

REVIEW

by Professor Valentina Stoycheva Margaritova Ph.D.

Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

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

Higher education field 1. Pedagogical sciences

Professional area 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...

Doctoral Program: Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports

Author: Georgi Nikolov Kabakov

Title: Optimisation of the Psycho-Physical Training of the Football Referee

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Ph.D. Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov, Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

1. General description of the submitted materials

By order No. ПД-21-2093 dated 13.12.2022 of the Rector of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury to hold a procedure for the defence of a dissertation thesis entitled Optimisation of the Psycho-Physical Training of the Football Referee for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional area 1.3. Pedagogy of training in..., Doctoral Program: Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports. The author of the dissertation work is **Georgi Nikolov Kabakov** – an independent doctoral student at the Department of Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports with scientific supervisor Prof. Ph.D. Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The set of paper materials presented by **Georgi Nikolov Kabakov** is in accordance with Art. 36 (1) of the Regulations of the Academic Staff Development at PU, and includes the following documents:

- a request to the Rector of the PU to open the procedure for defence of the dissertation thesis;

- curriculum vitae (European format);
- minutes from the department council reporting the readiness to open the procedure and a preliminary discussion of the dissertation work;
- dissertation thesis;
- abstract;
- a list of the publications on the subject of the dissertation;
- copies of the scientific publications;
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the enclosed documents;

2. Concise biographical data for the doctoral student

Georgi Kabakov was born on February 22, 1986 in the city of Plovdiv. In 2000, he completed his primary education at Dimitar Talev Primary School - Plovdiv. He obtained the educational qualification degree Professional Bachelor in 2010 at the European College of Economics and Management, Plovdiv. In 2018, he acquired a Bachelor's Degree in Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, majoring in Pedagogy of Physical Education, and in 2019 he graduated from the Master's Program Sports at School. He started work as an Assistant at the Department of Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports at the Faculty of Pedagogy of PU in 2020. In the same year, he was enrolled as an independent doctoral student. Assistant Georgi Nikolov Kabakov also developed in the field of football refereeing - he started his career in 2001. Since 2013, he has been practicing as an international football referee. He was voted the best referee in Bulgaria for 2015 and 2021.

3. Relevance of the topic and adequacy of the set goals and tasks

The dissertation thesis is developed on the basis of issues, increasingly attracting the interest of the experts, related to aspects of football refereeing such as the proper running of the football game and the regulation of the relations among football players, as well as the optimisation of the psychophysical training of the referees. This fact awakes interest and gives relevance to the topic of the dissertation.

4. Knowledge on the subject

Ass. Georgi Kabakov has been a long-time football referee with great experience and professionalism in his work, acquainted with the very details of the profession. He has

received a number of awards. Along with his abundant theoretical knowledge, he demonstrates practical skills which is a prerequisite for a successfully developed scientific work.

5. Research methodology

In order to solve the tasks, achieve the goal and prove the hypothesis, the doctoral student implements a complex of pedagogical and specialised research methods, which include:

1. Examination, analysis and summarisation of literary sources;
2. Survey;
3. Methods for measuring and evaluating of the physical development - weight and BMI;
4. Pedagogical monitoring;
5. Pedagogical testing for physical capacity:
 - 5.1. Explosive Strength Test;
 - 5.2. Joints Flexibility test;
 - 5.3. FIFA fitness test;
 - 5.4. Singles-doubles-singles test;
6. Mental tests:
 - 6.1. Self-confidence, activity and mood test (SAM test);
 - 6.2. Situational Judgement Test (SJT);
 - 6.3. Concentration test;
 - 6.4. Time Perception Test.

6. Characterisation and assessment of the dissertation work

The thesis developed by Assistant Professor Georgi Kabakov follows the classic structure of this type of work and complies with the generally accepted requirements. It contains an introduction, three chapters - an overview of the specialised sources, statement of the problem, scientific and methodological parameters of the study (hypothesis, purpose, tasks, subject and object of the study), organisation and methodology, analysis of the results of the study, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography and appendices. The thesis is

developed in a volume of 175 pages. It is visualised in 45 tables, 97 figures, 7 appendices, references from 235 literary sources and 16 sites.

The introduction substantiates the importance of the scientific problem - the magic of the football game has conquered the world since ancient times, and the referees are the sports educators on the pitch. The optimisation of the psychophysical training of the football referees would ensure higher efficiency in their activities.

