

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mirena Damyanova Legurska - Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" -
Faculty of History

of a dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

by: field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences

professional direction: 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...

doctoral program: Teaching Methodology in Geography

Author: Stanislava Plamenova Misheva

**Topic: APPLICATION OF MARIA MONTESSORI METHODOLOGY IN
GEOGRAPHY TEACHING**

General presentation of the procedure and the PhD student

By order No. PD-38-662 of 19.12.2022 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for the defense of a dissertation on the topic "Application of Maria Montessori's methodology in teaching geography" professional direction: 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...; doctoral program: Geography teaching methodology. The author of the dissertation is Stanislava Plamenova Misheva - a doctoral student in a free form of study at the Department of "Regional Development" with scientific supervisor Assoc. Dr. Maya Petrova Vasileva. The set of paper and electronic materials presented by doctoral student Misheva is in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations for the conditions and procedures for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski". The doctoral student has attached 3 publications.

Actuality of the topic and knowledge of the problem

The topic formulated by the doctoral student is current and significant for modern science and pedagogical practice. Two important aspects are skilfully combined, on the one hand, modern educational approaches, technologies and methods in teaching geography and, on the other, the application of Maria Montessori's methodology in them. There is awareness of the problem. The doctoral student has a good theoretical preparation necessary to achieve the goal of the dissertation. A good knowledge of the research subject is demonstrated in the dissertation work. The overall conduct of the research itself, the structure of the dissertation work and the up-to-date and well-selected bibliography confirm this belief.

The theoretical study presented in the introductory part and the first two chapters include scientific concepts of modern educational technologies, as well as the technology of self-development based on the methodology of Maria Montessori and its application in teaching geography. The theoretical analysis, as well as the experience of the doctoral student as a science mediator, teacher and researcher, gives reason to assume that the studied problem is known in the necessary depth.

Research methodology

The methodical approach that is used to carry out the research is the pedagogic experiment, examining the effectiveness of the created technology for self-development in geography education. The study used four main instruments: a checklist to guide classroom observations, a QBS questionnaire aimed at students, a QBS questionnaire aimed at parents and the self-efficacy scale aimed at investigating the perception of self-efficacy by teachers. I believe that this particular approach is appropriate for conducting the research, where the tasks correspond to the purpose of the dissertation and are a good guide for conducting the research. The significance of the obtained results is expressed in their applicability possibilities and the original methodology used to achieve the goals.

Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation has a volume of 219 pages, which include used literature (145 scientific sources in Bulgarian, Russian, English and Italian and 14 Internet sources) and 5 appendices. It consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, literature and applications. Numerous figures are included in the main content to illustrate the use of the chosen methodology. The processing of the collected information is appropriately structured and visualized through numerous tables and diagrams. Thus described the content of the dissertation characterizes it as a serious, complete and voluminous development. The above-mentioned characteristics determine the nature of the dissertation work as scientific and applied. The main contributions, according to the author, are four. From the point of view of practice, the dissertation research is valuable with the developed technology of self-development in teaching geography and the author's scientific workshops based on the methodology of Maria Montessori.

Dissertation Research Recommendations and Notes:

In the interest of the dissertation work, it would be good to strengthen the analytical focus and to more clearly state the position of the doctoral student on the commented scientific theses in the first and second chapters.

Assessment of the PhD student's publications and personal contributions

The 3 (three) articles and reports presented by the doctoral student Stanislava Misheva, based on the content of the dissertation work, have been published in prestigious national publications. The number and quality of the publications meet the requirements of the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and their content reflects basic results that are sufficiently presented to a specialized scientific audience.

Author's summary of the dissertation

The abstract includes all the necessary elements: actuality of the topic, purpose, tasks, subject and object, a brief presentation of the three chapters and a conclusion and meet the requirements for an accurate, complete and concise reflection of the dissertation in terms of volume and content.

Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results

I recommend the doctoral student to continue research by expanding the applicability of the results of the dissertation work in pedagogical practice and to publish more independent publications, which will establish her name among the scientific and pedagogical community.

The created ideas for scientific workshops based on the methodology of Maria Montessori can be published in the form of a methodological compendium, since they are invariant and could be successfully applied in the teaching of geography and economics when studying other topics of the educational content .

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski".

The dissertation work shows that the doctoral student Stanislava Plamenova Misheva possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty Teaching Methodology in Geography, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted research, presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and I propose to the honorable academic jury to award the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to Stanislava Plamenova Misheva in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical sciences; professional direction: 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...; doctoral program: Teaching Methodology in Geography.

21.02.2023

Prepared the opinion:

(Assoc. prof. Mirena Legurska)