

STATEMENT

regarding a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in Professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Educational Sociology, Social Adaptation and disadaptation), announced in SG issue 22, 16. 03. 2021, for the needs of Faculty of Education, Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”

by prof. Emilia Lubomirova Vassileva, PhD, member of the scientific jury

Candidate in the competition: Chief Assistant Silvia Varbanova Varbanova, PhD

Biographical data

Education:

Silvia Varbanova had completed her secondary education in high school (gimnasium) “Nicola Vaptsarov” in the city of Shumen with a golden medal for excellency. She graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" with a master degree in Pedagogy, again with excellent results and a gold badge. She defended her doctoral dissertation (thesis) in 2005 on the topic "Socio-pedagogical projections of differentiation in secondary education" and received the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty 05.07.01 "Theory of Education and Didactics (Educational sociology)".

Professional activity; Positions held; Current teaching activity:

The professional path of Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova began as a lecturer in Child and Pedagogical Psychology at the Semi-Higher Institute for Primary Teachers "Dr. Petar Beron", Shumen (1981-1982). Since 1983 he has been an assistant professor of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", and conducted seminars in FM, GGF, FslF, FKNF, Fph until 1986; In the period 1986-1989 she worked as a senior assistant. Since 1987 he has been conducted seminars in Educational Sociology and Didactics. From 1989 to the present she is Ch. assistant in the Department of Didactics. Now Ch. Assistant Silvia Varbanova gives lectures in Educational Sociology for part-time students in Pedagogy; lectures and seminars in “Society and Education” for both full- and part-time students in Non-formal Education; lectures and seminars in “Education and Society” for both full-and part-time students in Social Work; lectures and seminars in Social Adaptation and Disadaptation for both full- and part-time students in both Non-formal Education and Pedagogy; Chief Assistant Professor, Dr. S. Varbanova leads lectures and seminars in master’s degree programs as well:

lectures and seminars in Education and Society master's degree program - MSONO and CEINNE programs, lectures and seminars in Stress Management in professional (educational) environment for the purposes of Master's degree program in Educational Management.

Qualification courses:

Chief Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova completes qualifications that expand her professional horizon and contribute to her establishment as an authoritative scientist:

- ✓ Educational Technologies, Curriculum, Evaluation and Assessment in HE, Plymouth University, GB – TEMPUS Project 07653, 1994-96;
- ✓ Guidance and Counselling in Education - National Centre for Guidance in Education- Dublin, University of Cork, Ireland, February 2001;
- ✓ 27.01.2014–27.11.2014 Professional qualification “Specialist in design and conduct online education”

Other professional activities:

Chief Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova has a strong research activity and aspiration to continuously expand the scope of her scientific activities. She is engaged in the implementation of courses and trainings - trainings with directors of institutions for child and youth care within a project “Training and Exchange of Knowledge for Managers in Youth Care in Central and Eastern Europe” – Leonardo da Vinci project; 2006-2008 - NL/06/B/PP/157623 - as a lecturer in the international and the national courses on Project Management and on Overcoming Burnout Syndrome; 2009-2011- training on stress management and coping with burnout syndrome; She conducted trainings for NGO employees in the field of child and youth care on “Personal counselling in adolescence” within a project Guidance and Counselling in Education - “Community Based Guidance” – Leonardo da Vinci project 2000-2001; Initial training for acquiring the qualification "teacher" 2019 (MES); 2001- courses and trainings for: teaching methods in postgraduate courses; Summer school for newly appointed assistants at Sofia University "Learning and teaching in Higher Education" 2006-2008.

She was involved as a member of editorial boards: 1993-2000 - "Management of secondary education, Information Bulletin of MES"; 2000-2001 - "Management of higher education. Information Bulletin of the Ministry of Education and Science", 2003-2008 - member of the professional team of Horizont Medical Center - consultative activity on the issues of social adaptation of drug addicted;

Scientific research and projects activities

Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova participated in many projects highly relevant in content, with a sustainable positive effect on her work with students and the career development. She is sought after by a number of Bulgarian and foreign specialists as a research partner in researches with high coefficient of scientific utility in the field of pedagogical and social knowledge:

1. TRAIN-KOSOZIAL – TRAIN-KOSOZIAL - Training and Transfer of Competences of Social Informatics on the base of EVAS in Professional Education of Pedagogical Employees Working in Youth and Child Care Services. DE/12/LLP-LdV/TOI/147 507 2012–2014.

