

OPINION

by **Prof. Dr. Kalin Kanchev Gaidarov, professor at New Bulgarian University**

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

by: field of higher education 3 Social, economic and legal sciences

professional direction 3.2. Psychology

doctoral program "Pedagogical and Age Psychology"

Author: Tanya Stefanova Ilieva

Topic: "Development of strengths in childhood and adolescence"

Research supervisor: Associate Professor Dr. Kirilka Simeonova Tagareva, Associate Professor and Head of the Department at the Pedagogical Faculty of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski"

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

Tanya Ilieva is a doctoral student in the Department of Psychology of the Pedagogical Faculty of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski", doctoral program "Pedagogical and Age Psychology". The dissertation work was discussed by the members of the department on 17.05.2022 and is aimed for public defense

2. Relevance of the topic

The topic of the dissertation is undeniably relevant, especially considering the passivity of our educational system in the field of nurture. It is the personality of the adolescent that is the center of any psychological and pedagogical impact. Optimizing personal functioning is a generator of the overall social development of children and adolescents. In this sense, the questions investigated in the dissertation work are essential for improving the interaction between the school and students in the context of their socialization.

3. Knowing the problem

The bibliography of the work contains 205 sources in Cyrillic and Latin, which, in itself, shows the serious work of the dissertator with the existing scientific literature in the subject area of the study. The fact that the main construct on which Tanya Ilieva builds the thesis (which is undeservedly neglected in modern psychology) is "character" deserves admiration. This is the essence that allows the author to build an integral research approach that unites personal-psychological and pedagogical-psychological vectors, and thus the dissertation acquires a special value.

Constructs related to the main category that are the subject of analysis in modern approaches to psychology, such as "well-being", "moral competence", "subjective happiness", as well as the connotative concepts "virtues" and "prosocial behavior", are also examined.

It should also be noted the idea of the dissertator to combine the theoretical-analytical with the applied approach, by including in the next part of the work programs for the development of the strengths of the character of adolescents. Here is also a serious review of existing such programs that have proven their effectiveness. This was subsequently developed in the empirical part of the dissertation, where an own model of such a program was presented and implemented as part of the research methodology.

4. Research methodology

The design of the empirical study was developed correctly, presenting: goals, tasks, object, subject, methodology and hypotheses. Two points should be noted here. First, the author adapted for Bulgarian conditions the self-assessment scale "Strengths of children's character" by Katrin Dalsgaard, while observing the relevant standards. Second, he created his own version of a character strengths development program (Development Program), which was used in the formative stage of the study.

The applied statistical procedures and criteria are selected according to the nature of the psychodiagnostic tools used and the characteristics of the obtained distributions of the empirical data. Another positive side of this part of the dissertation is the inclusion of a formative quasi-experiment, which has both a constructive and a verifying character.

5. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

Tanya Ilieva claims 5 theoretical and 4 applied contributions. I believe that they have a place in the presented dissertation work.

The dissertation must be evaluated on its merits, as an interesting, current and innovative scientific-applied research that shows a developed author's views and creative potential.

6. Evaluation of the publications and personal contribution of the doctoral student

The author indicates 7 own publications on the topic of the dissertation, of which 2 are co-authored. They have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Headings correspond to main aspects of the dissertation.

Tanya Ilieva has developed an original and thorough scientific product that fully meets the requirements for this type of work.

7. Abstract

The abstract reflects to the necessary extent the essence and main aspects of the dissertation work.

8. Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results

The quality of the evaluated development is indisputable and this allows to promote its application directly in psychological and pedagogical practice. It would also be helpful if the author continues to work in this area, expanding and deepening his research. The development of new application programs of a forming nature will be particularly useful for the development of modern nurturing activities in the educational system.

CONCLUSION

WITH THE FOREGOING IN MIND, I RECOMMEND THE MEMBERS OF THE HONORABLE SCIENTIFIC JURY TO VOTE FOR THE AWARD OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE OF DOCTOR IN:

AREA OF HIGHER EDUCATION 3. SOCIAL, BUSINESS AND LEGAL SCIENCES, PROFESSIONAL FIELD 3.2. PSYCHOLOGY

ON

TANYA STEFANOVA ILIEVA

13.08.2022

Prepared the opinion:
Prof. Dr. Kalin Gaidarov