



Saint Petersburg State University

Tartu, 16. October 2020

**Report of the member of Thesis Council on the Thesis
“Personal and situational determinants of altruism”**

**Submitted for the completion of a scientific degree of candidate of psychological sciences
in Specialty 19.00.05 - Social Psychology
by Nedoshivina Mariia Aleksandrovna
at Saint Petersburg State University**

It is a pleasure to write this recommendation letter for acceptance of the scientific degree of candidate of psychological sciences submitted by Nedoshivina Mariia Aleksandrovna.

General comments

Dissertation provides an overwhelming insight into personality and situational characteristics associated with altruism in the context of specified four different manifestations of altruism model. This thesis addresses the highly relevant and vital areas of social psychological research integrating as a whole the current and historical/classical research about altruistic behavior as multiply determined phenomenon, and at the other side arise new areas in the nowadays social psychology as developed and tested four-component model of altruism.

The dissertation consists of four main chapters that are thematically coordinated integral parts of the dissertation. The main results of the dissertation research were published in four scientific papers and three of them in the journals included in the list approved by VAK (Higher Attestation Commission of Russian Federation) during last five years.

The dissertation consists of an introduction, main chapters, conclusions and summary with practical recommendations, and also a list of notations and abbreviations and a glossary. The thesis is well structured and correctly presented. There are both a Russian and English part of the dissertation, whereby the thesis is written in good English utilizing suitable academic terminology. The dissertation comprises 177 pages in each language version and four appendixes about used research methods following the classic structure of thesis in science in a form of the monographic dissertation.

Theoretical and methodological basis of the research are works of leading authors as well as references from valid and relevant scientific literature based on 172 sources for the discussed field, whereby one third of references are in English and two thirds in Russian mostly current sources from the 2000s along with the inclusion of a “classics”.

The key conclusions of the dissertation research are substantiated by overwhelming empirical data and stem from the research body. The dissertation has a clear contribution and interesting results and it addresses an important issue. No major criticism regarding the overall quality of the work I should like to move on to the specific areas of dissertation with some issues which could be addressed to specify through academical discussion.

Specific comments

Introduction to the main text is proper including the general theoretical and methodological foundations of the study highlighting the importance of the issue and the relevance of the research topic. This part is well written and provides a good background for understanding the rest of the thesis. The (general) purpose and (specific) objectives of the dissertation research have explained and as well as hypothesis of the research have presented, whereby the first hypothesis seems to cover large area than included in the content of hypothesis (consisting also comparison); and the last (sixth) research objective seem to cover more large bailiwick of research (also volunteering).

In the addressing the complex issue utilizing in the whole dissertation could be useful to bring more attention to the use of one of the key terms – “helping/помощь” across the dissertation because it seems that at most parts of the thesis (starting with introduction) terms “prosocial behavior” and “helping behavior” are used by Author as synonyms, but also in parallel line as general and specific terms.

Chapters 1 is theoretical background of the research, chapter 2 is methodological and chapter 3 performed the research process and its results. The thesis is inspired from both of the theoretical and methodological point of view. Author represents the ideas and knowledge with sufficient theoretical background. Used research methods are appropriate to the aims and hypothesis formulated in the thesis.

First chapter introduces and discusses theories proposed in the field taking interdisciplinary background of the altruistic behavior within different areas of psychology and concentrating to the social psychology of altruism with Author’s attempts to follow four different manifestations of altruism of her own theoretical model in order to apply it in further chapters. The literature review is concise, covering the main relevant theories and empirical studies in the field of study. It is the evidence of the deep theoretical knowledge and good orientation in the problem discussed in the thesis.

The second main part of the thesis is methodological consisting of five sub-chapters. In general, the coverage of the development of the triangulation of data collection through multi-stage methodology and integration of quantitative and qualitative research methods is thoughtful and coherent. The most important thing is that the Author succeed in connection of eight previously adapted research methods and one developed research method as integrated whole for analysis of the research material based on a large dataset, showing the Author’s high level of research expertise and impressive command of empirical methodology.

Nevertheless, concerning the methodological part of the thesis I would like to make one critical comment – research procedures are resented without describing following the ethic of research paying attention to the more in-depth information about whole process of research.

Also, I would like to ask the candidate to answer some questions as academical discussion points during the defense process:

What role can play participants gender and urbanization in studying the social representations of altruism to operationalize the concept of “altruism”?

What role can play participants gender in studying the interrelationship between the altruistic personality orientation and willingness to participate in charity?

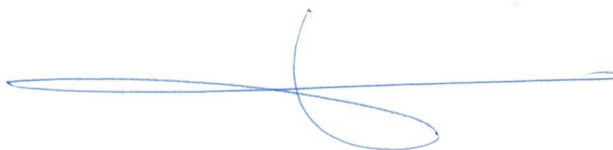
The Author correctly highlights the contribution of the thesis, and concerning with abovementioned specific questions for academical discussion raises more general question to the defendant: What are the limitations of the study?

The results of the dissertation research are well presented with the appropriate statistical analysis and their interpretation is at a high scientific level demonstrating a solid understanding of the research field with one (minor) exception – generalizations in the area of comparative study among Russian and Dutch university students tended to be too large – covering foreign respondents. Author highlights the key findings that represent the valuable basis for practical recommendations, presenting some thoughtful reflections on the research process and future directions for work in this area.

Conclusion

In spite of the above-mentioned minor remarks for academical discussion, this PhD thesis is clearly the result of great deal of work and much effort has been devoted to deliver a high-quality thesis bringing new evidence and new scientific debates in multiply determined altruistic behavior in social psychology. The present thesis is a structured and independently written PhD thesis with identifiable contribution of the Author, which meets the general requirements for this type of academic works, as required by the relevant provisions of the Saint Petersburg State University and its Department of Social Psychology. For the reasons and under consideration of the reservations named above, I recommend the PhD thesis entitled "Personal and situational determinants of altruism" by Mariia Nedoshivina for acceptance and for a defence.

Finally, I thank The Saint Petersburg State University, for the possibility to serve as an External Examiner for the thesis of Nedoshivina Mariia Aleksandrovna.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a long horizontal line with a loop on the right side and a vertical stroke crossing it.

Associate Professor Kristi Kõiv, PhD University of Tartu, Estonia