

REVIEW

**from prof. Galya Todorova Gercheva-Nestorova, DSc in Psychology
Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar”**

Regarding: The scientific works of Sevdzhihan Ahmedova Eyubova, PhD presented for participation in a competition announced by Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen for holding the academic position of *Associate professor* in field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field 3.2. Psychology (Developmental and Educational Psychology) for Department of Technological and Vocational Education, Preschool and Primary School Education at the Faculty of Education.

I issue the current review as a member of a Scientific Jury, appointed with Order № RD-16-067/10.07.2020 of the Rector of Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen for holding of the academic position of *Associate professor* in field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology (Developmental and Educational Psychology). One applicant has applied for participation at the competition - Sevdzhihan Ahmedova Eyubova, PhD.

Sevdzhihan Ahmedova Eyubova, PhD was born on 7th November 1980 in Shumen. She has graduated from the Medical College in Shumen – affiliate of the Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”, Varna in 2002 and acquired professional qualification as a nurse. In 2004 she acquired the degree of a “bachelor” in Social Activities in the St.Cyril and St.Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo and in 2006 she finished her Master’s Degree in Psychology in Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen. In 2018 the participant defended a

doctoral thesis – „Aggression and auto aggression in adolescence” in the Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar” and acquired the educational and scientific degree “Doctor in Psychology”.

During the period from 2002 until 2017 she worked consecutively as a nurse, educator and clinical psychologist in "Multi-profile hospital for active treatment - Shumen AD". From 2017 until now she works as a full-time lecturer in psychology at the Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen, teaching the disciplines: General and Developmental Psychology, Pedagogical Psychology, Psychology of Parenthood, Neuropsychology and Pathopsychology, Special psychology and Applied Social Psychology. Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD acquired additional professional skills in a number of specializations at universities in Ireland, Northern Macedonia, Turkey and Great Britain.

In relation to her participation in the competition Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD presents 27 pieces of scientific papers among which – a monograph, 13 articles and 13 reports from national and international scientific conferences.

The overall impression that remains after getting acquainted with the scientific production of Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD is that her scientific research is focused on current problematic areas of modern applied psychology - Developmental Psychology and Educational Psychology. Her active participation in various scientific forums with reports and announcements, in which she presents her research, proves her authoritative presence in the field of applied psychology.

The monograph "Screening for Autism in Early Childhood", presented as a habilitation thesis, is a sort of general conclusion of her long-term creative pursuits in the field of autism spectrum disorders in early childhood, which are presented in scientific articles and a number of national and international conferences and forums.

In her monograph, Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD emphasizes the

opportunities for specific screening for autism in early childhood in Bulgaria, which should be in accordance with the regulations and relevant resources - specialists, tools for screening, diagnostics and methodology for working with parents. The author provides an in-depth theoretical analysis of autism spectrum disorders, emphasizing their broad impact on the quality of life of both suffering children and their parents. Specific features of these disorders is that they affect a wide range of social activity of the individual. They are characterized by varying degrees of severity and difficulty in social interactions, in verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as with limited interests and stereotypical, repetitive behaviors. With her research, Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD definitely fills an existing void in both the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders in our country. Her statement that the earlier these disorders are being diagnosed and an active therapeutic intervention with the participation of the parents is being started, the better the achieved results are – is of great importance. In this regard, the author efforts to adapt the M-CHAT R / F screening tool for Bulgarian conditions. As the author emphasizes, screening for autism in early childhood is a procedure in which the expertise of specialists in childhood developmental disorders and parents' knowledge about their own child meet and unite in efforts to achieve a better quality of life.

Both the results of Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD's own research and the therapeutic approaches described by her are relevant, which is a very good basis for practical therapeutic work of various specialists involved in the problems of autism spectrum disorders in childhood. The results of the author's own research, presented in the monograph, more specifically - the presented screening tools and therapeutic approaches - are of particular importance for the direct work of specialists in the field of child health and development (general practitioners, pediatricians, nurses in nursery groups, psychologists, speech therapists, educators in kindergartens).

The participant demonstrates her obvious research preferences in these issues. This is evident in the contribution characteristics of her research, which she highlights, which I also support.

The theoretical analyzes and empirical research presented Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD's other publications have been performed exceptionally precisely and with a high degree of conceptual accuracy. The articles and reports submitted for review prove that the participant is capable of finding current problems in practical and applied sense, which she researches in depth and offers practical approaches to solving them. Her research focuses on the problems of aggression and self-aggression in childhood and adolescence, the development of children's digital skills, as well as behavioral and psychosomatic changes related to the use of digital technologies in childhood, emotional literacy, the problems of aging, assessment of child development, inclusive education, etc.

I think it is important to emphasize in the context of the candidate's presentation the fact that she manages to include successfully the results of her research in her lecture courses, which she leads with students from different majors. On the other hand, the cited quotations indicate that Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD is a well-known and authoritative scientist in the field she works in.

As main contribution characteristics of her research work, I would like to emphasize the following:

- The necessity for early diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders has been scientifically substantiated and empirically proven;
- Systematization of the most regularly used tools for specific screening of autism spectrum disorders in early childhood has been done;
- A tool for early screening diagnostics has been adapted for the Bulgarian conditions is and a mobile application has been created to facilitate screening;

- Models for therapeutic work with children in early childhood with autism spectrum disorders have been developed;

In conclusion, I would like to express my positive opinion regarding the research and teaching activities of Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD. I reckon that the procedures for conducting the competition have been fulfilled and I recommend that Sevdzhihan Eyubova, PhD shall be elected for the academic position of *Associate Professor* in the announced in State Gazette, issue 20 / 10.03.2020 competition for the academic position of *Associate professor* in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field 3.2. Psychology (Developmental and Educational Psychology).

18.08.2020

Signature:



**Prof. Galya Todorova Gercheva-Nestorova,
DSc in Psychology**