

REVIEW
by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nevyana Georgieva Feschieva, md
on the dissertation
of
Diana Neycheva Grozdeva-Foteva
on the topic:
NURSERIES IN SUPPORT OF PARENTS FOR FORMATION OF HEALTHY
HABITS OF THE CHILD

Supervisor:
Assoc. Prof. Katya Eguruze, PhD in Public Health

for awarding the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in the field of higher education:
7. Health and sports, professional field: 7.4. Public health and the scientific specialty "Health Care Management"

By Order No. P 109-486/18/11.2021 of the Rector of the Medical University - Varna, prof. Valentin Ignatov, MD, on the basis of the decision of the Faculty of Public Health of Medical University - Varna by Protocol №173/09.11.2021 I have been appointed as an external member of the scientific jury, and by Record №1 of the scientific jury - to submit a review for the dissertation on "**Nurseries in support of parents for the formation of healthy habits of the child**" for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Health Care Management", professional field 7.4. Public Health and field of higher education 7. Health and Sport.

Brief biographical data and career development

Diana Grozdeva was born in 1969. In 1990 she graduated from the Higher Medical Institute "Dr. Nencho Nikolaev" Varna with a degree in "Nurse - Children's Profile". Years of advancing educational degrees and postgraduate training followed. In 2000 D. Grozdeva graduated as a "Master" in "Administrative and Health Management" at the University of Veliko Tarnovo "St. St. Cyril and Methodius "; in 2001-2002 she obtained a postgraduate qualification "teacher" at the University of Shumen "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski". She graduated with a degree "specialist"- a nurse at the Medical College - Dobrich (2004-2005). After training (2011-2013) in the master's program "Health Care Management" at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov "- Varna, obtained a master's degree in Health Care Management.

Her professional career began as a nurse in the Premature Children's Ward at the United Regional Clinical Hospital in Sofia. She started her career as a nurse in the Premature Baby

Unit in Dobrich (1990-1996). Since 1996, after a selection, she has been a lecturer at the Medical College - Dobrich and her further work experience was in medical educational institutions in Dobrich and Varna. After a selection process, in 2018, she holds an academic position "Assistant Professor" in the Department of Health Care, specialty "Nurse" at the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University - Varna. Throughout her 25 years of teaching Diana Grozdeva has participated in 50 continuing education courses at national and international level in the field of health care and teaching. After taking up an academic position, she increased her publishing activity - she has over 25 scientific publications and over 45 participations in national and international conferences. She has co-authored a textbook on palliative care, a textbook on Child - Norm and Pathology - a Compendium of Nursing and co-authored a practical nursing textbook. She holds a second certificate from the National Quality Council for quality health care delivery.

She is a member of the Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals, the Bulgarian and European Public Health Associations, the Bulgarian Scientific Society of Public Health.

General characteristics of the dissertation

The dissertation submitted by assistant Diana Grozdeva contains 176 standard pages and is illustrated with 4 tables, 40 figures and 6 annexes. The bibliographic list includes 182 references, 81 in Cyrillic and 101 in Latin.

The material is structured in the following well-balanced main sections: Introduction, Chapter I - Literary Review - 53 pages; Chapter II - Purpose, tasks and methodology - 7 pages; Chapter III - Results and discussion - 60 pages; Conclusions, Suggestions, Contributions - 4 pages; Applications - 33 pages.

Relevance of the dissertation.

Intensive research work in recent years on the problem of "early childhood development" has provided irrefutable evidence of the crucial importance of the environment during this period, created by the family, the community and the state, both for the individual future of each child and for the potential and prospects of the whole society. Nurseries, part of the public care of children at an early age, are a meeting place for family and institutional efforts to strengthen children's health. The orientation of these efforts towards creating healthy habits in the child from an early age is necessary and promising. The lack of serious research looking at the intersection of parental care and the health competence of medical staff in nursery-reared children makes the topic of assistant professor Diana Grozdeva's dissertation particularly relevant to families and the organization of nursery work, as well as to public health in general.

Evaluation of the dissertation

In the **introduction** of the dissertation, the doctoral candidate justifies the importance of the research problem.

Evaluation of the literature review

The doctoral candidate has structured the literature review into five paragraphs that can be summarized into two major sections: A. History of the world and Bulgarian experience in organized child care, with emphasis on those for children up to 3 years - nurseries and B. The nursery and the role of the nurse in the formation of healthy habits of the child up to 3 years of age.

In the first section, the doctoral student provides a fascinating account, based on solid sources, of the path to organized child care, moving through shelters and religious institutions for physical survival and nourishment to modern facilities with organized prevention and health promotion programs and health education for parents and staff. The author's position is used to analyze the relationship between nurseries and parents, the evolution of the tasks of the nursery; best practices of education in modern, 21st-century nurseries are outlined. The presentation of the development of nursery work in individual countries, including Bulgaria, is of cognitive importance. I positively appreciate the analysis that the doctoral student makes of the historical facts, illuminating the organized early childhood education as part of the history of civilization. The second major section discusses the involvement of health professionals in working with children. The doctoral student concludes that the nursery nurse was, is (or should be) a pillar of children's health education, but also a consultant and advisor to parents. The literature review is a stand-alone study that, with minor editing, deserves to be published and would contribute to the education of all who are interested and/or involved in early childhood health.

