

REVIEW

by Assoc. Prof. Eng. Ognyan Tishinov, Ph.D.

Subject: A dissertation is presented for official defense by BOYANA KONSTANTINOVA KOTSEVA, full-time doctoral student at the Department of "SNOW SPORTS" at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski", on the topic "ANALYSIS OF THE CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALPINE SKIING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA" for acquiring the educational scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Theory and Methodology of Sports Science", professional field 7.6 "Sport", research supervisor Assoc. Prof. Petar Yankov, Ph.D.

The dissertation considers the skis for people with disabilities as accessible motor activity and the peculiarities of this process. The relevance of the chosen topic is unquestionable, given how a growing field of research shows the benefits of sports and recreation to promote integration into the community, as well as the physiological and psychological benefits for people with disabilities. They usually want to achieve the same results as other athletes participating in competitions.

Regular physical activity can help improve muscle strength, endurance, psychological condition and quality of life, lower blood pressure, improve mood, relieve depression, and increase well-being in people with disabilities.

In this sense, the topic is interesting, with a practical focus and there is no doubt about its dissertability.

The development has a volume of 166 standard pages. The results are presented in 31 tables and are illustrated with 53 figures. The literature used includes 88 titles, of which 75 in Latin and 13 in Cyrillic. The dissertation follows the classical structure of such scientific works: introduction in volume 6 pages; first chapter of 46 pages, divided into 10 subsections, second chapter 11 pages including

purpose, tasks, organization and methodology, third chapter, research results and analysis 98 pages, 7 theoretical and applied conclusions and 8 recommendations. 5-page appendices are presented. The list of publications and their number corresponds to the dissertation submitted for defense. The abstract meets the requirements.

The dissertation work offers multidimensional scientific tasks and answers a number of questions about sports with disabilities. The success in the development of the topic is largely due to the good scientific preparation of the dissertation. The work is well illustrated tabularly and graphically.

Chapter one answers a number of questions about the system for assessing functionality - the degree of disability of participants, specialized ski equipment for people with disabilities, nature, classifications and composition of the infrastructure used by athletes, the Paralympic Winter Games (Winter Paralympic Games) and familiarity with the structure of international organizations developing skiing for people with disabilities. The adapted skis of these participants represent a kind of sports culture and is an indication of the maturity of the worldview of the social structure. Interest in the topic of the dissertation is provided by the historical descriptions of cases of athletes with disabilities in Germany, Austria, the United States and others. successfully tackled the challenges. The apotheosis for athletes with disabilities is the Winter Paralympic Games (ZPI). In the beginning, the peculiarity of the competitions was the presence of three categories based on their functional ability, as the system for calculating the results allowing athletes with different disabilities to compete against each other. Since 2006, a new grading system has been introduced, significantly reducing the number of potential medals in Paralympic alpine skiing from 128 to 36 and creating a high level of competition for each medal. In this sense, the dissertation deals very comprehensively with the criteria for sports classes. The individual classes defined according to the functional capabilities of the athletes are also described in detail. In addition, the described

factor system allows the grouping of different classes into three general groups: sitting, standing and blind.

The many features that are present in the group of athletes with disabilities are described in great detail. From the acquaintance with the work it is impressive that there is no significant difference in the nature of ski competitions in the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The peculiarities of the equipment used by athletes with disabilities are described in detail and we see the individual characteristics in accordance with the degrees of functional disabilities.

In addition to equipment, athletes need facilities and shelters called tourist sites. The last part of the process is human resources. These are teachers of ski training, who must have the concept and attitude to work with athletes with disabilities.

The experimental part of the dissertation is presented exhaustively. The list of literature fully follows modern sources.

The goal is clearly and precisely formulated. The tasks in the correct logical sequence outline the path of scientific research to achieve the set goal. The subject of research has been determined.

The research methods used as well as the mathematical and statistical methods are described in detail. The derived working hypothesis derives from the review and is scientifically proven.

