

REVIEW
of
Prof. Dr. PhD Kiril Zahariev Kostov, South-West University "Neofit Rilski" Blagoevgrad

regarding the qualities of a dissertation
to acquire the educational and scientific degree

„DOCTOR“

field of higher education **1. Pedagogical sciences**
professional direction **1.3. Pedagogy of training in:**
PhD program: **"Theory and methodology of physical education and sports training".**

Author: Markus Aloys Zenft,
PhD student of independent study at the department "Theory and Methodology of Physical
Education and Sports" at the Faculty of Biology

***Subject: SPORTS-PEDAGOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS FOR
OPTIMIZING WINGTSUN TRAINING***

Supervisor: Prof. Ph.D. Veselin Zhelyazkov Margaritov

1. General presentation of the procedure and the PhD student

By order RD-21-711 dated 22.03.2024 of the Rector of the Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski", I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to ensure a procedure for the defense of a dissertation work on the subject: "SPORTS-PEDAGOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS FOR OPTIMIZING WINGTSUN TRAINING" for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree 'doctor' in the above-mentioned field of higher education, professional direction and PhD program.

The author of the dissertation is a PhD student of independent training at the Department of "Theory and Methodology of Physical Education" at the PU. The set of online materials presented by PhD student Zenft, as well as on paper, is in accordance with Article 36 (1) of the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of the PU and includes the following documents:

1. application form to the rector for opening a procedure;
2. curriculum vitae in European format;
3. protocol of the preliminary discussion in the department;
4. abstract;
5. declaration of originality and authenticity of the attached documents;
6. certificate of compliance with the minimum national requirements;
7. list of publications;
8. dissertation work;
9. copies of the publications on the subject of the dissertation work;
10. GC document for paid fee, according to the Tariff.
11. set of paper documents from item 1 to item 10 — 3 pieces;
12. set of documents from items 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 (possible indication of other documents from items 5 and 9 on electronic media)

2. Brief biographical data for the doctoral student

Markus Aloys Zenft was born on 18/11/1967 in Dillingen at the Danube, Germany, where he completed his primary education. He completed his higher education at the University of Lüneburg and graduated as a Master of Arts in Applied Cultural Studies in 1997.

In the period 2004-2009, he studied at the University of Plovdiv, majoring in "Sports Pedagogy" and graduated with a Master's degree.

In the period 2014-2019, he increased his basic educational and professional qualification in a number of additional courses in the specialty "Activating hypnosystem concepts for coaching, personal development, team and organizational development", (Dr. opn. Gunter Schmidt), also in "Systemic Therapy and Counseling" (Dr. Bernd Schumacher) as well as "Systemic Couples Therapy" with Dr. Arnold Retzer.

Markus Aloys Zenft is a long-time figure in the field of combat sports and especially in the sport of Wing Chun. It is obvious that he dedicates his efforts and interests in this direction, as in his quest for development, he also develops the current dissertation. The results of his efforts, as well as his desire to constantly improve his qualifications, were realized with participation in a number of conferences and symposiums in the period 2014-2018.

The most significant of them are: "Exhaustion - professional burnout - depression. Hypnotherapeutic paths to a healthy balance" /2016/, "'Addiction, longing and vision" /2014/, "You never walk alone - self-knowledge, therapy and consultation with the inner parts of personality" /2018/, "Trauma - conflicts - cultures, hypnotherapy and what connects us"(2017 / etc.

3. Actuality of the subject

The problem of optimizing the training process in any sport, including WING TSUN, has its significant place, both in a purely theoretical (scientific) plan, and also, above all, in the practical implementation of the activity. Even more so when it comes to "...one of the largest associations for the Chinese Wing Tsun style of kung fu, with over 50,000 actively practicing members".

When there is also the fact that a master's program "Sports pedagogy with a specialization in Wing Tchun" has been created at the Department of Physical Education and Sports at PU, any research in this direction is relevant and worthy of respect. The European Wing Chun Organization /EWTO/ is the only martial arts association in the European space that offers a separate martial arts curriculum in cooperation with a recognized state university, such as Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski."

In this regard, I would like to note that the problem developed in Markus Zenft's dissertation on the topic: "Sports-pedagogical and psychological aspects for optimizing Wing Tsun training" has its modern sound and place as a research and practical-applied territory in the multifaceted training process. and in the educational and pedagogical aspects of the Wing Tchun martial art.

