

BURGAS FREE UNIVERSITY
CENTRE OF HUMANITARIAN SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

STANDPOINT

by Prof. Mayiana Milcheva Mitevska, D.Sc
Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

of dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**"
in: field of higher education 3. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC
AND LEGAL SCIENCES
professional field 3.2. PSYCHOLOGY
doctoral programme SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

By: Sonyia Yordanova Stefanova

Subject: " CONSUMER ATTITUDES FORMING FACTORS IN CHOOSING A TOURISM
PRODUCT"

Research Supervisor: Assoc.prof. MIKHAIL PRODANOV, PhD
BURGAS FREE UNIVERSITY

1. General description of the submitted materials

By Order № UMO dated 03.10.2022 of the Rector of Burgas Free University (BFU) I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for providing a procedure for the defense of a dissertation thesis entitled "FACTORS FOR THE FORMATION OF CONSUMER ATTITUDES IN THE CHOICE OF A TOURIST PRODUCT" for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. The author of the dissertation is Sonyia Stefanova, with scientific supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mihail Prodanov, PhD from BURGAS FREE UNIVERSITY.

The material set submitted by Sonyia Stefanova is in compliance with the RRDA. The dissertation has been discussed at a meeting of the Department of Psychology at the Centre for Humanities at Burgas Free University and has been referred to a Scientific Jury for defense.

2. Relevance of the topic and appropriateness of the aims and objectives

The relevance of the research dissertation stems from the dynamic changes in the economic, information environment and their interrelation with human behavior from the perspective of social psychology. The significance of the study is found in the proposed scientifically based solutions for measuring consumer attitudes in the selection of a tourism product, from the purchase and "use" of the product, as well as from the construction of consumer loyalty. In this regard, the problems in analyzing consumer attitudes are thoroughly investigated. The apparent need for progressive research especially, in terms of quantification of results and their applied effectiveness is brought out. A real opportunity is found in a future study to build on and use the generalisations already achieved from the work with an analysis of communication media as part of international communication strategies and the formation of specific attitudes in tourism.

3. Problem knowledge

Sonyia Stefanova justifies the relevance of her scientific work by highlighting that psychology has accumulated and continues to accumulate and improve experience in the active development of domestic tourism. Moreover, she stresses that on the other hand, the requirements for improving the competitiveness of tourist services and the image of the country as an attractive tourist destination are on the agenda. Linking the development of an integrated marketing strategy to attract potential consumers with the identification of consumer attitudes, the author predicts a rapid promotion of Bulgarian tourism products and destinations.

4. Research methodology

The chosen research methodology allows to achieve the set purpose of the dissertation and to obtain adequate answers to the questions and tasks, it is relevant to the object of the study and the hypotheses. The research design includes theoretical analysis and synthesis; induction; deduction; comparison; abstraction and concretisation; theoretical summary and conclusions, questionnaire survey and structured interview to conduct a survey implemented in natural conditions. The data processing of the empirical study was carried out with a specialised statistical package - SPSS.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the thesis

The research addresses a number of topical and relevant issues in the field of social psychology and consumer behaviour with a focus on tourism. Characteristic of the work presented is the extensive use of both documentary sources and the results of empirical projections to confirm or refute the hypotheses put forward.

The dissertation research work is based on the problem specification, preparation of a structure, literature research on the topic of the dissertation, systematising the relevant studies on the topic from the last years, preparation of instruments for conducting the research.

As a result of the detailed work a dissertation has been developed with a total volume of 290 pages, main text - 237 pages. The summary results of the research and analysis are presented in 70 tables and 15 figures. There are 8 appendices. The sources used a total 502 references and electronic materials. The scientific production of Soniya Stefanova is described with analytical accuracy and precision. The research results are presented in a scientific style and language. In terms of structure, the work meets the requirements and standards for academic papers.

6. Contributions and Significance of the Development for Science and Practice

The scientific contributions are in the professional field of Psychology. They are obtained as a result of summarizing the research conducted by Soniya Stefanova and can be found in the presented scientific publications. Summarized, they are presented as follows:

1. New knowledge is obtained about the formation of consumer attitudes in the decision to choose a tourism product (destination).
2. The necessity of developing a typology of tourists related to their personal characteristics, classifying them into different target groups and codification of tourist resources is proved.

3. Suggested model, clustering of target groups forming the market environment, policies, opportunities for long-term strategies and competitiveness.

7. Assessment of publications on the doctoral thesis

The results of the study were used to prepare 8 publications with Soniya Stefanova as the sole author. The articles have been published in refereed scientific journals in the country and present the main results of the dissertation research.

8. Abstract

The abstract meets the requirements and correctly illustrates the structure and content of the dissertation.

9. Critical comments and recommendations

No significant comments regarding the scientific and publication work of Sonya Stefanova. It would be useful from a practical point of view in future research to make a short comparative analysis of the use of events for the formation of positive attitudes also in the field of tourism.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applicative results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LADAB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LADAB and the relevant Regulations of the Burgas Free University.

I give my positive assessment of the research presented by the above reviewed dissertation, abstract, results and contributions, and I propose the Honorable Scientific Jury to award the degree of Doctor of Education and Science to Sonya Stefanova in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology, doctoral programme SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY.

20.10. 2022 г.

Prepared the standpoint:

(Signature)

Prof. Mayiana Mitevaska, D.Sc.

