

RECENSION

From Prof. Elena Grozeva Zheleva, PhD

Department of Health Care, Branch - Sliven, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna

Internal member of the scientific jury

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Appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury by Order No. P-109-196 of 16.03.2023. of the Rector of MU "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna, and on the basis of Protocol №1/27.03.2023. to prepare a **statement** about the procedure for the acquisition of the degree of **Doctor** of Education and Science for the candidate **Zhivka Georgieva Margosyan** at the Branch - Sliven of MU Varna.

Subject: Award of the degree of Doctor of Education and Science in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sport, professional field 7.4. Public Health, scientific specialty 'Health Care Management'.

Topic: 'Exploring the professional preparation of health care professionals to work in a nursery'.

Scientific supervisor: **Assist. Prof. Anna Georgieva, PhD**

All the necessary documents provided in the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Regulations and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of MU-Varna have been submitted.

The proposed dissertation of **assistant professor Zhivka Georgieva Margosyan** is the result of her long-term, focused work as a health care specialist, teacher and researcher. In 1996 at the Medical Institute, Sliven she graduated from a post-secondary medical education with a professional qualification 'Children's nurse'. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Social Activities with a professional qualification in Social Activities at the University of Veliko Tarnovo 'St. St. Cyril and Methodius' - Veliko Tarnovo in 2001. And in 2004. - Master's degree at Veliko Tarnovo University 'St. St. Cyril and Methodius' with professional qualifications – 'Master in Economics' and 'Business Management - Health Management'. In 2015 she obtained a Master's degree in Health Care Management at MU-Varna "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna with a professional qualification - "Health care manager and practice teacher". In 2022, she earned a specialty in Clinical Social Work.

Since 1982 until 2015 she works as a nurse at the Hospital "Dr. Ivan Seliminski", Sliven, Bulgaria in the Infectious Diseases Unit.

Since 2015 she has been appointed, after a competition was held, as an assistant professor in the Department of Health Care at the Branch-Sliven of MU Varna and until now she continues to work there.

Assistant professor **Zhivka Margosyan** is a well-established lecturer with high professional competencies in the field of health care, clinical practice and pre-diploma internship in the specialty of nursing.

The dissertation of **Zhivka Georgieva Margosyan** is dedicated to a significant problem related to the professional training of health care professionals for working in nursery.

The work presents the identified contemporary needs and requirements in the professional training of health care professionals for the practice of their profession in nurseries. The created toolkit is appropriate for the conducted targeted research to present the current state of the problem 'professional training of health care professionals for work in the nursery', with regard to pedagogical activity in the nursery; the nursery as a professional environment for realization; the professional pedagogical training of health care professionals, related to their functions and roles in relation to their pedagogical activity.

The dissertation contains **159** pages, it is illustrated with **42** figures, **7** tables, **2** diagrams and includes **7** annexes. The bibliographic list contains **247** references, **125** in Cyrillic and **122** in Latin, **82** of which are from the Internet.

The work is structured according to the requirements and includes: **introduction**; **first chapter 'Literature review'** with two paragraphs; **the second chapter 'Aim, objectives, materials and methodology of the research'** with eight paragraphs; **a third chapter 'Results and Discussion'** with five paragraphs; **chapter four 'Practical approaches to maintain and improve the pedagogical training of health care professionals working in a nursery'** with seven paragraphs; **conclusions; suggestions; contributions; literature and annexes**. The content corresponds to the topic and reflects the results of the research done by **assistant professor Zhivka Margosyan**.

In the **Introduction**, the scientific and practical relevance of the research problem is presented - a study of the professional preparation of health care professionals for working in a nursery. The level of maintenance and improvement of the qualification of health care professionals working in nurseries is analyzed for the formation of professional competencies, for providing quality health care and ensuring conditions for constructive problem solving in pedagogical practice and the implementation of the tasks of innovative development of pedagogical activity.

Emphasis is placed on a contemporary model of education focused on innovation in the professional training of health professionals working in nursery and community needs; stimulating continuous professional development, affirming and enhancing the best pedagogical qualities; and the development of their creative potential.

