

OPINION

by Iliana Ognyanova Petkova, PhD

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as a member of the scientific committee according to order No. RD-38-125 / 26.02.2021 issued by the

Rector of South-West University "Neofit Rilski", Blagoevgrad

SUBJECT: procedure for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field of Higher Education 1. Pedagogical Science, Professional Field 1.2 Pedagogy, PhD Program: Theory of Education and Didactics on the defense of a dissertation on "**The effectiveness of simulation workshops in education, on work and Self-Efficacy of teachers**".

Author of the dissertation: Yasmin Balum, PhD student in the Department of Social Pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogy at SWU "Neofit Rilski"

Academic supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Veska Guviyska

1. Information about the author and legality of the procedure

Yasmin Balum's academic background is related to education. She graduated in 1997 with a degree in Mathematics and Informatics (VII-X grade), and in 2008 she enrolled in a master's program related to assessment and planning in education at Beyt Berl College in Jerusalem.

Education also determines her professional career. She worked for 7 years as a primary school teacher in Ramla. She followed a 15-year period (2003-2017) in which she taught at the Alsalam School in Qalansawa. Since 2016 until now she has worked as the Manager of the Educational Simulation Center at David Yelin College, Jerusalem.

She manages school in Jerusalem with 820 students from 7th to 12th grade and 75 teachers. Apparently Yasmin Balum is a person who is used to constantly learning and improving. Perhaps this is the reason decide to continue the educational and scientific degree "doctor". Through the present dissertation she makes an attempt to prove the effectiveness of the simulation workshop as an effective form in the work of teachers.

She was enrolled as a PhD student in English in 13.11.2017. to the Department of Pedagogy. After the restructuring of the department, she was transferred as a doctoral student to the Department of Social Pedagogy. She was expelled with the right to protection as of 25.11.2020.

2. Evaluation of the dissertation

The topic of the dissertation falls into three research fields of pedagogical sciences. The first is vocational pedagogy, because the topic is focused on one of its main parts, namely the continuing professional training and more precisely the improvement of teachers in their professional activities. The second is ICT in education, because in order to realize a simulation workshop, skills in the field of computer technology are needed. The third area is related to the management of education and more precisely the quality of education.

During the development of the dissertation the classical structure of the introduction, the content part of three chapters, the conclusion, the used literature from 231 sources in English, Hebrew and internet

sources and 3 appendices were observed. The problem is presented in a volume of 175 pages. 12 tables and 6 figures are included.

The actuality of the problem is undeniable especially in this time when the digital education due to the pandemic situation in the world replaced obligatory attendance. The PhD student has bound the research problem and the quality of education, development of skills to deal with conflict, the improvement of teaching and work of the teachers.

She has formulated clear and precise research questions. They set the direction of the study. The lack of a well-defined object and subject of the dissertation research leads to inaccuracy in the goal. What is being studied – **“to evaluate the perceptions of the participants in one of the simulation-based workshops” (p. 9) or “the goal is to focus on a wider phenomenon, and in this study, the phenomenon was the self-efficacy of teachers” (p. 10) or “how the participants in the simulation workshop, who provide feedback - trainers and teachers, assess the potential contribution of the workshop to teaching and communication skills”. (p.102)**

The first theoretical chapter focuses on the effectiveness of education based on the competencies that the teacher must possess. Of interest is the so-called Scientific statute of the teacher, containing the professional and personal qualities of the teacher. The first ones include the general pedagogical knowledge for building and managing the educational process, with its competence as a specialist. The personal ones are tied to his managerial and leadership skills, with the need for broad expertise. The described difficulties encountered by teachers in Israel, which are sometimes the reason for refusing to practice the profession, are very similar to those in Bulgaria. Problems such as the imbalance in the classes of theoretical and practical training, the way of perception of the world by the teacher and the subsequent transfer in the educational process, the small practical experience in solving problems and conflicts in the community are some of these reasons. The PhD student also focused on Bandura's theory of the nature and characteristics of self-efficacy, and the strengths and weaknesses of the simulation.

The second chapter is dedicated to the research methodology. Again, the research questions were raised, specifying that “the attitudes and perceptions of teachers of both sexes, in addition to junior teachers, regarding the effectiveness of the simulation workshop in education, with an emphasis on the differences in their sense of competence. .”(p. 69).

Quantitative and qualitative research is combined. Questionnaires, interview forms, validity and reliability tests were used as tools. They are all described in detail. It is stated that "the educational simulation workshop was held in specialized centers in Israel." The large number of respondents deserves respect. In the simulation involved 1567 people, including 814 Arab participants and 753 Jewish participants. In the interview involved 30 people who put more specific questions directed to the topic and formulate a hypothesis. The detailed methodology is a proof of the authorship and authenticity of the conducted research.

In the third chapter the achieved results are analyzed. The data from all used tools are analyzed in detail. The results were processed with the SPSS program and are well illustrated. Correlation dependencies have been sought in the use of different instruments. 859 people also participated in the videos of the simulation and gave their feedback. Emphasis in presenting the results is placed on emotional, reflective and interpersonal communication, the impact of the selected situation on learning, the assessment of teachers' self-efficacy. Differences in the responses of the participants from the Arab and Jewish populations were sought.

The detailed analysis of all results proves the effectiveness of using the simulation workshop in teacher training. Recommendations for its organization and implementation have been made.

Questions: 1. What are the object and the subject of the dissertation research?

2. Specify: Is the simulation "process", "method", "tool" or "technique"?

The dissertation abstract fully reflects the content of the dissertation. There are 4 publications on the problem.

I accept the formulated contributions, but it would be better if they are differentiated as scientific-theoretical and practical-applied.

CONCLUSION:

The rich theoretical analysis, the detailed methodology and the in-depth analysis of the results give me grounds to propose to the members of the respected scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" field of Higher Education 1.Pedagogical Science, Proffesional Field 1.2 Pegagody, Phd Program: Theory of Education and Didactics by Yasmin Balum, PhD student of independent training at the Faculty of Pedagogy of SWU "Neofit Rilski"

Date: 07.06.2021.

Author of the opinion:.....

/assoc.prof. Iliana Petkova/