The chapter "Research Results and Analysis" is undoubtedly of great importance. The analysis has a number of creative aspects, it was conducted with scientifically based criticism from the position of a built specialist. The problems that have not been sufficiently studied are systematized and an answer will be sought in the dissertation. Two main factors have been identified that allow us to obtain an adequate assessment of the existing conditions and facilities in Bulgarian ski resorts.

The survey is comprehensive enough. The presence of acceptable conditions for the newly built hotels and insufficiently equipped hotel base and conditions for the old construction has been established. The analysis of the climbing facilities and the approach to them is comprehensive. Stakeholders' attitudes towards adapted skis were established through a survey detailed in Annex1.

A variational analysis was made, quantifying the predominant answers in the survey.

Factor analysis is an in-depth study of the survey results. The number of required factors depends significantly on the correlations between the observed values, and in the typical case of application of factor analysis, this number is much smaller, usually one, two or three factors. Factor analysis allows factor results to be calculated for each of the factors, which means that the factors can be treated as ordinary observed quantities. To establish the dominant factors involved in the factors in the dissertation, an in-depth analysis was performed following the classical procedure of eliminating low correlation values and achieving satisfactory sample adequacy giving a sufficient guarantee for the reliability of the results. Factor analysis groups the in-depth questions from the survey into four factor groups described in detail in the paper. It is not in vain that this analysis is given enough space in the dissertation. The conclusions of the work can serve to determine the motivation of those involved in sports in the contingent of people with disabilities. Factor analysis identifies important characteristics regarding gender identity according to the work with people with disabilities.

A detailed comparative analysis was made of the units for management, organization and development strategies carried out for the Republic of Bulgaria and leading countries in the policy of sports with disabilities. The presented material is extremely encyclopedically detailed and can serve as a good basis for improving the work with people with disabilities at the national level. An example is the detailed

description of the work of the Australian Paralympic Committee compared to that in the Republic of Bulgaria. The useful effect of the training of staff in NSA "Vasil Levski" specifically aimed at sports with disabilities is reported. It is very valuable to combine the system of training in ski training with the Bulgarian Ski School - BPS implementing the unified training methodology.

The training methodology in Canada, Finland, Israel, Australia, Bulgaria and others is presented in detail.

The doctoral student is actively involved in ski training for people with disabilities. Due to this circumstance, the dissertation presents detailed training plans in accordance with the specific features of the field and the participants. Dependencies and personal impressions in the practice of sports are shown. The overall system-structural approach for analysis and interpretation of the obtained data, applied with skill, leaves a good impression.

The conclusions and recommendations are specific and logically follow from the results obtained and the analysis made.

In my opinion, the theoretical and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation are the following:

1. The literature sources related to adapted skiing for people with disabilities have been studied.
2. An analysis of the existing organizational features in countries with a policy in the field of sports for people with disabilities has been developed.
3. An analysis of the natural features in the Republic of Bulgaria and the implemented policy in the field of sports with disabilities has been developed.
4. Statistical variation, correlation and factor analyzes of the survey results were performed and conclusions were made according to the indicators participating in the factor groups.

5. Detailed plans for training work have been developed and pedagogical observations have been conducted repeatedly in the Republic of Bulgaria and abroad.

6. High value are the shared observations and personal experience of the dissertation in working with people with disabilities.

Ultimately, the dissertation is a detailed practical guide for the training of sports professionals in the work of people with disabilities and contributes to humanism today.

In conclusion, I must note that we have been offered a completed scientific work that meets all the requirements for a doctoral dissertation. The doctoral student has proved to be a knowledgeable and capable specialist, practitioner and researcher. Based on all the above, I give a positive assessment of the dissertation of Boyana Konstantinova Kotseva, a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Snow Sports at NSA "V. Levski ", on the topic "ANALYSIS OF THE CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALPINE SKIING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA" and I propose to the esteemed commission to be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the specialty 7.6 Sports.

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Signature:.....

(Assoc. Prof. Ognyan Tishinov, PhD)