

## OPINION

**by Prof. Iren Yordanova Peltekova, PhD**

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski",

member of a scientific jury according to Order No. 940 of 19.10.2023.

of the Rector of the National Sports Academy „Vassil Levski”

**Subject:** dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree PhD "doctor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...

**The topic of the dissertation:** "Methodology for interdisciplinary training in the subject -Physical education and sports for students from the initial stage of the basic education level

**Author of the dissertation:** Iva Nikolaeva Naydenova-Dancheva, a full-time doctoral student at the Department of "Physical Education Theory"

**Supervisor:** Prof. Lyubomir Borisov, PhD, "Vassil Levski" National Sports Academy, Sofia

### **General presentation of the documentation**

The package of materials presented by Iva Naydenova-Dancheva includes 12 documents, all of which comply with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LAD), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LAD (PPLAD) and the Regulations for the Conditions and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and occupying academic positions in the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski". Her dissertation "Methodology for interdisciplinary training in the subject - Physical education and sports for elementary school students" was checked for plagiarism with the software system Plagiat-Sistem Antiplagiat print Internet SRL and the check did not find any inadmissible limits of plagiarism. These facts allow the procedure for the official review of the doctoral work to be carried out.

### **Relevance of the topic**

The dissertation is devoted to a significant problem related to the general educational preparation of students from the initial stage of education in the study of the subject "Physical Education and Sports" (FVS). The scientific research of the doctoral student, on the one hand, is aimed at modernizing the methodology of training in physical education and sports in accordance with the curricula of the FVS and the State Educational

Standards for general education, and on the other hand, at increasing the motivation of 1st and 2nd-grade students for active participation in the lessons of physical education and sports by using interdisciplinary connections with the studied subjects at this age. In this sense, the topic developed by Iva Nikolaeva Naydenova-Dancheva is current and has scientific value in theoretical, scientific, and applied terms.

### **Brief introduction of the PhD student**

Iva Naydenova-Dancheva has a master's degree in physical education and a bachelor's degree from Vasil Levski National Sports Academy with the first professional qualification "Football Coach" and the second "Physical Education". In the years after graduation, she went through various courses and qualifications in Bulgaria and abroad, with which she acquired additional educational training. The professional work experience is in sync with the education received and includes work as a teacher of FVS a football coach of children, junior and senior youth, and a men's team that participates in the "B" football group. All these facts speak of a lasting and deep interest in the chosen sports-pedagogical field and are logical steps in her professional growth.

### **Structure, content, and characteristics of the dissertation work**

The manuscript contains 259 pages, which many times exceeds the standards for this type of work. Structurally, the dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, references, and appendices. The work is illustrated with 106 tables and 104 figures. The bibliography includes 150 sources, of which 129 are in the Cyrillic alphabet, 20 are in the Latin alphabet, and 1 internet resource. At the bibliographic level, the citation standards are followed. The publication period of the literary sources varies from 1949 to 2020, which is an indicator of a thorough and multi-year follow-up of the researched problem.

At the end of the dissertation, the author presented 6 conclusions and 3 recommendations.

The contingent of the study is 81 students from I and II grades, studying in two Bulgarian schools, divided for the purposes of the study as an experimental and a control group. The experimental group included 37 students from "Otets Paisiy" Primary School, Knezha, and in the control group 44 students from 120 Primary School, "G. S. Rakovski" city of Sofia. The experimental work with the students was carried out in four consecutive academic terms within two academic years - 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. During this period, the students completed three tests - before the start of the experiment, at the end of the first academic year, and at the end of the second academic year. The used test battery includes the taking of an indicator of 10 characteristics, which are presented and described in detail in the text and fully correspond to the age capabilities of the students. In addition to tests to assess physical development and motor abilities, students are also

subjected to a test of their theoretical knowledge, by conducting a summary test on the subjects included in the interdisciplinary methodology. The summary test for the I class includes knowledge of the subjects "Bulgarian language and literature", "Mathematics" and "Native studies", and to the general test for the II class, the study subject "English language" was added.

The first chapter is theoretical and an overview. In it, the doctoral student clearly and logically introduces the reader to the problems of the research. Important issues related to the role and importance of physical activity for human health and creative longevity are touched upon, and the consequences of the pandemic caused by COVID-19 and the inevitable transition to online learning, which affected the quality of life of all people and the learning of students, are analyzed. An important place is devoted to the opportunities provided by an interdisciplinary approach to learning and competence-oriented education. The multi-functional possibilities of games as the most attractive means for primary school students and to increase the quality and effectiveness of the learning process in FVS are presented in depth. Characteristics of the age-related development, anatomical-physiological, psychological, and motor capabilities of children from 7 to 10 years of age are indicated. With the analysis of the dynamic changes in the conditions of the changing educational environment, the author convincingly proves that new teaching approaches are needed, which most fully meet the needs of the current reality and are aimed at the future realization of the students.

