

R E V I E W

**by assoc. professor DSc Lyuben Vladimirov Vitanov,
regarding Magdanela Zlatkova Delinesheva's dissertation work**

**for the awarding of a scientific and educational degree Phd from a professional field
1.3. Pedagogy of education in... (Methodology of education in kindergarten and primary
school in domestic life and technology), doctoral student part-time form of education at
SU "St. Kl. Ohridski" on the topic "Didactic technology for the development of initiative
and entrepreneurship in the optional activities on technology and entrepreneurship in
the primary grades", with the scientific supervisor assoc. pof. Phd Nikolay Tsanev**

Compliance of the procedure with the current regulations

Magdanela Delinesheva was enrolled by order: №RD-20-1054/07/05/2018 (considered from 10.07.2018 to 10.07.2021) and dismissed with the right of protection by order of protection №RD-20-1408 /21.07.2021 (considered from 10.07.2021) of the rector of Sofia University "Saint Kliment Ohridski".

The dissertation work was discussed at a meeting of the "Primary School Pedagogy" department at the Faculty of Education and Arts of the Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" on July 4, 2022, and is referred for defense before a specialized scientific jury, determined by order of the rector of SU "St. Kl. Ohridski", No. RD 38-214/03.05.2022

All necessary documents and materials have been developed and submitted on time.

All the necessary procedures under the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the Terms and Conditions for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" were met.

General biographical presentation of the candidate

Magdanela Delinesheva graduated from Veliko Tarnovo University "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" with the specialty of Teacher in Bulgarian language and literature and English language and literature - "Master". She studied successfully and obtained a bachelor's degree from the same university, majoring in "Marketing" and professional qualification "Economist".

Over the years, Delinesheva participated in many qualification educations and successfully obtained certificates and diplomas from “Eurolink”, Sheffield, England, and the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Magdalena Delinesheva has extensive pedagogical and organizational experience. For more than 30 years, she has worked as a teacher, translator, editor, manager and coordinator in various municipal and private schools, municipal institutions, and non-governmental organizations.

Throughout the years, she has demonstrated professional qualities and successfully led various projects, many of them in the field of entrepreneurship education, financial literacy, innovation, social inclusion, skills for the implementation of the labor market, etc. Gains vast experience in developing educational programs in economics, business and entrepreneurship for school education as well as participation in expert groups in education, teacher education, program management.

Special mention should be made of her efforts in translating, editing, and adapting textbooks and teaching materials for business, economics, and entrepreneurship students, as well as her involvement in the development of successful technology and entrepreneurship textbooks and teaching aids in schools.

Actuality of the issues of the dissertation work

The dissertation is aimed at researching an important and topical issue for technology and entrepreneurship education - the planning and organization of entrepreneurship education in primary grades. Significant problems from the theory and methodology of economic education and financial literacy have been studied and analyzed - important priorities in the Bulgarian and European educational policy.

Thus, the dissertation examines entrepreneurship in the wider context of the European Union's concept of lifelong learning as a key transferable competence. This approach also offers various solutions for its effective development as an essential part of education and school preparation.

The relevance of the dissertation also stems from the study of educational documentation, textbooks, methodological proposals, and options, as well as the generation of rational solutions for more productive development of entrepreneurial competence.

Structure and content of the dissertation

The dissertation is spread over 332 pages, of which 161 pages are exposition, 15 pages are bibliography, and 156 pages are appendices. Includes an introduction, four chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. Scientific contributions are also structured. Publications on the topic of the dissertation are correctly indicated. The bibliography contains 162 diverse literary sources: 98 sources in Bulgarian as well as 64 in foreign languages. Furthermore, included are 7 practical applications.

The graphic layout is very good and includes figures, tables, and diagrams. The style and language of the dissertation are scientifically sound.

The goals, tasks, hypothesis, and research methodology are well formulated and provide an opportunity to conduct well-structured pedagogical research. A variety of research methods are used, including experimental and experiential research. Effective approaches, methods, and techniques for teaching entrepreneurship in primary grades are also applied.

A very good impression is made by the selected and effectively used methods: survey, content analysis, pedagogical experiment, expert evaluation, questionnaire survey and mathematical and statistical methods for processing and analyzing the research results.

