



REVIEW

by **Prof. DSc Yuliya Georgieva Doncheva, PhD**

Angel Kanchev University of Rousse

regarding the materials of full-time doctoral student *Vaia Dimitrios Duska*, for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", in the field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences, by professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool pedagogy - Intercultural education), with supervisor Prof. DSc Rosalina Plamenova Engels - Kritidis, PhD, at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts with the topic of the dissertation: "*Inclusion of children of migrant origin in Greek kindergartens through physical education and outdoor activities*".

Data, finding and assessment of the competition procedure, the doctoral studies, the dissertation, the abstract and the publications for the competition.

1. Compliance of the procedure with the current regulations. Data on the competition and doctoral studies - Pursuant to Art. 4 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (promulgated SG No. 38 of 21.05.2010, amended by SG No. 81 of 15.10.2010, amended by SG No. 101 of 28 12. 2013 amendment No. 04.05 d.), decision of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Arts dated 04.30. 2024, Protocol No. 6 and on the basis of Order No. RD-38-213 of 10.05.2024 of the Rector of Sofia University, full-time doctoral student Vaia Dimitrios Duska was dismissed with the right to defense with a positive decision of the primary readiness unit and is her procedure opened. A move has been made to defend the dissertation. All



preliminary legal and regulatory rules provided for in this procedure have been complied with.

2. General biographical presentation of the candidate (education, qualifications, professional experience, etc.).

In summary, it is clear from the presented resume that the educational qualification, academic growth and upgrading of the doctoral student is very active and dynamic. Here I will present only a part of them, namely ***Education and qualification:***

She is an experienced primary school teacher with proven work experience of over 30 years (official date of appointment by the Ministry of Education is September 1, 1995). Since 2017, she has been appointed as the school director of the 3rd primary school in Paleo Faliro, Athens, where she is a physical education teacher, her first appointment in 1995. She is also a regular member of the Regional Council for Primary Education, since the beginning of 2010 to finalize the position of President, General Secretary, Treasurer of the Board of Directors of P. Faliro Primary Education Teachers (Paleo Faliro) for more than a decade. During her career, she has attended numerous training seminars and conferences, and as an intern. There are also participations in innovative educational programs in the role of organizer and trainer. Excellent organizer of school celebrations and theatrical performances with great success. Associate member of the ENOA Athletic Club with many social actions undertaken and realized in the school entrusted to her.

In 1987, she graduated in physical education and sports sciences at the National Kapodistrian University in Athens, majoring in "Teaching and performing traditional Greek dance".

In April 2020 she defended his Master's Degree (MSc) in Public Administration - Educational Administration, University of Paphos with Thesis:

"Teachers' Views on Transformational Leadership Model for Primary Education".

Vaia Duska presents participation in seminars, projects, activities and activities with a wide range of topics, but the basis is the fundamental competences in Inclusive Education and sports pedagogy. The continuous desire, aspiration and realization towards training, self-improvement and provoking new academic achievements of the doctoral student is impressive, such as the last one so far, namely the educational and scientific degree doctor (PhD).

3. Actuality of the issues of the dissertation work.

The relevance of the topic *"Inclusion of children of migrant origin in Greek kindergartens through physical education and outdoor activities"* is related to a number of factors, including:

- The topic is extremely important, as more and more children of migrant origin arrive in Greece and need support and inclusion in society. Physical education and outdoor activities play a key role in the integration process of children in kindergartens, helping the acquisition of the new language, culture and community.

- Through physical exercise and outdoor games, children can enjoy fun and socialization with other children, regardless of their background. It also helps to improve their fitness, health and well-being, which is essential for their development.

- The need for support for migrant students in the educational process. They often experience learning difficulties, which can negatively affect their performance. Through the inclusive process, physical education and outdoor activities can be used to provide support and facilitate the socialization of children.

