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DISSERTATION REVIEW

Reviewer: **Dr Plamen Dimitrov, Bulgarian Psychological Society**
NBU PhD Candidate: **Yael Sne-Cohen, REUT, Israel**
Dissertation Theme: **“RATIONAL AND EMOTIONAL INFLUENCES ON THE
DEGREE OF SUCCESS OF MEDIATION”**
Science Field Code: **05.02.24**
Year: **2009**

Yael Sne-Cohen’s dissertation addresses a very complex research question through a careful theoretical and field-work analysis of the significance of both rational and affective factors on the mediation process dynamics and results. The candidate shows how the mixture of cognitive and emotion-laden variables is central to understanding the process of mediation itself. The topic of the dissertation is not only relevant, but also very demanding given the lack of recent in-depth meta-analytic work in this particular research area.

This dissertation is very well organized, clear in its major statements, and persuasive by its analysis and conclusions. It displays a profound grasp of the previous research, respect to the theoretical context of the studies on the same and proxy research themes. The author clearly presents the key issues and hypotheses of emerging research on rational-emotive mediation.

In addition, Yael Sne-Cohen conveys a deep concern for the applied aspects of the field and presents a refreshing perspective on the cases used in her dissertation. Indeed, Yael Sne-Cohen’s dissertation is based on a series of extensive, multi-site interviews and oral testimony coupled with the analysis of various mediation practice-based sources. Her work is well written, rigorously researched and provides well defined accounts of mediation success field forces at both intrapsychological/personality and social interaction levels.

In this way, Sne-Cohen's work represents an important contribution to the study of complex issues of rational-emotive dilemma of mediator’s practice. The work examines the most important hypotheses of rational-emotive mediation (REM) and all related cognitive-behavior and psychodynamic modes of mediation work in various contexts. In such a way,

Sne-Cohen's work is a compelling analysis of how a mediator can construct, interpret, and act upon more sophisticated model of professional identity and style.

The major parts to the dissertation, with its subsections, are well balanced. Literature review is planned and performed at a higher level, and the writing style of the author is comprehensive and above the general requirements for that type of scientific publications. The introduction provides a detailed and focus overview of the background on the dissertation topic and the structure of the thesis follow the good practice standards. Main findings are provided in a reader-friendly format and the author skilfully summarises the conclusions that she has gained from analysis of her literature review and field-work results. The literature review itself not only outlines previous research that has been undertaken on the topic but indicates candidate's analytical capacity to investigate between and beyond published research. Yael Sne-Cohen is concentrated on the most important points that are relevant to her chosen topic and takes a gentle and precise theory discussion angle adding in such a way maximum effect to the thesis literature review part.

Methodology component is structured and presented in a way allowing the candidate to identify her understanding of methods of data collection, and here, Yael Sne-Cohen outlines clearly the ways in which she collected and processed empirical data. Her arguments are satisfactory substantiating her argument for using these methods and allow the readers to understand that these were the best possible methods to choose for this particular research project. Used graphs, charts and diagrams to illustrate trends and analysis are relevant and technically correct – however, some of them allow more discussions and conclusions on findings and experience than the presented in the empirical data section of the dissertation. The conclusions made are a correct summary of the own research findings of Yael Sne-Cohen and include an honest assessment of how appropriate additional rigorous research in this field of rational-emotional factors in mediation process would be for all future students. Bibliography is rich, properly listed, and most of the quoted sources are presented adequately.

The work is well measured in terms of volume, language and presentation style too.

The thesis confirms in a very refreshing manner many of the important applied social psychology hypotheses on rational-emotive nature of productive conflict-resolution interventions. In particular, even the critical thesis reader can safely conclude on the basis of

the presented work that (1) a vast amount of evidence exists to confirm the author's hypotheses of rational-emotional interaction in the mediation process/outcome determination, and (2) author's findings nicely lead to further research and applied work improvements.

My humble opinion at this point of review is that the thesis is successfully resolved and Yael Sne-Cohen's dissertation presents a very good example of applied research contribution to the field of mediation process effectiveness study, an praiseworthy example which indeed meets the requirements of this respected University for awarding the PhD degree to the candidate.

Respectfully yours,

Dr Plamen Dimitrov

Sofia, 15 April 2009