ВЕЛИКОТЪРНОВСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
"СВ. СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЙ"



ST. CYRIL AND ST. METHODIUS
UNIVERSITY OF VELIKO TARNOVO

REVIEW

by Associate Professor Ivan Stoyanov, PhD

of the dissertation entitled:

"The Influence of the School Environment on Achievement Motivation among Secondary School Students in Israel"

Author: Hulud Ghadir, PhD Candidate in Independent Study Mode at "Chernorizets Hrabar" Free University of Varna

Supervisors: Prof. Lyudmil Georgiev, D.Sc. (Psychology); Associate Professor Ivaylo Lazarov, PhD

This review has been prepared in accordance with Rector's Order No. 591/29.09.2026 of "Chernorizets Hrabar" Free University of Varna concerning the public defense of the doctoral dissertation submitted by Hulud Ghadir for the award of the educational and scientific degree of PhD in Professional Field 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral Programme General Psychology.

1. Information about the Doctoral Candidate

The materials submitted as part of the doctoral procedure indicate that Hulud Ghadir has pursued doctoral studies in independent study mode at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social, Business and Computer Sciences, VFU "Chernorizets Hrabar" Free University of Varna, during the period 2022–2026. The documentation submitted is complete and complies with all requirements for admission to a public dissertation defense.

A review of the candidate's professional biography reveals a long-standing commitment to educational practice. Her extensive experience as a teacher, combined with her work as an educational coordinator, has provided opportunities

for direct observation of the factors influencing students' development and motivation. Consequently, the choice of the dissertation topic appears fully justified and closely related to the author's professional experience.

Particularly commendable is the effort to interpret and analyse accumulated practical observations through systematic scientific inquiry. Such integration of practical experience with research activity often leads to the formulation of questions that have genuine significance for educational practice.

The publications presented are directly related to the subject matter of the dissertation and demonstrate a sustained interest in the problem under investigation. They reflect consistent scholarly engagement throughout the doctoral period and the gradual development of competencies for independent scientific research.

2. Relevance and Significance of the Research Topic

The influence of the school environment on achievement motivation continues to be one of the most important topics in both educational psychology and contemporary educational practice. In recent years, increasing attention has been directed towards identifying the conditions that encourage students' active participation in the learning process and support their academic success.

In the dissertation, the school environment is not viewed merely as a physical setting but rather as a multidimensional system of conditions and relationships. Various factors are examined, including the social climate, the organization of school life, instructional practices, teacher-student relationships, and aspects of school leadership and management.

Particular interest lies in the inclusion of technology and artificial intelligence as components of the contemporary educational environment. This focus further enhances the relevance of the study, given the increasingly significant role that digital technologies play in transforming teaching, learning, and interaction within schools.

The review of the literature demonstrates a sound understanding of the principal theoretical perspectives and existing research in the field. The author successfully positions her study within the broader body of accumulated scientific knowledge while simultaneously justifying the need for conducting the present investigation.

The relevance of the dissertation is convincingly substantiated both from the standpoint of scientific interest in the problem and in terms of its practical significance for the educational system.

3. Information about the Dissertation and the Abstract

The dissertation comprises 161 pages and includes an introduction, four chapters, references, and appendices. The structure is well organized and enables the reader to follow the logic of the research in a coherent and systematic manner. The dissertation abstract adequately reflects the main components of the study and accurately presents its objectives, content, and findings.

At the outset, the author clearly formulates the object, subject, purpose, and objectives of the research. The principal research questions and the limitations of the study are also explicitly identified. This provides a solid basis for understanding the conceptual framework of the dissertation and facilitates appropriate interpretation of the findings within the actual scope of the investigation.

The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework of the study. It systematically examines various aspects of the school environment and their potential relationship with achievement motivation. The author addresses a topic situated at the intersection of educational psychology and educational practice. In addition to traditional characteristics of the school environment, issues such as academic self-efficacy, sense of belonging, psychological safety, academic anxiety, and student well-being are discussed.

A positive impression is created by the author's effort to present the research problem within a broader conceptual context rather than limiting it solely to the organizational characteristics of schools. Attention is devoted both to the relationships among participants in the educational process and to teaching practices, school management, and the impact of technology on the learning environment.

Special consideration is given to the increasing integration of digital technologies and artificial intelligence-based tools. This decision is entirely justified in light of the changes that have occurred in educational practice over recent years. The inclusion of this aspect enhances the contemporary relevance of the dissertation and broadens the traditional understanding of the factors shaping the school environment.

The review of the literature demonstrates good familiarity with the research area. Both classical theoretical perspectives and more recent scientific publications are analysed. The presentation of previous studies contributes to a clearer positioning of the present work and provides a rationale for conducting the author's own empirical investigation.

The second chapter presents the research methodology. It describes the participants, the organization of the study, the instruments employed, and the statistical procedures used for data analysis. The logic of the research design and the way in which the methodological decisions correspond to the objectives of the study are clearly presented.

The empirical study was conducted with a total of 317 participants, including 283 students and 34 teachers. Although the two groups are not equally represented, the inclusion of both students and teachers provides an opportunity to gather different perspectives regarding the school environment and its influence on achievement motivation.