In the first chapter '**Literature Review**' the PhD student presents the relevance of the research problem; provides a historical overview of the emergence and development of nurseries as early childhood learning environments. She thoroughly analyzes the current state of the problem: professional training of health care professionals for working in a nursery, with a view of their pedagogical activity.

She focuses on the problem of the current state of professional training of health care professionals for working in a nursery, with a view of their pedagogical activity. She considers the nursery as an early childhood learning environment; contemporary practice in an international aspect and in Bulgaria - normative frameworks, nature, structure and activity of the nursery. Statutory regulations for the implementation of health care professionals in the nursery as a professional setting. She focuses on the professional pedagogical training of health care professionals related to their functions and roles in relation to their pedagogical activities.

Considering the specific characteristics of the professional carrying out the pedagogical activity, the pedagogical functions and roles, as well as the pedagogical interaction in the nursery, she emphasizes the all-round development of children at an early age and their opportunity for harmonious development.

Doctoral student Zhivka Margosyan also looks at the role of the need for pedagogical training and postgraduate qualification. Analyses the current needs, responsibilities and requirements of health professionals working in the nursery. Summarizes that the pedagogical activity in the nursery is an integral part of the professional competence of the nurse, midwife and physician assistant. Special attention is paid to the professional competence of health care professionals, their pedagogical functions and roles as an integral part of the professional profile of the health care professional working in the nursery.

The used literature sources show the author's awareness of the problem under study.

Zhivka Margosyan discusses the need for changes in the training of health care professionals authorized to work in a nursery. It proves the need for a unified and systematic approach in their pedagogical training. Advocates her own position on the facilitation and effectiveness of knowledge, awareness and making a positive change in postgraduate education.

In the second chapter 'Aim, Objectives, Materials and Methodology of the Research' the aim, objectives and working hypotheses of the research are formulated. It presents the subject and object of the study and the scope of the study. The organisation, stages of the study and the methods, criteria and indicators applied are outlined. **Sociological methods** (survey method, documentary method, expert evaluation) and **statistical methods** for data processing and analysis (alternative analysis, correlation analysis, non-parametric analysis, parametric analysis, variance analysis, graphical analysis to illustrate the observed processes and phenomena) were used.

Data were processed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 19 statistical package.

The instrumentation of the study shows that the doctoral student used self-developed instruments. Three questionnaires with closed, open, semi-closed and identifying questions were developed to explore the views of students, health care professionals working in nurseries, educators, and parents. Questionnaires for two interviews and two semi-structured interviews for Nursery Directors, Nursery Branch Managers of the Municipal Health Department and Habilitated Educators involved in training health care professionals with closed, open, semi-closed and identifying questions.

The study was conducted after obtaining permission from the Research Ethics Committee of the Medical University 'Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyano' - Protocol/Decision №115/31.03.2022. All research participants signed informed consent.

The organization of the study includes **five stages**: stage I /preparatory stage/; II/pilot study/; III /actual survey/; IV /development of practical approaches to optimize the pedagogical activity of the nursery nurse/ and V /conducting an expert evaluation of the feasibility of the developed practical approaches to optimize the pedagogical activity of the nurse/. Informed consent to participate in the study was obtained by providing each study participant with information describing the purpose of the study, benefits to the study participant, and confidentiality of the information.

The presented information on the conceptual apparatus contributes to a more comprehensive and accurate clarification of the concepts and the overall concept of the thesis.

In the third chapter 'Results and Discussions' the characteristics of the groups of respondents - students; health care professionals working in nurseries; parents and educators- are presented. Professional background was examined in the two main groups of respondents - students and health care professionals working in nurseries.

The results of the doctoral student's own research and discussion are highlighted. The study included 577 respondents, divided into five groups - 192 students /97 from the specialty

'Nurse' and 92 from the specialty 'Midwife'/, 164 working health care professionals /of which 134 'Nurse' and 30 'Midwife'/, 15 educators, 175 parents and 31 experts. **The logical units** of the study are seven: students from the Sliven, Veliko Tarnovo and Shumen branches; FPH at MU 'Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov' Varna; **health care professionals and educators** working in a nursery, as well as **parents** in the cities of Sliven, Varna, Veliko Tarnovo and Shumen; and three types of **experts** participated in the dissertation study.