The chapter is readable and logical, and all sub-points are directly related to the object and subject of the study. Based on the presentation, a complete idea of the upcoming essence of the dissertation work is obtained and the working hypothesis of the study is logically formulated. Iva Naydenova-Dancheva has managed to write a fascinating and at the same time scientific first chapter.

In the second chapter, the subject, object, purpose, and tasks of the dissertation work are presented, and the stages and methodology of the research are described. The object, subject, and purpose are presented very correctly. The five scientific research methods used are appropriate and allow for solving the set tasks and achieving the goal of the research.

The third chapter is mainly contributory in nature and is dominantly exploratory. It includes a large set of test benchmark results and their analysis. The obtained results are presented in tables and figures, which facilitates the perception of voluminous information quickly and clearly.

The volume and structure of the dissertation work allow us to achieve the goal and tasks of the scientific research. The structure is subordinated to the "prove/disprove" logical framework of the thesis' main hypothesis.

At the terminological and technical level, the dissertation is of a very high quality.

### **Evaluation of the author's summary essay and publications**

The summary essay is presented in Bulgarian and English. The volume of the Bulgarian version is 40 pages, and the English version is 37 pages. The content and quality of the summary essay accurately reflect the structure and main results achieved in the dissertation and present them adequately, comprehensively and in a correct manner. At the end of the summary essay, the bibliography of the published articles on the dissertation work is presented.

The doctoral student has distributed part of the obtained results of the experimental work in three independent publications, which are on the topic of the dissertation and were published in the years of the research. They bring her the necessary 30 points, which covers the minimum national requirements required by the Law.

### **Knowledge of the problem, contributions, and significance of developments**

Only a person who has good practical, theoretical, and pedagogical training, only a person who carefully monitors the innovations in the educational processes, who is on "you" with the complex teaching activity, which is sometimes a confusing matter, who is guided by a strong professional interest can be began to develop such a specialized and innovative topic, which, in turn, is widely used in the general education of students. To my pleasure - Iva Naydenova-Dancheva has taken up this challenge.

I find the developed methodology for interdisciplinary training an innovative, modern, and motivating solution. The presented author's methodology establishes a logical connection between the subjects studied in "Physical Education and Sports", "Bulgarian Language and Literature", "Mathematics", "English Language" and "Native Studies". The methodology is based on intersubject connections, their discovery and interweaving in the lesson work on "Physical Education and Sport" with the studied material in other subjects from the compulsory curriculum. It is in this interweaving that I find a methodical and practical contribution.

With the created author's methodology, Iva Naydenova-Dancheva modernizes and expands the methodology of training in physical education and sports for students from the initial stage of the basic educational level. It presents undiscovered opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, with the emphasis being on the connection of the FVS with other academic disciplines and is based on the parallel development of theoretical knowledge and motor skills.

With the presented methodology, not only the knowledge and skills of the students but also the competencies of the FVS teachers are increased.

With a practical-applied contribution, I determine the created questions for the assessment of the cognitive-motor abilities of students of the I and II grades.

The correlation model between the physical development and motor abilities of the students and the tracked changes serves as a theoretical reference for the development of students from 7-10 years of age and their capabilities in accordance with gender similarities and differences. These results can be used by other researchers as a comparison for years to come.

I am deeply convinced that any scientific development becomes much more valuable when it has its practical application. In this line of thought - the work provided to me has a markedly practical-applied character.

### **Conclusion**

Doctoral student Iva Naydenova-Dancheva has knowledge of scientific publications in the fields of pedagogy, sports pedagogy, sports education, and school education. She implements an empirical study according to all the requirements for this type of research. She reaches reasoned conclusions and gives practical guidelines.

The summary is that the doctoral student presents a comprehensive text with theoretical, methodological, and practical value that meets the requirements for a dissertation.

Based on the analysis, conclusions, and summary regarding the dissertation work "Methodology for interdisciplinary training in the subject - Physical education and sports for students from the primary stage of basic education", the abstract, and the publications, I recommend the members of the honorable scientific jury to decide to award to **Iva Nikolaeva Naydenova-Dancheva**, PhD "doctor" in professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...

02.11.2023

Signature:

/prof. Iren Peltekova, PhD/