

ВЕЛИКОТЪРНОВСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
«СВ. СВ. КИРИЛ И МЕТОДИЙ»



ST. CYRIL AND ST. METHODIUS
UNIVERSITY OF VELIKO TARNOVO

О P I N I O N

by **Prof. Velislava Atanasova Chavdarova, PhD**

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regarding a dissertation submitted for the award of the educational and scientific degree of

Doctor (PhD)

Doctoral Programme: General Psychology

Varna Free University “Chernorizets Hrabar”

Author: Tsuriel Simcha Tzuf

Dissertation Title:

The Effect of Youth Organizations on Adult Functioning in Society

Scientific Supervisor: Prof. Valeri Stoyanov, D.Sc.

1. Relevance and Significance of the Dissertation

In the context of rapidly evolving societies, where increasing emphasis is placed on civic engagement, social responsibility, and the development of personal competencies, the study of the long-term effects of non-formal educational practices is of particular importance. The author correctly identifies youth movements as a key socializing factor with the potential to influence values, identity formation, and behavior in adulthood.

Additional relevance is provided by the focus on the Israeli context, where youth movements have historically played an established role in shaping civic and national identity. In this respect, the research problem is not only scientifically justified but also socially significant.

The research problem has been appropriately operationalized and convincingly substantiated. The author clearly emphasizes that although youth movements are widespread

and socially important, there remains a lack of sufficiently systematic empirical studies investigating their long-term effects on adult life.

The dissertation demonstrates a thorough understanding of the fact that existing studies have focused primarily on short-term outcomes or on developmental processes during adolescence, without adequately examining the relationship between participation in youth organizations and specific behavioral and social outcomes later in life.

The author displays a comprehensive knowledge of the theoretical foundations of non-formal education, socialization, and identity development, successfully integrating these perspectives into the rationale for the research problem. Consequently, the assessment of the current state of knowledge is accurate, consistent with scientific reality, and effectively justifies the necessity of the present study.

2. General Characteristics and Evaluation of the Dissertation and Research Methodology

The dissertation demonstrates a thorough understanding of the research topic and evidences the author's ability to critically evaluate existing explanatory models and the hierarchy of concepts upon which they are based. The text is well written, logically organized, and critically developed, directing attention toward possible empirical verification and practical applications of the theoretical constructs under analysis.

The literature sources have been used appropriately and in accordance with academic standards. No evidence of plagiarism has been identified.

The study is structured in a logically coherent manner, progressing from theoretical and methodological analysis to empirical validation and practical recommendations.

The selected methodology is appropriate and fully aligned with the stated objectives and research tasks. The use of a quantitative comparative design enables a systematic examination of differences between participants and non-participants in youth movements while controlling for important demographic and social variables.

The sample size (310 participants) is sufficient for conducting statistical analyses, and the use of diverse analytical techniques—including *t-tests*, *ANOVA*, *correlation analysis*, and *regression analysis*—enhances the reliability of the findings. An additional methodological strength is the effort to validate the research instruments through pilot testing and expert evaluation.

The consideration of potential selection effects through the control of background variables is methodologically sound and contributes to the internal validity of the study.

Nevertheless, the use of a cross-sectional design and self-report data imposes limitations regarding the establishment of causal relationships, a limitation that the author appropriately acknowledges.

3. Scientific Contributions

- The influence of youth movements has been operationalized through measurable social indicators.
- A model has been developed for analyzing the relationship between non-formal education and specific social and behavioral outcomes, including military service, civic participation, and residential choice.
- The understanding of the mechanisms through which adolescent experiences influence adult behavior has been expanded.
- The long-term effects of participation in youth movements on adult functioning have been empirically investigated, addressing a topic that remains relatively underexplored in the scientific literature.
- An empirical foundation has been established for the development and implementation of educational policies and programs in the field of non-formal education.
- The findings have the potential to generate positive social outcomes through the promotion of civic engagement and public participation.

4. Critical Remarks and Recommendations

The dissertation demonstrates a very strong command of a complex subject area, well-developed academic skills in analytical and synthetic scientific inquiry, and a high level of research precision.

With regard to future research, I would recommend:

- conducting longitudinal studies to establish causal relationships more accurately;
- extending the investigation to different cultural contexts;

- incorporating additional indicators, such as professional development and psychological well-being;
- combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies to achieve a deeper and more comprehensive analysis.

Conclusion

The dissertation represents a completed, methodologically rigorous, and scientifically significant study. Its contributions are clearly articulated and well substantiated, combining theoretical value with practical applicability.

I believe that the dissertation fully satisfies the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree of **Doctor (PhD)**. Accordingly, I recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury confer the educational and scientific degree of **Doctor (PhD)** in the professional field of **3.2 Psychology**, Doctoral Programme “**General Psychology,**” upon **Tsuriel Simcha**

29.04.2026

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Prof. Velislava Chavdarova, PhD