The first chapter of the dissertation examines the main scientific and theoretical problems of entrepreneurship education. Its nature and characteristics are described and analyzed. In the individual parts, a good analysis of the historical development of entrepreneurship and the characteristic of an entrepreneur is made. Definitions, concepts, models, and approaches are well structured.

The overview of the main approaches in entrepreneurship education also makes a good impression, although the range of concepts of different authors could have been expanded. Some key foundations for entrepreneurship education are identified: constructivism, experiential learning, project- and problem-based learning, etc.

The second chapter examines the place of early-stage entrepreneurship education. A very good historical overview of the introduction and spread of entrepreneurship education in Bulgarian schools since the mid-1990s has been made. The parameters of the first steps and the path to increasing economic culture and the more active introduction of concepts from the field of economics and financial literacy within the framework of technological education are outlined.

Entrepreneurship education is also very well analyzed in educational policies, priorities and normative documents.

Priorities of the competence approach and the concept of lifelong learning are well outlined. The main achievements and problems are systematized, important pedagogical priorities are indicated.

I would like to especially note the analysis of the need for entrepreneurship education to be carried out not only in the specialized subject, but also in other subjects, including during class time, when working on various projects, topics and activities related to career guidance.

The main challenges to school entrepreneurship education are very well structured, related to the organization and content of education, entrepreneurship teaching materials, as well as public attitudes towards entrepreneurship education.

An excellent impression is made by the analysis of state educational standards and competencies as expected results in the curricula. He is professional, often critical and points out some problems and important issues. Despite some unfounded conclusions and mistakes, I admire this approach.

The third chapter describes transformative pedagogical research, which includes an experiment conducted in several stages with 204 students from Sofia and other cities.

A variety of methods, techniques and approaches have been created, adapted, and tested to implement a well-structured methodological model with didactic options for implementing entrepreneurship education. It includes an experiential entrepreneurship curriculum for electives or faculty-defined subjects, as well as for interest-based activities. It successfully complements and builds on the knowledge and skills from the technology and entrepreneurship curricula focused on economic knowledge and business skills.

Very well thought out and tested authentic practically oriented topics aimed at forming initial economic literacy and entrepreneurial activities such as management, marketing, finance, accounting.

The themes are well developed in student-friendly short stories about entrepreneurs. They include not only texts but also a variety of tasks and activities.

They are provided methodically and with author-developed, well-structured worksheets for each topic.

The methodical approach to presenting economic knowledge through well-chosen and presented artistic texts is also effective. They are the basis of a system of pedagogical techniques aimed at indirect presentation of learning content.

When working on specific topics, students from the experimental classes are involved in tasks and activities for planning and analysis, financial provision, and budgeting, making informed decisions, etc.

The texts and assignments follow a practical, authentic approach to teaching and learning where students construct their understanding of important aspects of entrepreneurship and enrich their experience.

The activities for students aimed at practical work in work sectors where they apply and improve their knowledge and skills are also excellent.

I want to draw attention to the fact that methods and techniques for active learning are successfully applied in Magdanela Delinesheva's methodological developments. Such are well-structured projects, problem situations and case studies, simulation, and business games, etc. They represent a very good capstone applied aspect of entrepreneurship education, enabling students to apply the acquired knowledge and skills to concrete practical entrepreneurial activities. Thus, the proposed experimental methodological options, lessons, tasks, topics and activities are rich, complete, varied and useful.

A very good impression is also made by the development and testing of a toolkit for diagnosing the results of entrepreneurship education in the experimental classes.

The PhD student structured very good criteria and indicators that include not only traditional economic knowledge and skills, but also problem-solving skills, transferability, finding "niches" and opportunities, creativity, and innovation. However, this lacks some important, in my opinion, criteria for effective evaluation of the proposed education methodology.

Very good procedures have been applied to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed methodology and approaches.

In the fourth chapter, the results of the research are analyzed. The carried out successful approbation shows the effectiveness of the proposed approach, learning content, tasks. They are described and structured very well in the mathematical and statistical analysis done.

The conducted survey with 76 respondents from all over the country confirms the author's concept that interest activities have a key place in the implementation of additional education in entrepreneurship at school. They are desired and preferred by teachers and experts.

The results were also confirmed with incoming and outgoing diagnostics in the experimental classes.

A successful study was also conducted with expert evaluations of 49 participants - teachers, experts, and lecturers from higher education institutions. Very good quantitative and qualitative assessments are described.