An in-depth analysis of the views of the participants in the study was conducted. Pedagogical activity is examined from the perspective of students during their pre-degree internship and the perspective of already working health professionals. The opinion of educators and nursery school directors regarding the research was also studied. The research model reveals the actual state of the problem in practice, provides the results obtained from the research conducted. It has been shown that there is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of health professionals and students on the qualities they should possess to carry out their teaching work effectively.

The pedagogical interaction of health care professionals working in nurseries with parents has been evaluated by the doctoral student and occupies an important place in the dissertation. Parents' confidence that health care professionals have a high level of professional competence in the care, education and training of their children in the nursery becomes particularly important. A good organization does not require changes in the educational and overall process.

Assistant professor Margosyan explores the readiness of working nursery professionals for postgraduate training to enhance their pedagogical competence. The doctoral student proves that the main activities and means of improving their qualification are increasing their educational degree, systematic continuing education and acquiring specialization.

Doctoral student **Zhivka Margosyan** discusses the system for evaluating the pedagogical activity of health care professionals in the fourth chapter '**Practical Approaches for Maintaining and Improving the Pedagogical Training of Health Care Professionals Working in a Nursery**'. She emphasizes on their activities to ensure management in the nursery, based on a systematic analysis of the quality of performance, resource provision and the results of the educational process. An important trend in the work are the measures for the implementation of the goals and objectives of the evaluation of the pedagogical activity in the kindergarten, which are planned on the basis of a problem analysis of the educational process in it.

The doctoral student analysed the **criteria for the evaluation of the pedagogical activity of health care professionals working in the nursery** in six sections, setting criteria, parameters and points for each section.

The developed '**Slip for the evaluation of the pedagogical activity of health care professionals during a pedagogical situation in the nursery**' by assistant **Zhivka Margosyan** includes the components: definition of the pedagogical situation; forming motivation in children; mastery of the material; content differentiation; application of training and education methods; types of cognitive activity; management style of children's activities; the nature of pedagogical communication; nature of interaction with children; effectiveness of the pedagogical situation, which are of key importance for the professional training of specialists. Proves that the modern model of education in the nursery, focused on the development of innovation, is necessary to constantly stimulate professional development,

affirmation and enhancement of the best pedagogical qualities, development of the creative potential of health professionals working in nurseries.

An in-depth analysis of the development and improvement of professional skills of health care professionals working in nurseries is made, focusing on differentiation, taking into account the basic professional level of the health care professional, the formed professional competence, the creative potential, the mastery of pedagogical technologies, the set of professional skills that determine the educational success of pedagogical communication and interaction with the child.

The PhD student considers '**The system for optimizing the pedagogical activity of health care professionals working in nurseries**' as a necessity for quality training. The strategy aims to improve the professionalism of health professionals and is aimed at creating conditions for training and achieving the set objectives.

Assistant professor Zhivka Margosyan proves the necessity of the proposed system to function both in each nursery and at the municipal level /through the establishment of regional **Centers for Pedagogical Competence of Health Care Professionals**/ and at the national level /through the establishment of a **Center for Pedagogical Competence of Health Care Professionals**, which would provide a unified system for post-primary and continuing education of health care professionals, working in a nursery/. She thoroughly analyses the activities of the centres.

Zhivka Margosyan proposes a '**Continuing/Postgraduate Education Plan for Health Care Professionals**' with activities to continuously improve their professional competence. The data from the survey of health care professionals working in a nursery focus on their needs for training to enhance their pedagogical competence through individual choice of different forms and programmes of training. It proves the necessity of developing and implementing a '**Plan for interaction of health care professionals working in the nursery with parents**', which will create conditions for adequate adaptation and socialization, quality care, effective education and upbringing of each child, as well as creating a partnership between parents and health care professionals.

The practical approaches for maintaining and improving the pedagogical training of health care professionals working in a nursery, developed by the PhD student, are proposed for expert evaluation, with a view to their implementation in practice, after normative regulation and acceptance by the relevant institutions. It is shown that the experts give their positive assessment of the need for a unified and systematic approach to solving the problems concerning the pedagogical training of health professionals working in the nursery. The statistical processing presented by assistant **Zhivka Margosyan** shows that there is a lack of a unified and systematic approach in the professional pedagogical training of health care professionals entitled to work in the nursery.

