

RECENZIA

by Prof., **Ph.D. Mr. Lucian Angelov Milkov** - lecturer at UNSS, Faculty of Management and Administration, Department of Public Administration, E-mail: milkovl@abv.bg; phone 0895 553 400

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**"

by: **Field of higher education:** 1. Pedagogical sciences

Professional direction: 1. 2. Pedagogy

Doctoral program: Theory of education and didactics

Author: Nikolina Georgieva Tureva

Topic: "The student team in project-based learning"

Research supervisor: Assoc., Dr. Albena Alexandrova Ovcharova - teacher in the Department of "Pedagogy and Education Management" at the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Polytechnic "Paisiy Hilendarski"

1. General description of the presented materials

By order No. PD-21-131 dated 22.01.2024 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure a procedure for the defense of a dissertation work on the topic "The student team in project -based training" for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional direction 1. 2. Pedagogy, doctoral program "Theory of education and didactics". The author of the dissertation work is Nikolina Georgieva Tureva, a doctoral student in (regular form of education) at the "Pedagogy and Education Management" department, with the scientific supervisor Assoc., Doctor of Pedagogy Albena Alexandrova Ovcharova from PU "Paisiy Hilendarski"

The set of paper materials presented by Nikolina Tureva is in accordance with Article 36 (1) of the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of the PU, includes the following documents:

- a request to the Rector of the PU to disclose the procedure for the defense of a dissertation work;
- curriculum vitae in European format;

- minutes from the department council related to reporting the readiness to open the procedure and preliminary discussion of the dissertation work;
- dissertation work;
- abstract;
- a list of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation;
- copies of scientific publications;
- list of noticed citations;
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
- certificate of compliance with the specific requirements of the respective faculty (only for doctoral students enrolled until 05/04/2018);
- a resume with data on the types of education and specializations obtained;

The doctoral student has attached 5 publications, all related to the topic of the dissertation research. They were published in the period 2021-2024.

2. Brief biographical data for the doctoral student

Nikolina Tureva has a higher education in pedagogy, reinforced with many additional qualifications and specializations at PU "Paisiy Hilendarski", VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius", University of Burgas, University of Thrace and SU "St. Kl. Ohridski". He also holds a Second professional qualification degree. This training is a guarantee of serious theoretical and practical training and the possibility of achieving high educational and educational results in direct teaching activities. Since 1995, Nikolina Tureva has been a primary teacher at "Aleko Konstantinov" Primary School, Plovdiv

3. Actuality of the topic and appropriateness of the set goals and tasks

The topic of fundamental educational issues of the dissertation research has been carefully selected and relates both to the experience of the doctoral student and to the fundamental educational and educational problems currently being developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Among them, a leading place is given to the primary school, as a factor for laying the foundations of a modern, high-performing modern school, which will guarantee students a high intellectual development and many qualitative competencies.

4. Knowing the problem

When familiarizing with the dissertation research, the literature review, the reference to leading domestic and foreign authors working in the researched field,

it is clear that Nikolina Tureva, figuratively speaking, is "on your side" with the subject, with the issues of project-based learning, competency models . The development of modern education and training, the search for new, better and effective educational models create conditions for building in children, and in particular, those of primary school age, readiness to master all forms and types of the "communication" phenomenon " .

Project-based learning takes place in the conditions of teamwork during which children enter into interactions based on empathic communication with each other.

5. Research methodology

The empirical study was conducted with 702 students aged 7-11 years, studying in the primary stage of education in schools in the city of Plovdiv - OU "Aleko Konstantinov" and OU "Stoyan Mihailovski", town of Krichim - OU "Vasil Levski" , the city of Dupnitsa - "Paisiy Hilendarski" Elementary School, the village of Graf Ignatievo - "Graf Ignatiev" Primary School and the village of Popovitsa - "Hristo Botev" Primary School.

To conduct the empirical research, 3 instruments (2 standardized and one non-standardized/author's) questionnaire for teamwork skills/cooperation, activity, initiative were used.

The chosen research methodology allows achieving the set goal and obtaining an adequate answer to the tasks solved in the dissertation work.

A standardized test of empathy in elementary school-aged children ("Feelings and Thoughts"), reporting general levels of empathy and emotion recognition.

The measurement of changes in general levels of empathy and emotion recognition in an empirical study was carried out using a standardized test measuring empathy in elementary school-aged children.

It was adapted and published in Bulgarian as "Measurement test of empathy in elementary school-age children. Feelings and thoughts" in "Basics of psychological measurements" - St. Stoyanova (2007) with attached 6 photographs of faces with clearly distinguishable facial expressions of the six basic human emotions: happiness, surprise, fear, anger, sadness and disgust.

6. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work

The dissertation has a volume of 246 pages, of which 205 pages are the main text, 16 pages of bibliography (including 21 primary sources, 191 literary sources,

of which 79 in Cyrillic and 112 in Latin and 11 Internet resources) and 25 pages of appendices.

The structure of the dissertation work includes: introduction, 3 chapters, conclusions, conclusion, used sources and literature and appendices. The exhibition includes 28 tables, 76 figures and 2 diagrams.