In the first chapter, the author performs a logically structured, qualitative and precise theoretical analysis of the problem in focus. The overall history and origins of the football game, history and stages of football refereeing are examined. The particulars of the physical, mental and psychophysical training of the football referee is thoroughly and competently examined.

In the second chapter, the hypothesis is formulated on the basis of the theoretical analysis and practical experience of the problem. The purpose and tasks follow the logic of scientific pedagogical research and the specificity of the dissertation scientific problem. The object and subject of research are defined, the methodology is developed. The structure of the research follows the logic of the main research tasks and leads to the achievement of the set purpose.

In chapter three, the results of the research are presented in tables and diagrams. Variation and correlation analysis and hypothesis testing are used for data analysis. Mathematical and statistical processing is performed via Excel and the statistical package SPSS. They provide answers to the tasks set. The results obtained are summarised in tables and diagrams, correlation dependences are analysed to visualise the internal structure of the studied phenomena, where effective structural changes resulting from the applied models on the head referees are observed. The application of correlation analysis is focused on recording the results of the two experimental groups. A correlation matrix is also offered for the established statistically significant relationships.

The results are analysed in the focus of the research concept, which emphasises the competence of the author.

Conclusions and Recommendations follow further in the thesis. Based on the theoretical overview and the analysis of the results of the conducted experiment, 6 conclusions and 5 recommendations are drawn. They are specific and are the result of the conducted research.

The literature reference is correctly structured.

The appendices are located in the supplement to the dissertation.

The dissertation work meets all the regulatory requirements for the acquisition of scientific degrees.

7. Scientific and practical contributions and significance of the research

The author examines the mental and physical training of the football referee as the main components in the overall psychophysical preparation of the football referees and video assistant referees in order to enhance their work. The main contributions are:

1. A scientifically based theory is developed to optimise the psychophysical training of the football referees.
2. An actual and significant problem related to the process of development, improvement and specialisation in the training of football referees and assistant referees is examined.
3. Rational training models for physical, mental and psycho-physical training are created and experimented in the annual cycle in terms of content and structure.
4. The applied models and methodology for psychophysical training of the football referees are a foundation for new research and development of more training models.
5. An appropriate test battery with high informativeness and complex assessment is implemented in the three spheres of referee training. Objective results as well as statistical analysis have proven the effectiveness of the applied models.
6. The expanded knowledge about the psychophysical training of football referees is of special value for the innovative approach to the education and training of referees, adequate for contemporary football.

8. Assessment of the publications on the dissertation thesis

Ass. Kabakov has offered four publications related to the dissertation work. Three of them are independent and one is co-authored. In them, he examines modern trends in the formation of football referees, physical training, as well as mental training as fundamental for the activity of the football referees. It includes several types of readiness: general, permanent, specialised and situational. The latest requirements for the activity of the video assistant referee are presented. The author's competence on the subject under consideration is evident in the publications. The author and I have no publications in common.

The publications correspond to the quantitative requirement of the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions.

9. Personal contribution of the doctoral student

The conducted research was personally conducted by Assistant Georgi Kabakov and the scientific contributions are his own merit. He certifies this with a declaration of authenticity. Considering the personal qualities, theoretical preparation and professional experience of the doctoral student, I have no doubt that the dissertation thesis is his personal work.

10. Abstract

The abstract was developed in accordance with the requirements for pedagogical research. Its structure and content are a concise version of the dissertation.

11. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks and recommendations regarding the scientific work.

12. Personal impressions

I know the PhD student personally as a teacher in the department of Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports. He is an extremely competent, organised, accurate and responsible in the performance of his work duties person.

Ass. Kabakov possesses skills for scientific research and can effectively conduct objective study in the scientific specialty "Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports".

13. Recommendations for future use of the dissertation contributions and results

I would recommend that the developed and tested training models for physical, mental and psychophysical training be applied in the overall preparation of the football referees.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation thesis *contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science* and **meet all** the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria (ASDA), the Regulations for the Implementation of ASDA and the relevant Regulations of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The dissertation work proves that the doctoral student **Georgi Nikolov Kabakov** possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports, **demonstrating** qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Further to the above, I confidently give my *positive evaluation* of the conducted research, presented in the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and I *propose to the honourable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "doctor"* to **Georgi Nikolov Kabakov** in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional area 1.3. Pedagogy of training in..., Doctoral program Theory and methodology of physical education and sports.

Plovdiv, 18.01.2023

Reviewer: ...

(Prof. Valentina Margaritova, PhD)