The high percentage of readiness for the implementation of pedagogical functions and roles in the nursery setting is demonstrated. Health care professionals have been found to provide opportunities for effective teaching. The doctoral student summarizes the parents' opinion on the implementation of effective pedagogical activity; satisfaction with the professionalism, quality of training, education and organization of educational work in the nursery. Health care professionals have high professional competence related to the care, education and training of their child in the nursery. The main problems concerning the pedagogical activity in the kindergarten are related to the behaviour of the children and the large number of children in the groups. The need for a unified and systematic approach to

solving problems related to the pedagogical activities of health care professionals working in the nursery was demonstrated.

The theoretical, mathematical and statistical treatment of the empirical data and their interpretation in the dissertation is presented.

Assistant Professor **Zhivka Margosyan**, on the basis of the analysis made, is developing and will approbate in practice ‘**Model of the system for control and evaluation of pedagogical activity**’ and ‘**Unified model of the system for postgraduate training of medical specialists**’.

The basis of the dissertation research is the author's thesis that if the developed and proposed practical approaches to maintain and improve professional training related to the optimization of pedagogical activity are used to solve pedagogical problems in the nursery. The significance of the transformative research is that the ‘**Practical Approaches for Maintaining and Improving the Pedagogical Training**’ and ‘**Unified Model of the Postgraduate Training System for Medical Professionals**’ developed and proposed by doctoral student **Zhivka Marghosyan** for continuing postgraduate training will be approbated in the conditions of a real environment.

In the **conclusion**, assistant professor **Zhivka Margosyan** analyzes the scientific and practical significance of the professional training of health care professionals to work in a nursery, and in particular their pedagogical training, in view of the increasing demands of society for quality health care and education of young children in nurseries.

The dissertation provides evidence of the need for a unified and systematic approach to addressing the problems associated with the pedagogical activities of health care professionals. The developed models are aimed at optimizing the pedagogical activity of health care professionals working in the nursery and the interaction with parents to improve the quality of care, education and training of children.

The summarized **conclusions** present the opinion of **assistant Margosyan** about the problems investigated in the dissertation.

The submitted proposals to the **Council of Ministers**, to the **Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals** and to the **Heads of the Municipal Health Care Directorates** and the Directors of the nurseries will contribute to: further development and reassessment of the current legislation in the Republic of Bulgaria concerning the professional training of health care professionals for work in the nursery; introducing a single model for postgraduate training; a system for monitoring and evaluating the teaching activities of health care professionals; system for optimizing pedagogical activity; and stimulating postgraduate training.

The contributions of the work are of **theoretical-cognitive importance** and **practical-applied character**. They can be formulated as:

- ✓ A focused study has been done on the state of professional preparation of health care professionals for working in a nursery;
- ✓ The level of satisfaction of parents whose children attend a nursery school with the professional competence of health professionals related to the care, education and training of their children and with their interaction with health professionals was studied;
- ✓ The presented: **Model of system for control and evaluation of pedagogical activity and Unified model of system for postgraduate training of medical specialists** is an effective realization of the problems considered in the dissertation and can be applied in practice among working specialists in nurseries;

- ✓ The practical applicability of the developed practical approaches for maintaining and improving the pedagogical training in the nursery of health care professionals is demonstrated.

Seven appendices were used in the writing of the thesis.

The presented **abstract** fully reflects the content of the thesis.

The PhD student presents **three publications** related to the dissertation, two of which she is the sole author and the third of which she is the second author.

The presented dissertation on '**Study of the professional preparation of health care professionals for work in a nursery**' by assistant professor **Zhivka Margosyan**, in terms of topicality, precision of methodology, quality of the obtained results and significance of the scientific contributions is in accordance with the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and meets the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of MU Varna.

The above considerations justify me to give a **positive assessment** and to propose to the distinguished members of the Scientific Jury to award the degree of **Doctor of Education** in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sport, professional field 7.4. Public Health, scientific specialty "Health Care Management" of **Zhivka Georgieva Margosyan**.

11.04.2023

Sliven

Signature:.....
/ Prof. Elena Grozdeva Zheleva, PhD/