As always, the scientific supervisor of the doctoral student, Prof. DSc. Rosalina Engels - Kritidis, PhD, a nationally and internationally recognized scientist, finds the most relevant, the most valuable, the most up-to-date, and in this case mentoring, bringing this difficult subject to completion, both as an object and subject matter as well as research methodology and finalizing this scientific work to a pinnacle that is a model for all budding scientists! Moreover, any research, theoretical, practical or practical-applied, related to migrant children brings the potential, complements and superimposes the information bank for the effective work to develop and advance interactions and relationships for all target groups. In modern times, this information is of extreme necessity, therefore it should be popularized and multiplied, and not remain in the paper pages of the scientific work. Congratulations!

4. Structure and content of the dissertation work. Dissertation data -

The dissertation has a volume of 235 pages, of which 186 pages are the active text, 39 pages are a bibliography and 10 pages for Appendices. Its structure includes: *Introduction*; *Chapter One* on inclusive education and children with a migrant background; *A second chapter* concerning physical education and outdoor activities in kindergarten; *Chapter Three*, which includes the study of children in Greek kindergartens; *Chapter four* is about the applied education program; *Chapter Five* with the results of the research; *Conclusion, Recommendations, Bibliography* with 461 titles in English, *Appendices, Author Contributions* and *Publications* of the PhD student. The text includes 91 tables and 11 figures.

The programs that take place in kindergartens in Greece, with the aim of integrating children with a migrant background, are considered an effective way to promote social integration and learning through play and movement. They

create opportunities for children to learn and grow together, regardless of their background.

In summary, it can be said that the inclusion of children of migrant origin in Greek kindergartens through physical education and outdoor activities is of fundamental importance for their adaptation and successful inclusion in society. This creates opportunities for them to develop and enjoy their childhood, regardless of their background and culture.

An extremely good impression is made by the Protocol for checking the originality of the dissertation, regarding the similarity of the text in the plagiarism prevention system, with the generated quantitative report. The data is categorical, verified and signed by Prof. Engels-Kritidis, proving the absence of similarity or attempts to hide unregulated finding of foreign work through manipulation of the text. Congratulations!

5. Scientific-theoretical and practical-applied contributions.

Content and assessment of scientific contributions - Doctoral student Vaia Duska brings out 4 (four main) as well as conclusion and conclusions that correspond and color the dissertation research and are extremely relevant. Adopting her wording, I will add more contributing elements, such as:

- Current trends and problems related to the given topic are researched.
- An analysis of the possible solutions and approaches for solving the problems related to the topic was made.
- The results of conducted research and studies are presented, which can and will contribute to a better understanding, understanding and effective application of the topic.
- New ideas or approaches are proposed that will improve the state of the discussed topic.

• Different points of view and opinions of experts, interested persons on the issue were considered.

• The possible consequences and impact of current events and developments on the topic are discussed.

• Proposals have been made for specific actions and measures that can be taken to improve the situation related to the topic.

The use of outdoor physical and sports activities can have a number of positive effects, including:

Through their participation in physical games and sports activities, children of migrant origin can become familiar with existing rules and norms in society, as well as share experiences and skills with other children. This can help them learn social skills and feel more confident in their new environment.

Outdoor activities, such as outdoor games and nature walks, can also contribute to the better inclusion of children with a migrant background. These activities not only stimulate children's physical development, but also teach them to appreciate nature, the natural and social environment, and to enjoy the outdoors, especially in the age of information and communication technologies.

And last but not least, the inclusion of children with a migrant background in Greek kindergartens through physical education and outdoor activities can help to achieve better understanding and interaction between different cultures and ethnic groups. It will certainly create a more harmonious community and help the children feel more comfortable, cozy and accepted in their new environment.

And other.

Summarizing the mandatory part of the opinion about the contributing moments of the scientific work, I will note that developments of this kind should find a place in the scientific literature so that pedagogical, non-pedagogical

specialists, experts interested in the issue, here specifically and for parents as well, can find their answers.

