

LIEPĀJA UNIVERSITY MASTER STUDENTS' RESEARCHES ON MATHEMATICAL DIDACTICS

**Edvīns Ģingulis Liepāja University, Lielā iela 14, Liepāja, Latvia
edvins.gingulis@inbox.lv**

In the period between 1995 and 2010 Liepāja University has awarded Master's degree to more than 70 people for their researches in Mathematical Didactics. But only one of them has continued Doctorate studies and completed the programme. Why so few? The report comprises conclusions which have been drawn from document analysis, from Master students' questionnaires and from the experience of a consultant in writing Master's papers.

The degree has been awarded to both the teachers having considerable work experience and young people having just graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and having started work as Mathematics teachers at school.

The report presents answers to the six questions framed below:

1. How is the choice of the theme for the Master's paper made?
2. What help of methodological character for doing research is given to all Master students?
3. What is the role of the consultant of the paper?
4. How are the research findings implemented in practice?
5. How does acquisition of the Master's degree impact the pedagogue's salary, daily work and career?
6. Why are there so few cases when Masters continue their studies as Doctorate students?

Masters mention the following causes for not starting Doctorate studies: 1) it is difficult; 2) it is difficult to combine studies with daily routine at school and the care for the family; 3) in a great number of cases you have to pay for the studies; 4) after gaining the Doctor's degree neither the salary nor the attitude to the teacher changes; 5) the state support for such studies is not sufficient. It should be mentioned that quite often the Master's studies have not brought the expected satisfaction: implementation of the results of the Master's paper into daily practice is not efficient, the salary has not risen, and no changes have taken place in the professional career. Most likely there is one more reason. The requirements for writing Promotion thesis are much higher than for Master's researches.

One of the ways of increasing Masters' interest in Doctorate studies could be imposing stricter requirements on the level of Masters' research, enabling Master students to get a deeper idea of the research process. A supposition might be reasonable that in such cases the new Masters will derive more satisfaction from the work done and will be more interested in continuing their Master's research.

For more detailed information about the course of Master studies in Mathematical Didactics see the set of materials on the Internet:

<http://www.aiknc.lv/zinojumi/en/LiepUMatIndDidacten.doc>