The proposed structure fully meets the requirements for composing a work of this kind. It contains an introduction, a very well-arranged first chapter (theoretical), in which Nikolina Tureva shows excellent knowledge in a number of areas related to the topic. This contributes to a very clear and scientifically fluid and objective analysis of the concept of "project-based learning".

The second chapter is devoted to the empirical study. According to the PhD student, "project-based learning uses students' capacity to generate ideas to build creative problem-solving skills. Team work is fundamental for the formation and development of social competences in students. Project-based learning is tied to communication, collaboration, sharing of ideas in empathy-based activities that are oriented toward specific results and implemented in an appropriate environment (Dissertation: p. 113).

The third chapter is devoted to an analysis of the results of the empirical study. Here I cannot but express my admiration for the excellent structuring of the analysis, its saturation with graphic materials, the thorough discussion of all elements of the obtained data.

In the study before implementation of project-based learning, no significant difference was observed in teamwork between boys and girls. Regardless of their gender, for the most part, students feel accepted and equal members of the teams. In terms of the locality in which the school is located, students from different settlements give similar responses regarding teamwork, with the highest recorded levels of teamwork among students from the small town, followed by students from the large city and finally to those from the village. It can be assumed that this is due to the informal contacts that students have with each other in their free time from school commitments. Since students from the small and large cities attend schools in the neighborhood in which they live, this implies easier and more frequent contact between them after school.

The analysis of the results of the research input shows that the students have relatively good social competence and willingness to work in a team.

7. Contributions and significance of the development for science and practice

- A thorough study of the historical and contemporary scientific and practical theories related to the student team in project-based learning has been done.
- A diagnostic tool designed for children of primary school age was designed and implemented, which aims to establish the levels of indicators of social competence for teamwork: cooperation, activity, initiative, responsibility.
- An original empirical study was conducted on the potential of project-based learning to influence the teamwork skills and empathy levels of primary school students, as well as class cohesion.
- Recommendations are offered for working with the student team in a project-based environment in the initial stage of education

Conclusions from the dissertation research

The analysis of the results of the dissertation research is the basis for formulating the following conclusions:

- The understanding of project-based learning in historical and contemporary terms is presented.
- Work on projects in the initial stage of education is objectified in a theoretical and practical discourse.
- The effectiveness of the application of project-based learning depends on the good methodological preparation of the teacher, related to his ability to plan and carry out the project activities, according to the age-related psycho-physiological features of the students and the goals he has set.
- An empirical study was planned and conducted, and its results served to offer recommendations for working in a project-based environment in the initial stage of education.
- The empirical study, covering a one-year period of implementation of project-based learning among the studied students from the primary stage of education, showed the following results:
 - the application of project-based learning raises levels of social competence for teamwork and of general empathy in students from the primary stage of education.
 - the level of cohesion of student teams is increased and suggests that there is a positive correlation between increased levels of teamwork skills, empathy and cohesion of student teams, which can be further investigated.

8. Evaluation of publications on the dissertation work

The attached publications of the doctoral student were developed within 4 years and are directly related to the topic of the dissertation research.

They have been published in serious scientific publications, with editorial boards and preliminary reviews. Through them, Nikolina Tureva makes known to the scientific pedagogical community in our country about her research and the results of their analysis.

9. Personal participation of the doctoral student

I categorically state that the publications and the dissertation are my own scientific research. The style, language and thesaurus used are strictly scientific and are the result of extensive dissertation research. The conclusions and recommendations made are directly related to the dissertation and fully correspond to the analysis of the results obtained from the practical research.

10. Abstract

The abstract strictly follows the structure of the dissertation and reflects the main results achieved in the research. Here we also find the list of publications, as well as the contribution moments.

It is in a volume of 32 standard pages.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks, both to the topic and to the structure and analysis of the data obtained from the study. The conclusions and recommendations are a natural consequence of the serious analysis, the excellent knowledge of the leading our and foreign authors in this field.

I salute the author of the study, as well as the respected scientific supervisor, without whose competent help and erudition the study would not have been structured and completed in this way.

12. Personal impressions

I do not know Nikolina Tureva personally, but I have come across her name in some of the works where she has published her articles and scientific communications.

13. Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results

I would be most pleased to receive a monograph devoted to this very important educational problem. I am confident that the doctoral student-supervisor team will be able to prepare a work that, in my opinion, will have a significant place in the modern pedagogy and methodology of primary education. There are very serious results of the conducted research and a wonderful analysis of the obtained data,

accompanied by numerous graphic materials in dynamics, according to individual indicators. The sample is sufficient for a monographic work.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of PU "Paisiy Hilendarski" .

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Nikolina Georgieva Tureva possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in scientific specialty 1. Pedagogical sciences, Professional direction 1. 2. Pedagogy by demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted research, presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and I propose to the members of the Honorable Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Nikolina Georgieva Tureva in field of higher education: 1. Pedagogy, professional direction 1. 2. Pedagogical sciences, doctoral program "Theory of education and didactics".

02/20/2024

Reviewer:

City. Sofia

(Prof., PhD Lucian Milkov)