4. Knowing the problem

The author knows in depth the problem he researches, related to the need to create a streamlined system for training and implementation in the field of WING TSUN. This is evident both from the in-depth analysis of the specialized scientific and methodical applied literature in the field of Eastern martial arts and in particular WING TSUN, but above all from the long-term professional theoretical and practical-applied activities of the doctoral student in this field /p.21-62/

The author was able to achieve this knowledge after a thorough analysis of the philosophical essence of the Eastern martial arts, the history of their development and, above all, in the precise analysis of the main building components of the sport of WING TSUN, relating to

the psychophysical, technical and tactical preparation as a result of Wing Tshun training methods "...emphasizing economy of movement, simultaneous defense and attack, and the use of short, powerful punches and kicks to vulnerable body parts. Style attaches great importance to sense, i.e. the ability to anticipate and react to the opponent's movements, as well as the use of training exercises and sparring to develop practical skills' /p. 6/.

On the one hand, this speaks of a good knowledge of the researched issues, and on the other hand, it gives the author the opportunity to express his view on the rich facts and its creative interpretation.

A particularly positive impression is made by the in-depth historical review in the development of this eastern martial art, which shows the high erudition of the doctoral student in this direction.

I would also point out that any attempt to deepen not only the methodical-applied knowledge, but also the theoretical justification of the conducted training and competition process deserves approval and encouragement. This is also the starting point from which the current dissertation work should be evaluated, which I will note at the outset that it is a useful study, supported by the realization of a formative pedagogical experiment.

5. Research methodology

The complex research methodology chosen by the doctoral student Markus Aloys Zenft, the successfully selected mathematical and statistical tools for processing and quantitative analysis of the experimentally obtained data, as well as the overall logic and sequence of the experimental work carried out by him, allow the doctoral student not only to ascertain the current state of research from his problem, but also to build a logically built methodology for improving the psychophysical and technical training of the WING TSUN trainee, to follow it in real practice, and to get an answer to the tasks he set himself in the dissertation work. All this, as well as the data obtained and analyzed further in the dissertation, give me reason to conclude that the research methodology used by the author allows to achieve the set goal and to realize the specific tasks of the research.

6. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work

The volume of the dissertation work is 176 pages, structured in an introduction, 3 chapters containing text, 32 tables and 48 figures. Attached to the dissertation work are appendices in a volume of 24 pages, where a rather diverse selection of exercises and the specific tests with mental and physical status and details of their implementation are indicated in detail. The bibliography consists of 151 literary sources, all of them are in Latin. The list of author publications includes 3 titles.

In the first chapter (63 pages), the existing mostly narrowly specialized foreign literature is examined and analyzed, as well as some indirectly related to the researched issues, sources affecting in depth the research done. I evaluate the analysis of the historical aspects in the origin and development of Eastern martial arts, as well as the essence and role of psychophysical training and motor coordination in the complex training process in the sport of Wing Chun as a dissertable topic, possessing all the characteristics of a large-scale, but also narrowly focused dissertation research. I appreciate it as a successful and well-argued motivation for the development of this topic in order to research and improve some sport-pedagogical approaches and psychological methods in Wing Tshun training through purposeful mental preparation, as the main substantive and effective feature of the Heidelberg Competence Training / HCT/. As the author himself notes: "The main place in the current dissertation work is devoted to the Heidelberg Competence Training (HCT), necessary for improving the psychophysical and motor coordination ability of the examined persons practicing Wing Tshun"/p.69/

Quite successfully, in my opinion, the idea and characteristics of the HCT, aimed mainly at "building, resp. strengthening the mental control mechanisms" of the athlete in the three-zone characteristic of experiences, in order to reach the "zone of optimal performance". This is precisely the task of this mental training to help the athlete reach this zone of optimal performance. This makes him sensitive and he can sense when he leaves that area. Mental training is a set of strategies to return the athlete to their zone of optimal performance.

In the second chapter (10 pages), in its logical sequence, the methodological characteristics of the study and its organizational and time parameters are presented. Regarding what is written in this chapter, we will point out that it is in line with the requirements for a similar type of scientific development, where the sequence of the research work carried out is described in time and organizational order. Structurally, the logic of the exposition is respected, indicating the purpose and tasks of the study, as well as the research methods /pedagogical and functional tests, surveys, mathematical-statistical methods/ with which the primary empirical information was collected and processed. The author has done a relatively good job of clarifying and formulating these mandatory methodological parameters of any scientific study. In my opinion, there are some small inaccuracies in the definition of the object, the subject and the contingent of the research, which is probably due to a different interpretation of these concepts in the German and Bulgarian languages. However, this does not affect the final results of the study in the slightest. The tasks, in my opinion, can be reduced and reformulated, and specified in the direction of the expected results, without including some routine activities, such as those indicated in 6 and 7 tasks.

