

Review

by Prof. Ph.D. Yonka Baltadzhieva,

Member of the Scientific Jury for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor",
approved by order of the Rector of BSU, UMM 18/03.10.2022

of the dissertation on the topic: Pre-doctoral stressors influencing the parental style in children with disorders (5-10 years) presented by PhD student Irina Boikinova for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" under Professional Direction 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral Program "Pedagogical and Age Psychology",
Scientific Leader Assoc. Prof. Ph.D. D. Zirkova,

The documents submitted to me on the protection (dissertation work, author's, list of publications, etc.) meet the requirements of the IARB and its Implementing Regulations, as well as the Rules of Procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and taking academic positions at BSU. This gives me reason to review the dissertation.

1. General description of the dissertation work

The dissertation work is in a volume of 207 printed pages. The work is composed in three chapters, accompanied by an introduction, conclusion, bibliography and applications. The resulting research material is presented in 73 tables and 18 figures. The list of literature used contains 216 titles, of which 33 are in Cyrillic, 183 in Latin and 3 Internet addresses. Less than 50% have been published in the last 15 years. 5 standalone applications are attached in a volume of 12 pages. The annexes are clear and readable and complement the statistical analysis of the data received.

2. Topicality of the topic and appropriateness of the objectives and tasks set

This is an attempt to insight into the theoretical and scientific and applied level at the nature of the constructs "parental stress, pre-conditions of parental stress (parental efficiency and endurance), parental style, parental behavior" and the mutual dependencies between them. According to the author, these constructs prove important for determining the quality of parental behavior towards the child with developmental disorders. The need for research in this field is timely and up-to-date.

The theme of the dissertation work is mainly significant in scientific and applied terms. In this direction are also the formulated objectives and tasks of the dissertation work in general, and the research carried out in particular. The idea of the PhD student, placed at the center of the conceptual model and representing a synthesized expression of the review of the existing theoretical and experimental productions realized in chapter one, is clearly defined.

Two objectives of the study are formulated and they are logically related to the overall conceptual model.

The presented theoretical (conceptual) pattern of the relationship between the output work structures (parental efficacy, resilience, parental stress and parental style) and the demographic characteristics of the parents shows that parental behavior (style) is influenced to varying degrees by them. The results of the realized empirical study enrich existing research achievements and reveal the mediator function of parental stress relative to parental style. These theoretical and experiential patterns of interaction provide a new insight into the phenomena studied in Bulgaria.

I believe that the topic chosen for development is dissertable, up-to-date and socially significant.

3. Knowledge of the problem

The PhD student presents an in-depth analysis of the issues related to the theoretical interpretation of the main ideas of parental stress, parental behavior (style) and demographic characteristics that may affect them. It analyzes the specific manifestations of parental style in normal children and children with developmental disorders.

In its entirety, the PhD student knows the state of the problem, evaluates creatively and interpretively the theoretical material and its application in an applied aspect.

4. Methodology of the study

The formulated objective and the tasks assigned have determined an adequate choice of theoretical and scientifically applied study, which includes – theoretical (conceptual) basis of the study, selection of methodologies, pre-experimental studies and experimental studies. The selected battery of tests for research allows to achieve the set goal and obtain an adequate response to the tasks decided in the dissertation work. Four tools for examining the structures under consideration are included:

- **Parenting Sense of Competence Scale**, the scale has 17 statements forming 2 scales: Satisfaction and Efficiency. The scale is validated and adapted by the PhD student and through it parental efficacy is explored;
- **Connor-Davidson Endurance Scale (2003)**, adapted test for Bulgarian population, through which Resilience is studied;
- **Parental Stress Scale**. The scale is validated and adapted by the PhD student and through it parental stress is examined;
- **Author's questionnaire for the study of parental style** (Stoeva, T., 2010), it explores Parental Style.

The two Parenting Sense of Competence Scale and Parental Stress Scale scales have been adapted by the PhD student for the study of the Bulgarian population, and all the conditions and requirements for conducting this procedure are met. The adaptation was carried out in groups of over 100 persons. All data are processed statistically with reliable products and internal stability, reliability and validity of the scales has been proven. The actual study included 255 persons surveyed (parents of children of the age mentioned in the topic), of which 111 were parents of children with developmental disorders. The organization of the study is presented in detail. The data collected are subject to statistical processing, which includes descriptive statistics, t-test for independent samples, dispersion analysis (ANOVA), mediation analysis of the links between the variables. Data processing was performed with the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 statistical software package and Microsoft Office.

5.Characteristic and evaluation of the dissertation work

First chapter of the dissertation work is essentially a theoretical analysis of the problem, a review of published theoretical ideas on the subject and results of experimental studies that are related to the interpreted issue. The content of this chapter is oriented towards three main directions - 1.The role of the family and parents for the development of the child; 2. Development of the child in the age of 5-10 years; 3. Developmental disorders. The wording of the third strand allows interpretations of the developmental disorders of parents or children. The same inaccuracy is allowed in the author's age.

