

## **REVIEW**

**by Assoc. Prof. Galina Georgieva Georgieva, PhD**

Faculty of Education and Arts,

Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Member of the academic jury appointed by Order No. RD-38-273/02.06.2025  
of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

### **on the dissertation**

**by Assistant Professor Miroslava Volodieva Andonova,**

entitled: "Model for Stimulating Emotional-Volitional Development in Preschool  
Age",

submitted for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

in the field of higher education: 1. Pedagogical Sciences,

professional field: 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool Pedagogy)

**Supervisor: Prof. Radoslav Ivanov Penev, DSc**

#### **1. Compliance of the Procedure with the Current Regulatory Framework**

The procedure for the preparation, submission and admission of the dissertation of Assistant Professor Miroslava Andonova is fully compliant with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Implementation Rules and the internal regulatory documents of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". The documentation file contains all necessary references, certificates, and evidence of the completion of the individual study plan, doctoral seminars, publications, and research activity.

#### **2. General Biographical Presentation of the Candidate**

Miroslava Andonova graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with a Bachelor's degree in Geography (2010) and a Master's degree in Preschool Pedagogy (2019). She has worked as a kindergarten teacher (2019–2022) and since 2022 holds the position of assistant professor at the Department of Preschool and Media Pedagogy. Her biographical data reflects a consistent accumulation of professional experience and a clear engagement with the subject of her dissertation.

### **3. Relevance of the Dissertation Topic**

The dissertation topic “Model for Stimulating Emotional-Volitional Development in Preschool Age” is highly relevant both nationally and in the broader European context. Considering modern educational policies and the growing need for early social and emotional development, Andonova’s research offers contemporary solutions and tools applicable in real pedagogical practice.

### **4. Structure and Content of the Dissertation**

The dissertation consists of 220 pages, including an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography and appendices. It includes 44 tables, 26 graphs and 7 figures. The structure is logically consistent, progressing clearly from theoretical overview through methodology to empirical analysis and conclusions. Each section is justified and aligned with the general research aim: the creation and piloting of a pedagogical model for stimulating emotional and volitional development.

Of the 220 pages, 201 pages are dedicated to the main text, while the remaining include a bibliography of 114 sources (77 in Cyrillic and 37 in Latin script) and 7 appendices containing diagnostic tools and correlation analysis results. These together demonstrate the precise execution and effectiveness of the research design.

The introduction clearly outlines the rationale for the choice of topic.

**Chapter One** establishes the relevance and conceptual parameters of the research.

**Chapter Two** presents the theoretical foundations across nine subtopics, reflecting deep understanding of the literature and effective integration of research resources.

**Chapter Three** details the methodology and research organization, including stages, participants, diagnostic tools and the structure of the developed model.

**Chapter Four** analytically presents results from the preliminary research phase, with emphasis on national and European regulations related to emotional and social development. The analysis supports the need for innovative pedagogical models in this domain.

**Chapter Five** introduces and explains the author’s model “Small Children with Big Emotions”, composed of six modules: recognizing and naming emotions, self-management and prosocial behavior, empathy and tolerance, communication and friendship, virtues and environmental management. The model shows vision and methodological competence.

Chapter Six presents results from the formative and control phases, including comparative and correlational analysis. The data is well interpreted and statistically supported. Even non-significant results are carefully examined and discussed, identifying trends and potential benefits from long-term pedagogical intervention.

The theoretical and experimental parts are logically connected and consistently developed. Conclusions are aligned with the hypotheses and research objectives. The dissertation is an original work, successfully passed plagiarism screening. The language is academic, the style is professional, and the structure is coherent.

### **5. Scientific and Practical Contributions**

Miroslava Andonova's dissertation contains significant contributions in both theoretical and applied domains. Theoretically, it defines and justifies key concepts related to emotional and volitional development in preschool age. Practically, it presents a pedagogical model that demonstrably enhances emotional awareness, self-regulation and prosocial behavior in children.

The diagnostic tools and pedagogical scenarios developed are highly applicable in real educational settings and represent a valuable resource for preschool pedagogy. These contributions strongly support the eligibility for awarding the doctoral degree.

### **6. Abstract**

The abstract accurately reflects the core parameters, content and results of the dissertation and meets academic standards for public defense preparation.

### **7. Publications Related to the Dissertation**

Three scientific publications were submitted, all developed during the doctoral studies. Each is thematically aligned with the dissertation and contributes to meeting national scientometric requirements. The author demonstrates the ability to disseminate her findings through peer-reviewed journals.

### **8. Personal Impressions**

The doctoral candidate demonstrates a high level of academic culture, precision and research ethics. Her approach is analytical, well-argued and oriented

toward practical outcomes. She successfully combines theoretical knowledge with applied focus.

### **9. Remarks, Recommendations and Questions**

The topic is extremely relevant, given the current challenges in preschool education regarding children's emotional and social functioning. The dissertation is well-structured, with clearly defined objectives, object and subject. The terminology is well-developed and operationalized. The theoretical part is deep and supported by authoritative Bulgarian and international sources. Classical and contemporary theories are skillfully integrated. The author takes an interdisciplinary approach, combining physiological, cognitive, behavioral and social aspects of child development.

The proposed model “Small Children with Big Emotions” is original, applicable in practice and meets real needs in preschool settings. The formative experiment is professionally conducted and reflects authentic pedagogical practice across different age groups. The results are analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

I only recommend a light editorial revision of some formulations and punctuation for improved academic clarity and stylistic consistency.

### **10. Conclusion**

Miroslava Andonova’s dissertation fully meets the criteria for awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”. The research presented is of high academic, methodological and practical value.

I give a positive assessment and recommend to the academic jury to award Assistant Professor Miroslava Andonova the educational and scientific degree „Doctor“ in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool pedagogy).

22.06.2025  
Sofia

Reviewer:

Assoc. Professor Galina Georgieva, PhD