162 pages. Structurally it consists of an introduction, three heads, conclusion bibliography and applications. The data are illustrated with 29 tables and 15 graphics. The bibliography consists of 219 titles, of which 25 in Bulgarian and 175 - in English, 8 in French, 2 in German and 9 internet sources. This structure of the dissertation fully meets the requirements for this type of research.

As you can assumed patients with cardiac and cardiac surgery interventions go through emotionally difficult periods. In the process of illness and interventions such emotions and conditions as anxiety and confusion intensify, fears of annihilation and disintegration of physical and mental. Patients experience intensive vital endangerment , they are violated their ability to symbolization and metaphORIZING. Character of pre-surgery period is alexithymia in which the facts are causal, without opportunity for mental processing. Associative opportunities for organizing time dimensions are difficult. So everyone response methods have been shown to be blocked and ineffective for expectant

patients cardiac surgery intervention. This significantly changes their mental and social functioning.

In the theoretical part of Violeta Azis' dissertation, leading psychosomatic theories are considered, with a very good knowledge of their theoretical and practical significance and with a sufficient dose of criticism .

A brief history of psychocardiology is also included, as a contemporary reading and a method for understanding the relationship between the mental and the "heart" and the influence of psychosocial health-threatening factors, as well as personality traits and personality types.

The medical part, which includes cardiac and cardiac surgery interventions also shows a very good knowledge of the problem under consideration. Special attention is paid to Kovid-19 and cardiovascular diseases, which further increases the relevance of the dissertation. This part of the dissertation is the first study in our country on the impact of Kovid-19 on cardiovascular disease.

The theoretical part of Violeta Azis' dissertation includes a detailed literary analysis of the discussed problem. The doctoral student shows excellent skills in the analysis of scientific literature. The discussed literature sources are relevant to the purpose and tasks of the dissertation. Critical analysis of the specialized literature provides an opportunity to identify unexplored areas of the problem under discussion, to define the purpose, hypotheses and objectives of empirical research.

The review on available literature shows that theoretically and empirically it is not sufficiently developed in our country. Internationally, direct and indirect empirical data for the interconnection between personality characteristics and cardiac problems.

The second chapter presents the design of the empirical study. The goal, tasks, hypotheses and respondents are briefly and clearly formulated. A well-planned and implemented empirical study is presented, built on the basis of excellent theoretical knowledge and skills for conducting research.

Empirical data analysis was performed. The interpretation of the data was performed according to the different scales of the used methodologies. In addition to statistics, the data are subjected to quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The participants in the empirical study are 135, of which 48 are with invasive cardiac intervention, 41 - cardiac surgery, and 46 people were a control group. About them 65 men and 69 are women.

The research battery is well designed and selected adequately to the purpose and objectives of the dissertation. The goal, tasks, hypotheses and respondents are briefly and clearly formulated .

The empirical research is well planned, organized and carried out, with a clearly justified distribution of participants by groups and clear evaluation criteria.

The interpretation of the data was performed according to the different scales of the used methodologies. In addition to statistics, the data are subjected to quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Between both experimental groups there are differences in Emotional Lability, Suspicion and Taking over of risks. Patients with cardiac intervention are emotionally more labile, suspicious, and more likely to take over risks from patients who have passed through cardiac surgery intervention.

Individuals's high levels on alexithymia characterized by reduced or completely absent ability to mentalization, which means that the symbolization for them is very difficult, the connection with own them internal world is violated or interrupted. It is allowed that at patients's cardiologically disease, each mental excitement can't be optimal reworked through symbolization and verbalization .

As the doctoral student rightly points out, due to the specifics of the research design, a causal relationship between the studied constructs cannot be sought .

An interesting result of the study is that patients with cardiac surgery interventions are very similar with subjects in control group. This lack of statistical significance probably due on insufficient volume on the sample. Mental factors that are responsible for this outcome may also be discussed.

The present study is the first development in Bulgaria for the study of mental preconditions, such as predisposition for cardiac diseases.

The present research is the first in Bulgaria, which right correlation and researches influence it on Covid-19 at cardiovascular patients.

Received results and conclusions would could will serve such as basis for implementation of specific prophylactic and therapeutic practices in the clinical field. The study allows to connect two fundamentally different areas - psychotherapy and cardiology/cardiac surgery. Empirical results allow to enrich existing models of impact and interventions in patients with cardiac problems. They provide an opportunity to consider an existing theory in frames on the current ones conditions and description on the consequences. In this part of Violeta Azis' dissertation, her professional commitment to

the topic under discussion and the hope that changes can and should take place in the medical care of cardiac patients are evident.

With a sufficient dose of professional ethics, the limitations of the research are noted and the directions of future research in this field are outlined.

What is presented in the dissertation is original for the Bulgarian sociocultural context and is the personal work of the doctoral student .

This issue requires and presupposes a very high general culture, flexible mind and critical thinking, which Violeta Azis undoubtedly possesses. I appreciate her ability to talk about complex things simply and clearly.

Violeta Azis's dissertation shows very broad competencies in various fields of scientific knowledge - psychology, clinical psychology, psychotherapy, cardiology, cardiac surgery, combined with high analytical skills, ability to summarize data and thus outline unexplored areas. The contributions of the dissertation are primarily applied, described with sufficient professional ethics and self-criticism.

Violeta Azis has 10 publications on the topic of her dissertation. The abstract accurately and formally reflects the content of the dissertation. The contributions - theoretical and applied, are formulated clearly and accurately and reflect the research and analysis of empirical data.

Conclusion

The dissertation presented by Violeta Azis gives me reason to believe that she has excellent theoretical training, combined with very good practical skills, which makes her a respected and valuable researcher and practitioner.

Given the relevance and social significance of the issues under consideration, the extreme precision in the presentation and analysis of empirical data, as well as the theoretical and practical significance of the dissertation, with full conviction ***I propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Violeta Azis the educational and scientific degree PhD in Clinical Psychology.***

March 29, 2022.

Reviewer:

(Full Prof. Vanya Matanova, PhD, DSc)