6. Data on the auto-reference. The abstract, with a total volume of 53 pages, of which one page the author's publications on the topic (5 in number) meet all the standard requirements for a synthesized and adequate, analytical and systematic development of the primary document, the scientific text, as well as the objective reflection of the content of the dissertation research. The following is the structure of the dissertation, preserving the original numbering of the tables and diagrams included in it. The scientific and technical requirements for the design and presentation of it in the paper version and in the digital form as an online publication have been met. The correctness is visible, the scientific value of the scientific work has been analyzed, as well as the quantitative data according to the normative requirements in the national and intra-institutional laws and regulations.

I state with satisfaction that no violations have been committed regarding the compliance of the dissertation and the originality of the work with the requirements of LDASRB, the Regulations for it, the Regulations for the acquisition of scientific degrees at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and the institution's internal rules.

7. Publications on the topic of the dissertation (content and fulfillment of scientometric requirements).

7.1. Publication data.

The dissertation student presents 5 (five) publications on the topic of scientific research, published in the period of 2022. Four are independent, one is co-authored with the supervisor. Their content is adequate and corresponds to the dissertation, both as a stage and as a continuum.

7.2. Assessment of conformity of the scientific production according to the requirements of LDAS: The doctoral student participates with the following scientific production, related to the Scientometric criteria for the minimum national requirements for the scientific and teaching activity of candidates for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions, Field 1. Pedagogical Sciences, as follows:

- *Dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor", Group A, Indicator 1 → 50 points.*

- *Group D 7. Articles and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes: 4 number of independent x 10 points = 40 points; 1 issue in co-authorship x 0.5 points = 0.5 points. Publications - 5 in total.*

Total number of points for the Posts indicator = **45 points.**

Total number of points for indicators from groups A and G = **95 points.**

From here, it can be categorically summarized that the sum of the indicators of the respective groups **fully meets**, exceeding, the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of LDASRB and Art. 1a, paragraph 1 of the RILDASRB and, accordingly, according to Art. 24, para. 1 of the Regulations for the implementation of LDASRB (for the educational and scientific degree "doctor") for area 1. Pedagogical sciences, Professional direction 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool pedagogy - Intercultural education).

8. Personal impressions.

I do not know Vaia Dimitrios Duska personally, but judging by the scientific production - dissertation, abstract and publications submitted for participation in the competition, I can state that together with and under the extremely professional and competent guidance of my supervisor Prof. DSc Rosalina Engels - Kritidis, PhD, is a finalized scientific work, the subject of which

is particularly significant, current and, I would say, a step ahead of its time, containing no significant weaknesses that would detract from its merits. Congratulations!

9. Notes, recommendations and questions.

As a recommendation, I can point out the following: it is good for the doctoral student to expand her participation in international educational projects. That is, to strive for/to popularize the results of the research activity in publications, conferences, scientific meetings, etc., so that the results that are really significant are heard, visible and recognizable.

Questions:

- Can your model be applied on a wider scale, such as national, and why not international, for example? Specify, in your opinion, the difficulties, the factors that would prevent the mass implementation of your concept?
- How do you generally see the application of the development, in your future specific work (from here on, how will you develop him/her)?

10. Conclusion - Doctoral student Vaia Dimitrios Duska has fulfilled her obligations arising from the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the LDASRB, the Regulations of the University of "St. Kliment Ohridski", as well as the obligations under the corresponding individual study plan of the doctoral student, that is, it meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and 3 of LDASRB and art. 1a, paragraph 1 of RILDASRB. The form and content of the dissertation meet the requirements of Art. 27 of RILDASRB. All administrative procedures have been followed.



Bearing in mind the above, I confidently give my *positive assessment* of the conducted research, presented in the dissertation work, the abstract, the achieved results and contributions.

I declare *my positive vote for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", PhD, to Vaia Dimitrios Duska* from professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Preschool pedagogy - Intercultural education), field of higher education 1. Pedagogical sciences.

Prepared the review, as a member of the scientific jury:

(Prof. DSc Yuliya Doncheva, PhD)

29.05.2024