Participation as a coordinator for Sofia University and as a lecturer in the organized courses;

2. „EVAS-Train”– practical oriented curriculum for professionals working in institutions for children" LLP-2009-LEO-MP-06. 2009 – 2011;

3. “Training and Exchange of Knowledge for Managers in Youth Care in Central and Eastern Europe” – Leonardo da Vinci project, 2006-2008 NL/06/B/PP/157623 - as a lecturer in international (in English) and in national courses and as coordinator for Sofia University;

4. Developing Youth Career Services LdV/N 2002-BG/02/B/F/PP-132018/;

5. Desegregation, teaching assistants and school adaptation, funded by the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, OCCE, 2004;

6. RSS Project – “Roma Children in Schools: Self-Esteem and Social Perception” (2001-2003)

7. Guidance and Counselling in Education - Ireland, “Community Based Guidance”- Leonardo da Vinci project, 2000-2001;

8. TEMPUS Project 07653, 1994-96 Educational Technologies, Curriculum, Evaluation and Assessment in HE;

9. Contemporary projections of human pedagogy in the educational process (2006-2008) SRS-SU, FP.

Teaching activities:

Chief Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova is highly valued by her students as an erudite and beloved teacher, involving and motivating future educators and social workers to reveal the essence of the relevant sciences and the logic of their specific manifestations in existence. And all this, achieved with a lot of emotion, love and a clear professional perspective for the preparing students. Her lectures and seminars are chosen with great interest and consistently high attendance. Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova has been the scientific supervisor of more

than 50 graduates; she leads the development of term papers for students of bachelor's and master's programs. She has given lectures and exercises with Erasmus students: course "Education and Society" - 8 students (Ireland, Japan, Poland, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Kazakhstan; course "Social adaptation and disadaptation" - 9 students (Spain, France, Turkey, Lithuania, Serbia; 10 students are involved in research projects.

Social and organizational skills:

Ch. Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova has strong personal and social competencies such as: cooperation, she is problem-solver and has communicative abilities, sense of humour, ability to establish creative atmosphere in the workplace, negotiation skills, and teamwork abilities, artistic skills - performing music skills - guitar and singing.

Analysis of the scientific production:

Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Silvia Varbanova participates in the competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" with 20 scientific publications, of which 15 are in Bulgarian and 5 in English:

1. *Monography* (habilitation publication);
2. *Monography* (published book based on a defended dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor");
3. *Studies published in unreferenced, with scientific review editions - (Sofia University Annuals -3 studies);*
4. *Articles* published in scientific journals, indexed and referred in international databases with scientific information – 3 articles
5. *Articles and reports*, scientifically reviewed and published in journals, or scientifically reviewed and published in collectively written volumes (9 articles and reports)
6. *Collective teaching textbooks with correctly shown independent author's parts* (participation in 3 *textbooks*).

The overall work of Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova impresses with its relevance, breadth of theoretical and empirical scope of her research and compelling research insight. The publications of Chief Assistant Silvia Varbanova can be distinguished thematically in the following research fields, in which the author's scientific contributions stand out:

- The influence of social changes on the course of socialization and identity formation;

- The relationship between parents and children, determining the development, expression and social adaptation of adolescents;
- Origin and dynamics of inequalities in education;
- The relationship equality – individualization – differentiation;
- Education as a symbolic space and the hidden curriculum;
- Training of professionals for successful adaptation to the professional requirements in the work with children and youth, adaptation of the activity to the needs of those they work with, coping with stress in a professional environment.

The thematically differentiated research territories are analyzed both relatively independently in their specific manifestations and by discovering emphatically significant semantic areas, which allow supplementing the essential characteristics and regularities of the studied realities. As a dominant theme, uniting the various author's searches is postmodernity and its projections on social beingness - in its fullness and dynamic manifestations. The topic is reflected at different research levels and in outlining specific content accents and relationships. The topic is very thoroughly and extensively expanded and enriched with new research insights into the author's habilitation work: "Individuality in the mirrors of postmodern times". The characteristics of postmodernity are presented on a broad conceptual basis, constructed by the most current scientific productions of Bulgarian and foreign authors, systematized and enriched by the personal research achievements of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. S. Varbanova. The influence of the postmodern living environment on socialization is deeply reflected, with exceptional correctness of the research and value-oriented breadth of the analyzes - the tendencies in the development of the stability of its invariants and the specifics in the dynamics of the interactions; the individualization of public life - represented by the two main approaches of Giddens, Castells, Beck and Lyotard, Baudrillard, Jamieson, Bauman; *the formation of identity* - influenced by the marital status and education of the parents, as well as by the parent-child interaction; values and individual behavior - viewed through the prism of the collapse of values at the personal and social level; *social adaptation*, influenced by the new social realities and bidirectional interactions of the individual with the specifics and claims of the environment; *the postmodern perspectives of education* - as an individualized project and the connection between the formal, non-formal and informal.

