

## **R E V I E W**

By Prof. D.Sc. Venka Petrova Kuteva - Tsvetkova

On a dissertation on a topic "**Formation of personal experience through experience - variable applied strategies in the activities of the modern educator**"

For the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree "doctor"

In the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences

Professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy ("Theory of education and didactics")

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### **Data for procedure**

Rумыana Georgieva - Ilieva **meets the requirements** of the Law and the Regulations to the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". The procedural requirements have been met.

The doctoral student has **fulfilled the minimum national requirements**.

**No plagiarism has been proven** in accordance with the statutory procedure. A declaration of originality of the dissertation work is attached.

### **Short data on the PhD candidate**

Rумыana Georgieva – Ilieva holds a Master's degree in Bulgarian Philology. She is enrolled in doctoral studies in 2022 at the Department of "Theory of Education", Faculty of Education at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

She has additional qualifications as a nature instructor, a German-speaking tour guide, and a German teacher.

She is fluent in German, English, and French.

She is the author of two books and an educational game dedicated to road safety. She is the head of the project "On the Path of Change".

### **Data for the dissertation**

The dissertation contains 275 pages of text, structured in an introduction, three chapters, conclusion, contributions, bibliography and appendices. The main text of the dissertation is 222 pages. 53 pages contain literature and appendices.

The work contains 37 figures, 4 tables and 11 appendices.

The proposed work has a theoretical and applied nature.

The *introduction* sets out the topic of the dissertation research, its significance and relevance, the documentary basis of the research. The scientific apparatus of the dissertation is very precisely formulated – object and subject, goal and objectives, hypothesis.

The *first chapter* is devoted to the theoretical aspects of experience in pedagogical interaction. The formulation and systematization of the main working concepts in the dissertation make a pleasant impression: personal experience, experience, modern educator, pedagogical educational situation, educational intervention and interaction, educational time, pedagogical communication and interaction, microclimate, emotional intelligence and social competence, stereotyping, etc.

This chapter is theoretical in nature, contains results of analyses by Bulgarian and foreign scholars.

The problem areas in contemporary pedagogical practice are studied and systematized. A historical overview of the emergence and development of experiential pedagogy in Germany is made. A periodization of the researched issues is presented, as well as the history of learning through experience. Professional burnout in the activity of the contemporary educator and conflicts are analyzed. Variant strategies in the activity of the contemporary educator are proposed. The relationship between the concepts of reflection and sustainability is examined. The concept of City Bound or learning through experience in the city is introduced and used. Civic education and proactivity are studied. At the end of the paragraphs, original analyses, conclusions and summaries are made.

*Chapter Two* "Design of Practical - Applied Research and Analysis of Empirical Data" has methodological and methodological parameters. The purpose of the study is to reveal the essence, features and role of experience in the context of personality formation through the use of variable applied strategies. The scientific apparatus of the organized and conducted research is precisely formulated. The stages in conducting the empirical research are systematized. The methodological tools with the qualitative and quantitative methods used are presented. The essence, structure and specificity of the educational game "The Path of Change" are analyzed.

*Chapter Three* presents "A Model of Integration of Education and Learning through Experience and Experience in the Activities of the Modern Educator". This is the strongest and most significant in applied aspect research part of the dissertation work.

The main principles are derived that should be guiding for educators when integrating pedagogical experience into their activities. The pedagogical framework is formulated and substantiated, with the help of which pedagogical experiences are implemented in practice. A conceptual program for a two-day training of educators

is presented, so that they can integrate the model into their practice. The risks facing the model are formulated.

*The conclusion* draws generalizations, justifies the confirmation of the assumptions made in the dissertation work, the conclusions made by the author as a result of the theoretical and empirical study of pedagogical experience, as a way of forming personal experience.

### **Relevance of the dissertation**

In our educational system, "learning" is associated more with knowledge and skills than with feelings, values and attitudes. We do not prepare young people for the real challenges of life. Although state documents are based on the need to form a holistic personality, individual subjects are generally independent and are rarely integrated. In traditional education and upbringing, ready-made knowledge is offered. It is believed that in the future students will find a way to apply it.

Programs based on learning and upbringing through experience have taken their place in schools and universities since the 1950s. Over the years, this type of education and upbringing has become established in many countries, and has become embedded in the educational systems of EU countries, Canada and the USA.

Despite the presence of a certain, albeit limited, number of publications on the topic in Bulgarian pedagogical literature, there is no complete and comprehensive study of this issue. In this sense, the appearance of a dissertation with a similar topic is timely and absolutely relevant. This is a very promising research issue.

### **Scientific awareness**

The author sufficiently fully substantiates her thesis with information. The literature review lists 80 sources, of which 65 are in Cyrillic, 15 in Latin and Internet resources. The sources are current and published in recent years.

