

THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE SECOND CHANCE SCHOOLS TO FEMALE ATTENDANCE: Views and Perceptions of Women Trainees, Opportunities and Prospects

Dr. Evangelia MANOUSOU
Tutor Counsellor
Hellenic Open University
Paradeisou 23
171 23 Nea Smirni GREECE

Charitini LINARDATOU
Med. Msc. Teacher
Marinou Geroulanou st. 27 Lixouri,
28200 Cephalonia GREECE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this pilot qualitative research is to investigate the role and importance of Second Chance Schools (SCS) in the course of women trainees' attendance. In particular, the subject of the research which was carried out through online interviews in social networking medium (Facebook) using questionnaires and interviews is to highlight the attitude of women trainees regarding their study experience in SCS as well as the perspective on distance learning during their educational pathway in SCS.

The interest of this research is that for the first time what is investigated is the role of SCS as well as their importance to the education of women and the views and perceptions on issues related to their reintegration into the educational system. Also for the first time the present investigation shows the incentives of women reconnection with the school, which stem from the early school leaving in the teens and their expectations which for the majority of women trainees are to broaden their horizons (cognitive, social, professional).

A significant contributor to this effort apart from the family environment for the majority of women turned out to be the school teachers. The possibility of distance learning is a key question for future research since it is a perspective that can facilitate the smooth progress of women trainees' attendance.

Keywords: Second Chance Schools, women's education, unemployment, incentives, expectations, distance learning.

INTRODUCTION

Second Chance Schools (S.C.S.) is a European program recommended in the fight against social exclusion. Their goals are to reconnect learners with educational and training systems, to form a positive attitude towards learning, the acquisition of basic knowledge and skills, strengthening of the personality and, finally, access to the job market. S.C.S. were instituted in Greece by Law 2525/97 under which they have professed prescribe the principles of the European Union. The target group for the S.C.S. are citizens 18 years and older who have not completed compulsory secondary education. Attendance at S.C.S. is two years and provides high school diploma (Youth Foundation and Lifelong Learning. Second Chance Schools, 2012).

According to Efstratoglou, Nikolopoulou (2008:5) in the study of demographic factors in SCS it was shown that women participate at a higher share (56.7% in comparison to 43.3% for men) in the population of individuals who have not completed compulsory education.

According to the survey of Strantzalis (2005, in Zotos, 2006, p. 59) in the S.C.S. of Neapolis, Thessaloniki, it seemed that the women trainees predominate in numbers than men (percentage 20% higher). Roussos characteristically says:

"Students in SCS are by default adults and constitute a "vulnerable" group of individuals who need special treatment and support. The common denominator of Trainees is early school leaving, while part thereof has characteristics of other socially vulnerable groups. These are people who cannot any longer afford normal schooling and careers, and often do not even have the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities in order to take advantage of existing training opportunities to reclaim or remain in a job. These people usually are on the verge of social exclusion."
(n.d., p. 40)

Early school leaving is associated with the illiteracy phenomenon and as indicated in Pavlakou (1991, in Athanasiadou 2002, p. 2) in all geographic regions the rate of female illiteracy is higher than the male rate, regardless of the literacy level of each country.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Surveys (Shamir 1985, Waters & Moore, 2002) highlight the social and psychological impact of unemployment on men and women. According to Prause, Dooley & Huh (2009, in Kaminoti, 2013, p. 121) job loss involves loss of income, position, etc. and can lead to depression.

The exploration of female unemployment is relatively new and is placed after 1970. The impact of unemployment is diverse for them as well.

As Samartzi states (1992:247), "it directly affects the level of a woman's life and of her family's as the autonomy, economic independence as well as the possibility of personal satisfaction, needs, and expectations are limited."

Women's vocational rehabilitation is an important social and psychological aspect of the need of women to join training programs. According to Karalis (2013) the adult participation reasons in programs of lifelong learning on their occupation is related to their need to learn new things and the belief that education should last throughout their lives, especially the need for professional upgrading.