Assessment of purpose, objectives and methodology.

The purpose of this dissertation is formulated: *To study and analyze the role of the nurse in the nursery for the formation of healthy habits of children, together with parents and to develop approaches to improve the interaction between the nurse and the family.*

Six tasks are planned to accomplish this purpose.

Four hypotheses are presented. The subject, object and scope of the study are well described. Covered are:

- a. Nurses practicing in nurseries located in the city of Varna - 49, which represent 31.5% of the list of nurses working in nurseries in Varna.

b. Parents of children up to 3 years of age attending nurseries in Varna - 844, which is 41.6% of the parents of children attending nurseries in Varna. Varna.

c. Children up to 3 years of age attending nurseries; - 844, which is 41.6% of the children attending nurseries in Varna

The *stages* of the research work are clearly and in detail described in terms of *time, place, object, applied instruments*. The sequence of the stages includes: a one-moment survey among parents and nurses on the level of children's proficiency in healthy habits; identification of the group of parents for training and of children for observation; development and testing of own methodology for improving the interaction between parents and nurses and after 6 months assessing its impact on the level of healthy habits in children.

The **research methods** of the survey - documentary, survey, observation were adequately applied. For the statistical presentation of the results the following were used:

Descriptive methods and estimation methods; Hypothesis testing methods-nonparametric methods; *Correlation analysis*- Spearman's coefficient.

An essential part of the research methodology is the **Methodology for Improving the Effectiveness of Nurse-Parent Interaction developed** by the doctoral student, which is well described in terms of *purpose, object, subject, applied tools*. The methodology contains elements of assessing the parents' training needs, conducting their training as a type of intervention with self-developed materials, approbation of the Model for Building Healthy Habits in the Nursery; with the involvement of the family and the nurse, 6-month monitoring and reporting of changes in the level of mastery of habits.

A **toolkit** developed by the PhD student is presented: *questionnaires* No. 1 (for the nurses' opinion on the children's level of mastery of healthy habits) and No. 2 (for the parents' opinion on the same issue) and *a habit monitoring sheet* (for the nurse to monitor the change in each habit after applying the proprietary methodology).

The methodology of the dissertation includes traditional and original methods, specially developed for the study, meets the modern requirements, proves the doctoral student's preparation for research work and is a guarantee for the reliability of the results obtained.

The results and discussion are presented in six sections, according to the set tasks and applied methods. The analysis of data on children enrolled in nurseries by age group for the period 2010-2020 is done by statistical planning areas and by districts, which is valuable from a health policy perspective. The conclusion is that the insufficient number of nursery places deprives many children of early socialisation in an appropriate environment with quality professional care. The results of the original study show the difficulties of parents in

establishing healthy habits. The types of habits a child should have according to age are identified, which is a prerequisite for health personnel and family to work together.

A 6-month trial of the self-reported methodology in one nursery (among 76 children) showed a positive change in the level of mastery of healthy habits.

The presentation of the results by sections is done accurately, very well illustrated and accompanied by a discussion based on research by foreign authors. Particular mention should be made of the well illustrated guide 'Practical tips for parents'.

The conclusions of the thesis follow logically from its results.

I agree with the formulated contributions, among which the following should be highlighted: a survey conducted for the first time in Bulgaria on the formation of healthy habits in early childhood with the participation of nursery nurses and parents; a theoretically grounded and proposed Model for building healthy habits in the nursery with the participation of the nurse and the family. I highly appreciate the practical-applied contributions relating to the Methodology, the developed manual for parents and the system for monitoring healthy habits.

Abstract and publications

The abstract to the dissertation reflects the structure of the work properly and contains a detailed description of the methodology and the most important results and conclusions of the survey.

There are three full-text publications related to the thesis topic and one participation in an international conference.

Personal impressions and recommendations. I know assistant Diana Grozdeva to be socially responsible, accurate, scientifically conscientious. She deployed these qualities in the development of her dissertation and proved her research capabilities. I would recommend her to continue her work on health promotion in early childhood and to find appropriate forms for the implementation of the ideas of the dissertation in practice.

Conclusion

The dissertation titled "**Nurseries in support of parents for the formation of healthy habits of the child**" represents a complete scientific product dedicated to a little developed and pertinent topic, well methodologically placed, precisely executed, with significant contributions, opening the way for new research work in the field of health promotion in early childhood and cooperation between family and health personnel. It fully complies with the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations of Medical University - Varna for its implementation.

In connection with all of the above, I give my positive assessment and recommend the Honorable Scientific Jury to award the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in the scientific specialty of Health Care Management to **Diana Neycheva Grozdeva-Foteva**.

01.02.2022

Reviewer:

assoc. Prof. Nevyana Fevchieva, MD, PhD.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'N. Fevchieva', is written over the text of the reviewer's name.