For the purposes of the study, the author developed a proprietary questionnaire consisting of 57 items grouped into six major dimensions. The

construction of the instrument demonstrates an effort to derive its dimensions from the theoretical framework presented and from findings reported in previous research. This establishes an appropriate connection between theoretical concepts and their empirical investigation.

A five-point Likert scale was used to evaluate participants' responses. The author provides evidence regarding the internal consistency of the instrument through Cronbach's alpha coefficients, the reported values being within acceptable limits. It should be noted, however, that more detailed information regarding the validation procedures would have contributed to a more comprehensive presentation of the instrument's psychometric properties.

The third chapter presents and analyses the findings of the empirical study. The discussion is organised according to the principal dimensions of the research instrument. The data are presented systematically and allow the reader to identify the main trends reflected in participants' evaluations.

The findings indicate an overall positive perception of the various characteristics of the school environment. Among the highest-rated aspects are classroom climate and the curriculum and teaching methods. Lower, although still positive, ratings were reported for school leadership and the use of technology and artificial intelligence.

The research hypotheses were tested using a one-sample t-test. The results revealed statistically significant differences in comparison with the neutral midpoint of the scale, enabling the author to substantiate the conclusions regarding the significance of the factors under consideration. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that these findings primarily reflect the perceptions and evaluations of the participants.

The final chapter focuses on the interpretation of the findings and seeks to position them within the context of existing scientific knowledge. The discussion is linked both to the research questions and to findings reported in previous studies, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of the results obtained.

Particular emphasis is placed on the practical implications of the findings. Various approaches to improving the school environment and supporting students' achievement motivation are considered. Attention is also devoted to the thoughtful integration of technology and artificial intelligence tools into the educational process, a topic that currently ranks among the most significant issues in contemporary education.

A logical extension of the analysis is found in the recommendations and directions proposed for future research. These include conducting comparative and longitudinal studies, employing qualitative and mixed-method approaches, and further investigating technological factors within the school environment. Such recommendations demonstrate an awareness of the prospects for future development within this field of research.

The publications submitted are thematically related to the dissertation and complement the doctoral candidate's scientific work. The dissertation abstract accurately reflects the essential characteristics of the dissertation, the methodology employed, and the results obtained.

4. Scientific Contributions

Having reviewed the dissertation, I consider that several results with scientific and applied scientific value can be identified.

First, a noteworthy contribution lies in the attempt to provide a comprehensive examination of the relationship between the school environment and achievement motivation. The study integrates various aspects of school life that are often investigated separately. In doing so, it offers a broader perspective on the factors that may influence students' attitudes and aspirations toward academic success.

Another contribution is the empirical investigation conducted among students and teachers in Israeli schools. The findings contribute to a better understanding of how different characteristics of the school environment are

perceived by participants in the educational process and how these characteristics may be associated with achievement motivation.

The development of a multidimensional research instrument designed to assess the examined factors may also be regarded as an original contribution of the author. The reliability indicators reported suggest that the instrument could serve as a useful basis for subsequent studies and further methodological refinement.

The practical value of the dissertation is reflected in the recommendations formulated for educational practice. These recommendations are directed toward improving the school climate, increasing student engagement, and creating conditions that support students' achievement motivation.

5. Remarks, Questions, and Recommendations

The dissertation leaves a positive overall impression in terms of its structure, the relevance of the chosen research problem, and the empirical investigation conducted. The remarks presented in this review do not diminish the merits of the dissertation and should rather be viewed as opportunities for further development of the research.

I would recommend that in future work the author devote greater attention to the validation procedures of the developed research instrument. A more detailed presentation of its psychometric characteristics would broaden the possibilities for its application in other research contexts and strengthen the methodological foundation of future studies.

A promising direction for further research would be the implementation of longitudinal studies aimed at examining the longer-term effects of specific characteristics of the school environment on students' achievement motivation. Such investigations would contribute to a deeper understanding of the relationships identified in the present study.

Further exploration of the role of digital technologies and artificial intelligence tools in educational practice also appears particularly worthwhile.

This field is developing rapidly and presents numerous opportunities for future scientific inquiry and practical innovation.

6. Conclusion

The dissertation is devoted to a contemporary and significant research problem. The author demonstrates the ability to analyse theoretical concepts, to organize and conduct an independent empirical investigation, and to interpret the findings within the framework of existing scientific knowledge.

The stated objectives and research tasks have been accomplished to a substantial extent. The study is characterized by a clear research logic, a well-structured organization, and a strong practical orientation. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between characteristics of the school environment and students' achievement motivation.

Based on my analysis of the dissertation, the publications submitted, and the scientific and applied scientific results obtained, I give a positive evaluation of this work.

I am convinced that the dissertation by Hulud Ghadir entitled "The Influence of the School Environment on Achievement Motivation among Secondary School Students in Israel" satisfies the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree of PhD. Therefore, I respectfully recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury confer upon Hulud Ghadir the educational and scientific degree of PhD in Professional Field 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral Programme General Psychology.

28.10.2026 Signature:

Veliko Tarnovo Associate Professor Ivan Stoyanov, PhD