

OPINION

by Professor Valentina Stoycheva Margaritova, D.Sc, PhD

Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv

on a dissertation thesis for awarding the educational and scientific degree "**doctor**"

in: 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 of the dissertation: Markus Alois Senft

Title: *Sports-Pedagogical and Psychological Aspects to Optimise WingTsun Training*

Scientific Advisor: Professor Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov, D.Sc, PhD, *Paisii Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv

1. Overview on the procedure and the candidate

Pursuant to order № ПД-21-711 from 01.04.2024 by the Rector of *Paisii Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv, I was appointed as a member of the scientific jury to open a procedure for the defence of a dissertation thesis entitled *Sports-Pedagogical and Psychological Aspects to Optimise WingTsun Training* for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the Higher Education Field 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, Markus Alois Senft, is a doctoral student of independent training at the Department of Theory and Methodology of Physical Education and Sports with scientific advisor Prof. Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov, D.Sc, Ph.D. from *Paisii Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv.

The presented set of materials, submitted on paper by the doctoral student, complies with Art.36(1) of the Regulations for the Academic Staff Development of the university, and includes the following documents:

- a request to the Rector of the university to open the procedure for the defence of the dissertation work;
- European format curriculum vitae;
- minutes from the Department Council announcing the disposition to open the procedure and a conduct of a preliminary discussion of the dissertation work;
- dissertation thesis;
- abstract;

- a list of scientific publications on the subject of the dissertation;
- copies of scientific publications;
- declaration about the originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
- certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements
- a receipt for the fee paid according to tariff

Markus Alois Senft was born on 18.11.1967 in Germany. He graduated from the *Johann Michael Seiler* High School in Dillingen (1978-1987). Between 2004 and 2009 he was a student at *Paisii Hilendarski* University of Plovdiv, obtaining successfully a bachelor's and master's degrees. He also has a number of additional training qualifications in Germany. He has a MA in Arts (specialization in Applied Cultural Studies at the University of Lüneburg, 1989-1997). He is fluent in English, and his mother tongue is German. He has been taking an active part in a number of annual conferences.

2. Topicality of the subject

The dissertation work is developed targeting issues, increasingly attracting the attention of specialists, related to the *WingTsun* self-defence system and the sports, pedagogical and psychological aspects of training optimisation. The aforementioned generates interest and adds relevance to the chosen topic of the dissertation.

3. Depth of subject knowledge

Markus Senft is a member of the *European WingTsun Organisation* with long years of experience and professionalism in his activities as well as profound knowledge of the topic. In line with his rich theoretical background, he also demonstrates skills, which is a prerequisite for a successfully developed scientific work.

4. Research methodology

To resolve the tasks, achieve the goal and prove the hypothesis, the PhD student applies a complex of general pedagogical and specialised research methods. The selected methodology of study contributes to the achievement of the set goal and to the access of an adequate solution of the tasks in the dissertation work.

5. Description and evaluation of the dissertation thesis and its contributions

The developed dissertation follows the classic structure for such research and meets the general requirements. It contains an introduction, three chapters – a review of specialised sources, formulation of the problem, scientific and methodological parameters of the research (hypothesis, goal and tasks, subject and object of the research), methodology, mathematical and statistical evaluation and organisation of the research, analysis of the results, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography and appendices. The thesis is distributed in a volume of

175 pages (202 with the appendices). It is illustrated with 32 tables, 48 figures, and 151 literary sources are used.

The introduction supports the importance of the scientific problem - the use of martial arts as a means of conflict resolution. Another aspect is their application as a therapy with a positive effect on mental and physical health during practice by improving mood and reducing stress. The special role of *EWTO* - the *European WingTsun Organisation* - with 50 000 members is indicated, as well as the experimental subject of research - the introduction of the psychological and educational concept *Heidelberg Competence Training* in *WingTsun* to improve the output results of the participating students.

In the first chapter, the author conducts a logically structured, qualitative and precise theoretical analysis of the problem under consideration. The history of *WingTsun* is detailed. The pedagogical and psychological aspects of *WingTsun*, as well as the *Heidelberg Competence Training (HCT)*, are thoroughly and expertly explored.

In the second chapter, the hypothesis is built on the basis of theoretical analysis and practical experience. The goal and tasks are in line with the logic of the scientific pedagogical research and the specificity of the dissertation problem. The object and subject of research are defined, and the methodology is presented. The organisation of the research follows the logic of the main research tasks and leads to the achievement of the set goal.

Chapter three contains the results of the study which are laid out in tables and diagrams. Variation and correlation analysis, and hypothesis testing are implemented for data analysis and detection of statistical regularities. The mathematical and statistical processing is performed with Excel and the SPSS statistical package. They provide solutions to the tasks set. The obtained results are summarised in tables and diagrams, correlation dependences are analysed to visualise the internal structure of the explored phenomena, where effective structural changes resulting from the application of *HCT* and the positive effect on the studied indicators are observed.

The results are analysed in line with the research concept, where the competence of the author is evident.

Conclusions and Recommendations are next presented. Based on the theoretical overview and the analysis of the results of the conducted experiment, 5 conclusions and 4 recommendations are drawn. They are specific and are the result of the conducted research.

The reference sources are arranged correctly.

Appendices follow as a supplement to the dissertation.

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

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

Markus Senft has submitted three independent publications relevant to the dissertation work. There he explores the concept of the *WTPLUS* program in the scope of the *WingChun* practices, as well as the *Heidelberg* training model. The author's competence on the actual subject 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 the Acquisition of Scientific Degrees and the Occupation of Academic Positions.

7. Abstract

The abstract is developed in accordance with the requirements for pedagogical research. Its structure and content summarise the dissertation thesis.

8. Recommendations for future implementation of the dissertation contributions and results

I would recommend that the *Heidelberg* training model be put into practice in order to help optimise *WingTsun* training.

April, 15th

Plovdiv

Reviewer:

Professor Valentina Margaritova, D.Sc, PhD