Theories and studies on the stages of parental development are discussed and interpreted in detail, but within two perspectives – psychodynamic and cognitive, which to some extent limits the presentation of existing scientific information on the problem. The development of the child in 5-10 years of age is tracked thoroughly and comprehensively at different levels – physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic development. Special attention is paid to common and classified in official sources violations in children's development.

Chapter One ends with the removal of the contents of the working structures at a theoretical level and the determination of the likely mutual influences between them. They also outline the transition to the created theoretical model of the study, which is developed in chapter two.

The analytical thought of the author is evident, its ability to interpret and summarize the available theoretical and applied aspect information, to extract and apply adequately, and scientifically sound, correct and innovative in its work the achievements of other authors.

The second chapter of the dissertation work is devoted to the methodology of the study. The purpose, tasks, hypotheses and instrumentarium for research are presented sequentially. The idea of the PhD student, placed at the center of the conceptual model and representing a synthesized expression of the review of theoretical and experimental productions realized in chapter one, is clearly defined. Two objectives are formulated and they are logically related to the overall conceptual model of the study. Of these, five specific tasks arise, which are solved in and through the subsequent experimental study. The object and object are precisely specified. Five hypotheses have been put in place. The formulated goal, the tasks assigned and the hypotheses raised have determined an adequate choice of scientific and scientific application study, which includes – conceptual foundations of the study, selection of methodologies, pre-experimental studies and experimental research. The research toolkit is presented readable and correct, with a description of incentives, procedure and method of evaluation. The representativeness of the study is also determined by the number of persons surveyed included at the different stages – 105+118+255 (total 478).

Chapter three presents the results of the study. Summaries and conclusions have been drawn which focus on the practice and with evidence of the situations raised.

The detailed and analytical presentation of the results of the study in chapter three, their correct interpretation proves that Irina Boikinova has the skills to extract and analyze information rich in volume and content. Its statements, conclusions and summaries are reliably substantiated and based only on actual quantitative values obtained. This gives them weight and persuasiveness.

The style of exhibition is clear, accurate and scientific. There is a good knowledge of the scientific field of the scientific field being developed. The main ambition of the PhD student has been achieved – to discover, research, summarize and illuminate the meaningful characteristics of the parental behavior of parents of children with developmental disorders and mutual influences between parental stress and parental behavior, as well as the influence of certain demographic characteristics on the manifestations of parental stress. This ambition is not self-targeted, but directly related to the needs of psychosocial practice.

6. Contributions and importance of development for science and practice

PhD student has determined 6 contributing points in the dissertation work. They are brought to the author's age. Two of them are of theoretical significance and can serve as references in university courses, seminars, parent-child relationship trainings (the theoretical overview of approaches that examined the development of parents and the development of the child and the derived specifics in parents of children with developmental disorders; the

definitions of working structures - parental stress, parental efficacy, endurance and parental style). Four of these contributions are mainly practical and applied and can be used in practical work with parents and families in identifying and managing parental stress in normal children and children with developmental disorders. Especially significant for the practice are the two research tools that the PhD student has validated and adapted - (Parental Stress Scale; Berry, J. O., & Jones, W. H. 1995) and (Parenting Sense of Competence Scale; Gibaud-Wallston & Wandersman, 1978; Johnston & Mash, 1989).

7. Assessment of the publications under the dissertation

The attached 6 articles are on the topic of the dissertation study. They are published in the period 2017-2022. Four of them are presented as reports at conferences of student scientific creativity at BFU and are printed as articles in reference editions of BFU. One publication is in the Yearbook of BFU (2021) and one – in a collection of articles on Psychology, edition of BFU (2021).

8. The author's

Author is in a volume of 42 pages. It reflects correctly and precisely the content of the dissertation work, includes the main graphic material. The formulated contributions and publications on the subject correspond to those listed in the dissertation

9. The research on the dissertation is a personal work of the PhD student

The research, which was conducted by Irina Boikinova, was carried out in a three-year period in two stages – the first stage, during which an adaptation of the research toolkit for the Bulgarian population is carried out and the second stage during which the actual study is realized. The first stage involved 105+118 persons, of whom 5 dropped out when processing the results because their responses were incomplete. The second stage of the study included 255 persons (parents) surveyed, of whom 111 were parents of children with developmental disorders. It would be correct to reflect in the author's report that they are surveyed individuals (parents). The anonymity of all persons surveyed has been maintained. I accept that all the studies are the personal work of the PhD student and there is no evidence of plagiarism.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation work contains scientific and applied results that represent a contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (HRSRB) and the Implementing Regulations of the HRSRB. The dissertation work shows that PhD student Irina Boikinova possesses theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty "Pedagogical and Age Psychology", showing qualities and skills for self-conducting scientific research.

The scientific production presented by Irina Boikinova shows full compliance with the minimum national requirements for the scientific and research activities of the candidates for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Pedagogical and Age Psychology".

I give my positive assessment of the survey presented in the reviewed thesis, author's report, results achieved and contributions. With worthy protection, I propose to the respected scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Irina Petrova Boikinova in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Strand 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral Program "Pedagogical and Age Psychology".

25.10.2022

Reviewer: Prof. Ph.D Y. Baltadzhieva