

## **STANDPOINT**

on a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in a professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Pedagogical Sociology, Social Adaptation and Maladaptation), announced by the Faculty of Education at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in SG, issue 22/16.03.2021

Member of the scientific jury: prof. Boncho Valkov Gospodinov, PhD - Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

### **1. Data for the competition**

The competition was announced for the needs of the Department of Didactics at the Faculty of Pedagogy at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” in the State Gazette, issue 22 of 16.03.2021 and is provided with the necessary classroom employment. There is one candidacy for the competition - of Assist. Prof. Silvia Varbanova Varbanova, PhD.

### **2. Data for the participant in the competition**

Assist. Prof. Silvia Varbanova graduated in Pedagogy at the Faculty of Philosophy at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski“ in 1981. In 2006, she successfully defended dissertation on “Socio-pedagogical projections of differentiation in secondary education” as a result of which she was awarded PhD degree on scientific specialty Theory of education and didactics (05.07.01).

Since 1983 until now Silvia Varbanova has been working at the Faculty of Pedagogy of Sofia University, Department of Didactics.

The candidate has participated in 9 research projects, many of which are international, and in 2 of which she was a coordinator for Sofia University.

Assist. Prof. Silvia Varbanova is a lecturer in a total of 6 lecture courses – 4 in bachelor's degree and 2 in master's degree.

According to the scientometric indicators - 1574 points with a minimum required of 400, the participant in the competition meets the minimum national requirements for holding the scientific position of associate professor.

### **3. Research activity**

Assist. Prof. Silvia Varbanova has a total of 34 publications, and participate in the competition for associate professor participates with 20 of them – 2 monographs, 3 teaching aids (2 co-authored one of which in English), 3 studies, 3 articles and in referenced and indexed magazines (2 of them in co-authorship and in English) and 9 articles and reports in peer-reviewed and edited editions (1 of which in co-authorship and 2 in English).

The complete reading of the publications submitted for the competition gives the impression of lasting and deep interest of the candidate in problematic areas of pedagogy and pedagogical sociology in particular, related to the nature of socialization and the main factors influencing it (№№ 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 17), social adaptation and maladaptation (№№ 1, 4, 7, 8, 14, 17), the relationship between differences in their specific dimensions and equality in education (№№ 2, 5, 6, 13), essence of identity and the process of its construction (№№ 1, 3), educational achievements and their determinants (№№ 5, 6, 13, 15), burnout syndrome in the teaching profession (№№ 18, 19), characteristics, varieties and effects of the influence of the hidden curriculum (№№ 9, 11), pedagogy of the university (№№ 7, 20), etc.

Upon careful acquaintance with the submitted for review publications one essential feature makes an impression and it is that many of the publications are a clear expression of the author's ability to reveal, analyze, present and argue the relationship between theory, research and practice.

This skill is convincingly demonstrated in the habilitation work - the monograph “Individuality in the mirrors of postmodern times”, which maximizes the qualities of Silvia Varbanova as a scientist and researcher.

What do I see as the significance of the monograph? Every society at all times has (or should have) a clear idea of what kind of person, what type of person wants to be formed through education, which idea society directs to education as a public procurement. And because societies are different at different times, their ideas about the desired type of person are different.

And these notions, in turn, depend very much on how societies at different times perceive and think of themselves. In confused, contradictory, hurried, “transformational” times of differences like ours, it is difficult (and perhaps

impossible?) to build such common (public) notions. That is why, as Silvia Varbanova notes, "Understanding the basic characteristics of social transformation is the basis of adequate pedagogical decisions." (p. 4) And more "The analysis of the *postmodern as a set of practices* (which is the focus of this review) in different areas and levels of public life is important for considering reliable pedagogical solutions in the new conditions." (p.10 -11)

In this I see the reasons for the author to engage in the analysis of how the individual sees himself through the mirrors of postmodern modernity and what are the pedagogical projections of this perception. In the direct and indirect conclusions of this analysis lies, in my opinion, the significance of the monograph.

The content of the text is wide - from the changed realities in the postmodern world, presented and analyzed through the prism of globalization, cultural transformation and individualization of public life, through the specifics of socialization in postmodern times to the modern reading of its main factors. At the same time, the text as a whole is very clearly and precisely focused, purposeful and with a clear message about the importance of the pedagogical reading of the formulated conclusions.

I cannot miss the well-planned and professionally performed empirical research, as well as the professionally sound analysis of its results.

Something that also makes a good impression is the very successful integration of sociological, sociological- pedagogical and pedagogical analysis of the postmodern time and of the individuality in the postmodern time.

In the monograph as a whole, and all presented for peer review publications seen so style and high level of competence Silvia Varbanova as built a research scientist, a thorough knowledge of interest to him problems both in theoretical and in practical terms.

#### **4. Main contributions**

In my opinion, the candidate has precisely and comprehensively formulated the contributions from his research activity. I could hardly add anything to them, and therefore I fully accept them. Here I will mention only some of the most important in my opinion.

1. An in-depth study and conceptual understanding of the trends that in modern reality determine the nature of the influences in the process of socialization of

adolescents and young people, problem areas and possible prospects for successful personal development and fruitful social adaptation. Different ideas and understandings of influential scientists are covered, whose analyzes have a lasting influence on intellectual views and practical decisions, a variety of large-scale research conducted in recent years in Bulgaria and other countries and a variety of methods applied in the author's own research.

2. A successful attempt to conceptualize the relationship socialization - social adaptation in the context of change is presented, the characteristics of postmodern fears and successful adaptation are summarized. The changes related to the influence of the factors of socialization are systematized, it is substantiated that the changes are not related to the weakening of the role of the individual factors, but to a change in the nature of the influences.
3. Trends in influence of socio-contextual factors on differences in educational achievements and success, the influence of cognitive socialization in the family, the effects of cumulative advantages in skills and achievements, the role of educational context and individual behavior.
4. Training and qualification programs for students, teachers and professionals in the system of pedagogical and social care have been developed and tested within international projects, and then elements of them are included in the existing curricula at the universities, included in the projects and in current trainings. with professionals.

## **5. Conclusion**

In conclusion, I declare that the number of items and the nature of the publications of the candidate and the actual offerings contained therein that are clearly testifies to its capacity of a serious scientist and explorer allows me to offer the members of the scientific jury **to choose Assist. Prof. Silvia Varbanova for “Associate Professor”** in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (Pedagogical Sociology, Social Adaptation and Maladaptation), for the needs of the Faculty of Pedagogy at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”.

30.06.2021

Author of standpoint:

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