Invariant and variable/provocative components of the social environment influencing the experiences, problems, attitudes, expectations, perceptions and self-esteem of individuals and in general determining the implementation of socialization are studied and commented - its

dynamics and problems. Referring to her longitudinal research, Chief Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova has managed to systematize important trends, to understand the depth of current processes and interactions, to reveal problem areas of influence between the set of "models, social repertoires and life practices" the creation of the notions of valuable, significant attractive, provocative ... and all this is projected on the choice of directions for the formation of personal self-perception and patterns of behavior. The typology of globalization and social transformation are reflected in detail and precisely. The new realities that the author explores and analyzes change a number of understandings about socialization and the construction of behavioural models of adolescents and young people in the new social context of postmodernity. Particular interest is focusing on the process of personal maturation - the manifestation of growing insecurity and vulnerability, hedonistic orientation, social distancing and consummative attitudes, influenced by the "death of distance", the deterioration, unprecedented and uncontrolled spreading of flows of information, the open cultural space. Referring to her longitudinal research, Chief Assistant Dr. S. Varbanova has managed to systematize important trends, to understand the depth of current processes and interactions, to reveal problem areas of influence between the set of "models, social repertoires and life practices" in the creation of the notions of valuable, significant attractive, provocative ... and all this is projected on the choice of directions for the formation of personal self-perception and patterns of behavior. Without hesitation, based on reliable research results, the author overcomes a number of stereotypes and speculative interpretations that have prevailed over the time by offering the reader in-depth analyzed and parameterized realities typical of the emerging new type of social personality states, metamorphoses and relationships which determine the new look, problems and life perspective of adolescents and young persons. All the author's findings - validated with a large number of participants are the result of in-depth and multifaceted theoretical and empirical research. Some of them have been implemented with the most current quantitative and qualitative scientific methods, used for the first time in our country by the author. Such are Michael Berzonski's Identity Style Inventory for the study of the process of identity formation, the two-resource approach of Kerr and Stattin in the study of parental strategies for control and adaptation in adolescents. The adopted research approach has allowed tracing the marked phenomena not in the existing momentary staticity, but in observable dynamics.

As other significant scientific contributions of the scientific work of the Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova are the developed themes for:

- The origin and dynamics of inequalities in education; analysis of the dynamic relationships: equality, individualization, differentiation - Outlining the influence of socio-contextual factors on differences in educational achievement and success, the impact of cognitive socialization in the family, the effects of cumulative advantages on skills and achievements, the role of educational context and individual behavior;
- Validation of an author's model for psychological and pedagogical support for school and social adaptation of students of Roma origin; revealing the invariant impacts, as well as the new tendencies for the influence of the social factors on the adaptation, the educational and social success;
- Uncovering the key aspects of the hidden curriculum that play an important role in student development; the role of symbolic characteristics and "silent messages" for students' cognitive, emotional and social development, as well as for their value orientations, is personified.
- Disclosure of the nature of teachers' burnout syndrome, the components of burnout, the differences between stress and burnout. The most important signs and characteristic signals are discussed. The factors and causes of stress and burnout are considered. Validated guidelines for prevention and stress management are presented.

Citation:

Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova is a highly erudite scientist. She is recognizable among our and foreign pedagogical community. She is sought after as a reliable partner in a number of research projects. Proof of this are the large number of citations - 49 citations in internationally recognized databases (attached certificate from UL), 77 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and in unrefereed journals with scientific review, and the attached description of citations significantly exceeds the number of citations in the statement of minimum requirements.

The scientific profile of Chief Assistant Dr. Silvia Varbanova Varbanova fully meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b of Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the republic of Bulgaria.

CONCLUSION:

Chief Assistant Silvia Varbanova is a representative of the new generation of researchers who manage to change existing stereotypical attitudes and decisions not speculatively, but through a clearly parameterized methodological basis, up to date technological research solutions and

a bright research passion. That is why the scientific field (in its well-marked territory), to which the author has devoted herself, acquires a contemporary look and a clear perspective for further development.

The overall analysis of the scientific work, research activity and teaching commitment of Ch. Assistant Professor Dr. Silvia Varbanova Varbanova give me grounds to plead and recommend convincingly the honourable members of the Academic Scientific Jury to form a proposal to the Faculty of Education at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" to award the candidate Silvia Varbanova the academic position **“Associate Professor” in the professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Educational sociology, Social adaptation and disadaptattion).**

3.07.2021

Reviewer:

Prof. Emilia Vassileva, PhD