Precise and well-systematized results for all research indicators and criteria, presented in tables, charts and graphs, have been created.

The presented results confirm the hypothesis of the scientific research and provide sufficient scientific grounds to confirm the effectiveness of the created and tested methodical system of education for entrepreneurial competence of students in elective classes and activities on technology and entrepreneurship.

Scientific theoretical and practical-applied contributions

The contributions of the thesis are well organized and presented. They fully correspond to the conducted research and transformative work with the participation of experimental classes.

The contributions have a theoretical, methodological, and applied nature. They are related to the described, systematized and analyzed methodical and practical experience of the doctoral student for the implementation of successful and effective education in entrepreneurship at the initial stage.

It includes well-balanced traditional, active, and innovative elements of learning content, teaching methods and techniques.

Many well-functioning topics, lessons and activities that can be successfully used in entrepreneurship education have been developed, adapted, and tested.

A working diagnostic toolkit has also been created.

Thesis

The thesis is very well developed. Meets all the requirements – technically and substantively. It correctly reflects the main questions, problems, and achievements of the dissertation work.

Publications on the topic of the dissertation

On the topic of the dissertation, Magdanela Delinesheva published 6 articles in Bulgarian and international scientific methodological journals and conference proceedings. They are diverse and representative.

The other publications mentioned are also very well developed - study aids, worksheets, and methodological guidelines on entrepreneurship "Small Entrepreneurs", as well as a teacher's and volunteer's guide to the "Practical Finance" education.

Her participation in the development of textbooks and books for the teacher of technology and entrepreneurship for the primary stage is also an indisputable success.

Although with a minimum number of 80 points from both groups of indicators, Magdanela Delinesheva meets the scientometric requirements for the scientific education degree "doctor", although there are some inaccuracies in the presented certificate.

Personal impressions

My personal impressions of Magdanela Delinesheva are of a professional dedicated to the problems of entrepreneurship education. Her energy, initiative, and drive to innovate are exemplary.

I know her as a specialist dedicated to the effective formation of students' entrepreneurial competence, education and inspiring many teachers.

Notes, recommendations, and questions

Some of the theoretical statements in the first chapter are limited or incomplete. For example, the important finding for understanding the term entrepreneurship education with its main goal is the building of entrepreneurship. Thus, conditions are created for reducing the share of economic knowledge and skills, which at the same time has been overcome in the experimental work.

The proposed classification of entrepreneurship education methods for the age group, based on the classification of Marin Andreev (1987), is not sufficiently effective and modern. In it, for example, the methods of active learning, which the doctoral student successfully applies in her work with young students, are missing or classified in a different way.

The finding that the Ministry of Education does not manage to explain clearly what the changes from the introduction of the subject "Technology and Entrepreneurship" consist of is also unfounded. It has categorically formulated them in the normative documents - state educational standards and curricula.

I also cannot accept the finding that negative sentiments in relation to any change in the education system traditionally prevail in society, as well as prevailing stereotypes about entrepreneurship. I think that, on the contrary, it is significantly positive about this education, which is also reflected in the growing number of schools and classes with optional entrepreneurship activities, to which parents also contribute.

I also have notes on the scope of the experimental work. I think it could have been extended and tested, albeit with separate topics and activities, in at least one more grade of primary school. Thus, the methodology would be much more widely applicable, because in the fourth

grade there are important changes in entrepreneurship education, including the number and duration of school hours.

I think the research would benefit if important indicators such as teamwork skills, measured risk taking, decision making, as well as career guidance were included in the diagnostic procedure.

I also have a note on the presented table about the scientmetric indicators of the doctoral student. There, the publications are not categorized and the corresponding points for each of them are missing.

Conclusion

The dissertation work presented for discussion and defense is the result of excellently planned and implemented theoretical, applied, and experimental research work. It includes a very well-conducted study, the results of which have theoretical and applied significance.

The dissertation has a sufficiently thorough research, conclusions, contributions, publications and complies with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff and the Regulations for its Implementation of SU "St. Kl. Ohridski".

This gives me the reason to give a positive conclusion and a positive assessment for awarding Magdanela Zlatkova Delinesheva the scientific and educational degree "doctor" in professional direction 1.3. Pedagogy of education in Methodology of education in Kindergarden and primary school in domestic life and technology.

Sofia, 08.09. 2022.

Prepared the review:



(assoc. Prof. DSc Lyuben Vitanov)