

## OPINION

regarding the procedure for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor", in a professional direction: 3.2. "Psychology", scientific specialty "Pedagogical and age psychology" of the South -West University "Neofit Rilski".

***Dissertation topic:*** Greek Teachers' Perceptions about Emotional and Behavioral Problems of Students with Special Educational Needs

***Prepared the opinion:*** Assoc. Prof. Natasha Angelova, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, South -West University "Neofit Rilski".

***Doctoral student:*** Maria Christos Papadopoulou, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, South -West University "Neofit Rilski".

***Research supervisor:*** Prof. Dr. Ivanka Asenova, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, South -West University "Neofit Rilski".

*The dissertation "Greek Teachers' Perceptions About Emotional And Behavioral Problems Of Students With Special Educational Needs" was discussed and proposed for public defense by the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy of South -West University "Neofit Rilski", all documents were submitted on time. The procedure is in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its Implementation, the Law on Higher Education, as well as the current Internal Rules of South -West University "Neofit Rilski".*

**Relevance and significance of the topic:** The significance of research on this issue is indisputable, as teachers find themselves in the delicate situation of teaching learning material simultaneously in mixed classes with students who have and who do not have special educational needs. Additional training and qualifications are necessary for them to achieve the goals set in the curriculum and at the same time meet the individual educational needs of students with special educational needs. The personal resource of teachers should also be expanded by developing new abilities to connect and maintain contact with students. The challenges facing teachers in the new era are extremely numerous, and in this regard, the doctoral student raises an actual problem in her dissertation.

**Characteristic of the candidate's scientific production:** The dissertation is structured as follows: introduction, one chapter exposition presenting the theoretical issues of the dissertation and a second chapter with the research design, results, discussion, conclusions and contributions. The text has a volume of 170 pages, which includes 30 tables and 33 figures. The literature cited covers 223 titles in English and Greek language. The research is well done, the methods used are appropriate for the sample and the statistical analyses are corresponding to the methodologies. The Ph.D. student has described 10 contributions in her dissertation, but on my opinion it seems that not all of them have such a weight. I would recommended some of the contributions to be combined, others to be removed .

**Technical implementation:** I would recommend, in case the doctoral student undertakes to publish the dissertation as a book, to reorganize her work and distinguish the tables in which she provides statistical information about teachers and children. From page 73 I get the impression that the sample of people examined consists of 188 teachers and from the results on page 89 in table 1, this is confirmed, but from table 3 on page 90 it can be seen that children were also examined (188 in total), in addition, they have the same number and percentage distributed by gender as the teachers, that is, the sample should have a total of 376 researched persons. Such a coincidence happens very rarely, and I would like the doctoral student to clarify this matter.

Another weakness in this work is that the title introduces the idea that teachers' perceptions will be investigated, while hypotheses 2 and 4 imply the study of students. The same hypotheses read in the context of the title create the impression that constructs from the position of teachers are being studied, but in fact students are being studied.

Another technical note is that research tasks are missing.

As I have already noted, the technical performance of scientific research should be improved.

## **Conclusion**

I accept the dissertation work of Maria Christos Papadopoulou and vote for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor", in professional direction: 3.2. "Psychology", scientific specialty "Pedagogical and age psychology".

20.04.2023

Blagoevgrad

Signature:

(Assoc. Prof. Natasha Angelova, Ph.D.)