In general, the research methodology in the present study enables an objective assessment of the results of the complex methodology used, based on the Heidelberg Competence Training (HCT) method for the psycho-physical performance of athletes through the application of specific exercises for attention, activity, self-esteem, strength, flexibility, speed, etc. This is achieved through a detailed toolkit for analyzing the impact of the CCT method on all aspects of the human being in the following dimensions: physical performance in the context of both physical fitness and emotional and mental fitness and resilience.

The appropriate mathematical-statistical analysis of the obtained experimental data also makes a good impression.

The third chapter is 80 pages long. It is devoted entirely to the analysis of its own experimental results. It is built logically, entirely on the basis of the results obtained from the experimental test study conducted from the fall of 2019 to the fall of 2022.

On the basis of these data, an accurate quantitative and qualitative analysis was made the mental and physical capacity of the examined persons engaged in this martial art. Their preparation is mainly based on the used methods, techniques and approaches of the Heidelberg competence training through purposeful mental training. Preparation models have been created, using variable methods and means to optimize the training activity with a priority on psychophysical and technical preparation. These results are presented and analyzed sequentially and show the expected effects of the training model created and experimented in practice, applying Heidelberg Competence Training in practice.

A successful approach in evaluating the impact of the created model for the preparation of the researched persons is the use of the SAN-test, which is quite suitable for studies of this nature. The results obtained with it confirm the positive impact of the applied methodology for the training of Wing Chun competitors.

The mathematical-statistical processing used in the dissertation provides a very good opportunity for in-depth quantitative and qualitative analysis of the obtained experimental data. In this direction, I will note that the sufficiently rich material of experimental data, which the dissertation received, allows for an even more detailed analysis, especially regarding the results of the use of correlation analysis.

The graphic layout and visualization of the obtained results are done quite richly and competently and correspond to the data obtained and presented in the tables.

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

On the basis of the obtained results and their analysis in the dissertation work of doctoral student Markus Aloys Zenft, the following more important contributions can be highlighted:

1. A successful attempt was made to practically apply the ideas and approaches in the training activity of the Wing Tchun competitors, based on Heidelberg competence training, thereby optimizing their psychophysical and generally functional training.
2. Innovative training models have been approved to optimize technical-tactical training in the Wing Tchun training process, for which their effectiveness and usefulness have been experimentally confirmed.
3. The positive effect of HCT on psychophysical performance established in the present study confirms the results of previous research in this direction, where mental training is highlighted as an effective means of increasing results in various other sports.
4. The experimentally obtained results are a good basis for the development of training programs that fully take into account both the physical and mental results and possibilities of the Wing Chun martial art for the improvement of the mental and physical fitness of the competitors in this sport.

In general, we can note that with the performed theoretical-applied research, new data and facts from the application of Heidelberg competence training were obtained, which will be the basis for improving the complex training and competition process in the sport of Wing Chun.

8. Assessment of dissertation publications

As proof of the significance and applicability in practice of research in the dissertation, the 3 articles presented by the author, which reflect certain aspects and results of the research, are also a problem.

Regardless of the fact that the overall structuring and shaping of the results of the conducted dissertation research, as well as the published articles, are the result of the expert guidance of the scientific supervisor, given the fact that the dissertation was realized in an independent form of study and without me being a direct witness during the development of the dissertation, I can confidently state that **the presented dissertation and the conducted research is primarily the result of the doctoral student himself, with his personal participation both in the planning, implementation and writing of the work, as well as in the analysis of the obtained results and the formulation of their contributions.**

9. Abstract

The abstract for the dissertation reflects the main points and results of the research. In terms of volume and structure, it was made in accordance with the requirements for summarizing similar types of developments in accordance with the regulations of the PU.

CONCLUSION

Markus Aloys Zenft's dissertation mainly contains scientific and applied results and contributions to the training and preparation of WING TSUN players. It meets the requirements of ZRASRB and its regulations, as well as the regulations of PU "Paisiy Hilendarski". The presented materials and dissertation results are in accordance with and correspond to the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the PU for the application of ZRASRB.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student possesses the necessary theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty "Theory and Methodology of Physical Education", demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research. Everything stated up to this point in my review gives me grounds for a positive assessment of the conducted research, presented in the reviews above: dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions.

I propose to the honorable scientific jury to **AWARD** the educational and scientific degree "**doctor**" to Markus Aloys Zenft in:

- field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences
- professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in ...
- PhD program: "Theory and methodology of physical education and sports training."

20.04.2024 г.
Blagoevgrad

Prepared by:
(Prof. Ph.D. Kiril Kostov)