

Statement

for dissertation work

on the subject:

"Role of self-compassion and compassion for others in career success and life satisfaction"

on

Maria Petrova Vasileva

for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

in Professional direction 3.2. "Psychology"

doctoral program "Cultural and Differential Psychology"

Academic supervisor: Prof. Irina Zinovieva, Ph.D

Prepared the opinion:

Assoc. Prof. Miglena Krasteva-Ivanova, MD,PhD

Relevance of the dissertation:

The relevance of the dissertation consists in the study of a very interesting construct - self-compassion from the point of view of its role in the adaptation of the personality, understood as maintaining the psychological well-being and functionality of a person in different life situations.

Self-compassion as a feeling seems so fragile - especially because in order to feel great, we need to feel special and above average. One of the downsides of living in a culture where independence and personal achievement are the norm and emphasized is that if we don't consistently achieve our exemplary goals, we feel as if it's our fault. And if it is our fault, then we deserve no sympathy. In fact, everyone is worthy of compassion. The Dalai Lama says, "Human beings are created in such a way that they want happiness and do not want suffering." Self-compassion is a powerful tool for achieving emotional balance and life satisfaction. When we show ourselves unconditional kindness and support ourselves unconditionally, absorbing the full range of human experience, however difficult it may be, we avoid destructive states: fear, negative worldview, feelings of isolation.

Modern research on self-compassion originates and develops in the field of positive psychology and represents a productive alternative to the active life position regarding problems and active "dealing" with them. This is characteristic of secular Western society. The phenomenon of compassion is usually, in accordance with the opposition accepted in modern personality psychology, adaptation - self-actualization, pleasure and interest, considered in the perspective of the relationship and the possible influence on the development of the "higher" qualities of the personality.

Theoretical framework of the dissertation:

The dissertation has a volume of 208 pages, introduction, three chapters, conclusion and limitations, of which 179 pages are main text and 29 pages are literature. 38 tables and one figure are used. The literature includes 362 titles, including those in Bulgarian and English.

The first chapter is devoted to a theoretical review of the existing literature on compassion for others, compassion for self, life satisfaction, and career success. Definitions of the constructs, the empathy process, origins and flow of empathy, and relationships to attachment style and emotion regulation are included.

The second chapter presents the empirical study and its design, incl. hypotheses, theoretical model, instruments, procedure, sample and scales with their psychometric characteristics. Chapter three describes the results of the various analyzes used to answer the research questions and examine the hypotheses and concludes with a summary, general discussion and interpretation of the results. Finally, conclusions and limitations of the dissertation are presented, followed by a list of cited literature.

The design of the empirical psychological study was to examine the relationships between self-compassion on the one hand and life satisfaction and objective and subjective career success on the other.

For the conduct of the research, which is also an indisputable contribution of the author, in accordance with the hypotheses, a questionnaire was created, which contains the following scales:

Compassion for Others, Compassion for Self-Short Form, Fear of Compassion, Helpfulness, Life Satisfaction, Objective Career Success, Subjective Career Success, Big Five Personality Trait Scale (MINI IPIP -Donnellan, Oswald, Baird, & Lucas, 2006), Self-Esteem Scale.

The methodology of the empirical psychological research consists in the fact that the battery of questionnaires /scales/ described above was created to validate the theoretical model and test the hypotheses. For the instruments that were not adapted for Bulgaria (Short Format Self-Compassion Scale, Compassion for Others Scale, Fear of Compassion for Others, Career Satisfaction) a triple translation from English to Bulgarian was carried out, as well as back-translation from Bulgarian to English. Then, the best translations are selected for each item.

To construct the scales compiled by the author (Scales for Helpfulness and Objective Career Success), a review of existing scales was carried out, followed by an analysis of the perceived meaning. For this purpose, 69 interviews on the topic of empathy and career success, conducted among psychology students from Sofia University, were used in order to complement the analysis and to set the direction of the intended questions.

The instrumentation of the research is adequate to its purpose and to the set research tasks and shows unity with the content description of the constructs.

Conclusions from the conducted research:

Consistent interrelationships were observed between self-compassion on the one hand and life satisfaction and objective and subjective career success on the other.

Self-compassion played a consistent and statistically significant role in the regression models for all three variables: life satisfaction, subjective and objective career success.

Increasing self-compassion is consistent with self-verification theory (Swann, 1997). According to Swann (1997), people rely on self-views to understand the reactions of others and to guide their behavior

Three constructs of compassion stand out for their consistent correlations with personality traits and self-esteem, namely self-compassion and the two facets of fear of compassion for others. Self-compassion is highly correlated with self-

approval and neuroticism, moderately correlated with self-competence, and weakly correlated with extraversion, imagination

And awareness. This means that self-compassion is fundamental to some of the core characteristics of various personality traits.

The detailed analyzes of the research results show the ability of the doctoral student to organize and carry out independent scientific research.

The contributions of the dissertation research: I accept the contributions of the doctoral student as valid.

The following main contributions are made:

1. A contribution to the research is that the results obtained regarding the positive correlations of self-compassion with objective and subjective success provide important guidance regarding the lack of significant correlations between compassion for others/helpfulness and life satisfaction/career success. This result seems to complement other similar findings, such as that people with lower social status also have higher nova of sympathy (Stellar et al., 2012). In a sense, workplace hierarchy corresponds to social structure in life as a whole, so the result is consistent with research on social class and empathy.

2. The analysis made also contributes that people with a lower income (minimum and average salary) also have higher levels of sympathy compared to those with very high incomes. It stands to reason that the people with higher incomes are likely to be the same ones who stand higher in the occupational hierarchy. Research confirms that the most important role in the workplace is played by colleagues, with satisfaction with colleagues revealing a stronger correlation with life satisfaction than satisfaction with the boss (Bowling, Eschleman & Wang, 2010). This may be another reason why employees at lower levels of the hierarchy feel more empathy for others than those at higher levels.

3. An important contribution is the analysis of fear of sympathy for others and its two facets in relation to career success, life satisfaction and personality constructs.
4. The importance of personality constructs becomes even more apparent when examining the predictive abilities of Big Five personality traits and self-reports for each empathy construct. All five constructs of empathy can be predicted in various combinations of self-endorsement, self-competence, neuroticism, cooperation, and imagination. This means that the various combinations of the above personality constructs and aspects of the self largely determine individual combinations of empathy constructs. In this conclusion, there are important practical implications for individual retrospection, analysis, therapy, development, and self-improvement.
5. Other contributions are the adaptation of four questionnaires for Bulgaria (Compassion for self - short format, Compassion for others, Fear of sympathy for others and Satisfaction with career), as well as the development of two new scales (Helpfulness and Objective career success) .

We cannot always maintain high self-esteem, there will always be difficulties and setbacks in our lives, but self-compassion, that safe haven, will always be at our disposal. In good times and in bad, at the top of the world and at the very bottom, it will give us strength and it can change your life.

The abstract faithfully and accurately reflects the essence of the dissertation work. The statement is professional, exact, it shows the author's personal commitment to the issues of the development.

The dissertation student has the necessary scientific publications approved by NACID.

In conclusion, I can say that I highly appreciate the work of Maria Petrova Vasileva, derived from the rich theoretical review, the conducted research and the analysis of its conclusions, and I propose to the members of the esteemed jury that she be awarded the ONS "Doctor of Psychology", in for awarding of educational and scientific degree "doctor" in Professional field 3.2. "Psychology", doctoral program "Cultural and differential psychology"

May 13, 2024, Varna

Assoc. Prof. M. Krasteva-Ivanova, MD, PhD