The theoretical analysis of the experience in pedagogical interaction is thorough, logical, and the personal position of the author of the dissertation is also well highlighted.

The study makes it clear that Rumyana Georgieva - Ilieva knows the problems perfectly in both theoretical and practical aspects, which gives her a good basis for conducting empirical research and developing the dissertation work.

### **Conceptuality and evidence-basedness**

The dissertation has a clearly defined and complete concept, associated with a number of new and contributing points. M. Georgieva - Ilieva convincingly formulates the conceptual framework, demonstrates competent knowledge of existing publications and research in this area.

The study proves that the acquisition of personal experience through experience, through the use of variable applied strategies, leads to sustainable results of personal and, respectively, social development.

### **Practical significance**

A model for integrating education and learning through experience and experience in the activities of the modern educator is proposed.

The conclusions drawn and the recommendations shared will help further develop the idea of forming personal experience through experience.

### **Scientific apparatus**

The goal and objectives, the subject of the study are very well formulated, logically connected and fully correspond to the topic.

The goal is decomposed into tasks of a theoretical and applied nature, which in their totality completely cover it in content.

The object and contingent of the study are appropriately selected and provide an opportunity for targeted work on the topic and reaching scientific and scientifically applied results that have a certain contribution character.

The empirical study is related to the applied tasks of the dissertation. I believe that the approach here is correct as well.

### **Research design. Sample**

An empirical study with three stages of implementation was organized and conducted:

1. Educational experiment with students.
2. A survey with three stages (determining, formative, control) was conducted with two age groups (youth aged 16+ and children aged 10+).
3. A second empirical study was conducted with young people within the framework of the project "On the Path of Change", funded by the Sofia Municipality under the program "Sofia - a City of the Young and Active".

Within the framework of the project "On the Path of Change", 40 proactive workshops were carried out with young people from different schools, universities and youth centers in the capital.

The specific research tasks for each stage are clearly formulated, showing consistent planning and linking of activities in each of them.

The sample is sufficiently representative. A total of 649 participants aged 14-29 years take part in the project activities.

The analyses of the results cover both the ascertaining, the forming, and the control stages. The levels of analyses based on the developed author's model are competently presented.

The results of the conducted empirical study are presented in tables and graphs, which allows for good orientation in clarifying the current state, for revealing determinants and emerging trends in the discussed issues.

### **Toolkit**

Empirical research is carried out using a rich combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. These include: analysis of scientific literature, systematization

and generalization of theoretical concepts, pedagogical modeling, pedagogical surveying, statistical processing methods, educational experiment, observation, the City Bound experience, etc.

### **Contributions of the dissertation work**

Дисертационният труд съдържа приноси моменти, които са лично дело на Румяна Георгиева - Илиева. Като такива могат да се приемат:

#### **In a theoretical aspect:**

- For the first time in the pedagogical literature in our country, an attempt is made to comprehensively consider the problem of forming personal experience through experience;
- Revealing the essence of the concept of pedagogical experience and the related ones, towards establishing its use in Bulgarian pedagogical theory and practice, in the spirit of the so-called experiential pedagogy;
- Distinguishing the role and place of pedagogical experience in the practice of the modern educator, in accordance with the main trends in education of the 21st century, in the Bulgarian context;

#### **In applied aspect:**

- A representative empirical study was organized and conducted on the effectiveness of pedagogical experience as a tool in the practice of the modern educator;
- Creation of a comprehensive methodology of an educational game on the topic of "Road Safety" for two separate age groups as an applied strategy in the activities of the modern educator with a rich potential for variability and educational effects in the direction of the personal development of adolescents;
- The creation of a comprehensive model for educators for integrating education and learning through experience and experience in the activities of the modern educator has its specific use in everyday educational practice, as it is justified not only in theoretical terms, but also takes into account the peculiarities of practice, by formulating basic principles for its integration; educational methods for its use are presented; a conceptual program for a two-day training of educators is given and certain risks in its implementation are taken into account.

### **Evaluation of the author's abstract and publications on the topic**

The abstract meets the requirements and objectively reflects the content of the dissertation. 3 author publications on the topic of the dissertation are presented.

## **Conclusion**

I believe that the goal and the tasks set for the study have been achieved. My assessment of the dissertation work is categorically positive. The content and qualities of the scientific production of Romyana Alexandrova Georgieva - Ilieva fully satisfy the criteria, requirements and conditions for the defense of a dissertation work and the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

The achieved results and the presented arguments give me reason to give my **positive vote** in the Scientific Jury for the defense of a dissertation on the topic **"Formation of personal experience through experience - variable applied strategies in the activities of the modern educator"** by **Romyana Alexandrova Georgieva - Ilieva** for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree **"Doctor"** in Professional Direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Theory of Education and Didactics).

June 21, 2025

Author of the review: ....S....

Veliko Tarnovo

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