Research findings (Balatti, Black & Falk, 2007, Beder, 1999, Dymock & Billett, 2008, Eldred, 2002 Green, Preston & Sabates, 2003, Hammond & Feinstein, 2006, Merri fi eldetal, 1993 Nashashibi, 2004, Preston & Feinstein, 2004, Preston & Green, 2003, Preston & Hammond, 2002, Schulleretal, 2004, Swain, 2006, Ward & Edwards, 2002, in Panitsidou, 2013:70) point out that the participants in LLL programs provide the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skills, understanding and trust in others and in themselves, elements which bring distinct changes in their personal lives, while allowing them to play a functional role in the family, in the community or at work.

The recent literature review (Landritsi, 2007, Sipitanou & Platsidou, 2010) revealed that there are a limited number of studies on the training provided to S.C.S. in Greece. The survey of Sipitanou & Platsidou (2010) focuses on personal assessments of learners in S.C.S. of Thessaloniki, Neapolis in Thessaloniki and Giannitsa for the positive attitudes,

abilities and difficulties they encountered in the course of their study. In the SCS of Patras, Pyrgos and Agrinio, Landritsi (2007) investigates the characteristics of learners and the influence of their cultural background to the learning processes while Prapas (2005) focuses on the investigation of educational practices in S.C.S.. Efstratoglou & Nikolopoulou (2008) investigate the factors associated with supply and demand of the learners in S.C.S.. Kotti (2008) examines whether the methods of experiential learning are applied in the Acharnes S.C.S. or not.

Prigou (2008) investigates the expectations of learners in the S.C.S. of the Thessaly region (except the S.C.S. of the Larissa Judicial Prison) and the degree of their implementation taking into account the educational and professional development following their attendance at S.C.S. At the same time, she investigates the causes of the trainees' dropout when they were at a young age and the support framework during their study in S.C.S. Pavlidou (2012) explores the learners' perceptions across the course of numerical literacy of the S.C.S. in Aridaia, and the role of ICT and new teaching methods in the course. A pilot study of Linardatou & Papadaki (2013) on the trainees in the S.C.S. of Acharnes during the school year 2012-2013 investigates the effectiveness of teaching the Greek language by combining face to face and distance learning.

Mystakidou (2015) explores the views of undergraduates and graduates of the S.C.S. of Drama, Kavala, Serres, Xanthi, Komotini and Alexandroupolis on the contribution of such schools in the reintegration of the trainees in the formal education system, the obtaining of necessary knowledge and skills, the enhancement of their self-esteem and thus the improvement of their professional and social status. Kyriazopoulou (2015) investigates the economic and cultural capital of learners of the Agioi Anargiri S.C.S. as well as the expectations they have with obtaining their diploma.

From these studies, and since the majority of learners in S.C.S. are women, it is evident that the attitude of this target-group has not been studied, regarding the participants' study experience in SCS and, in particular, their views and perceptions of education at S.C.S.. What has also not been explored is the role and importance of SCS in the education of women as well as the possibility of distance learning.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

The research concerns the case study of nine women who attended S.C.S. from 2013 to 2015. More specifically, the research questions which have been studied are:

- ✓ **What is the role and importance of SCS in the education of women?**
- ✓ **What are the views and perceptions of women for the experience of attendance at S.C.S.?**
- ✓ **What are the prospects and potential of SCS in the education of women?**

The interviews were conducted in writing via Facebook, using as a tool an 11-question. Questionnaire, which has given to 10 trainees in SCS, of which 9 completed it, during the period between September 2015 and April 2016. There were several difficulties in the direct and quick response of women given the fact that some of them do not have easy internet access or even that some do not know how to handle the PC well.

Extra telephone interviews were conducted for clarification and better documentation of the answers given in writing. According to Robson (2007: 335) telephone interviews share many of the advantages of the face to face interview: a high response rate, correcting obvious misinterpretations, possible use of exploratory questions, etc. For the validity of the survey and reliability the method of triangulation (Cohen & Manion, 1994)

was applied with the implementation of interviews with two women teachers (Math and Literature) who have served in S.C.S. about three years.

- A) Participants' profile: Personal data (age, marital status, occupation)
- B) Results of the research through Facebook Criteria:
- C) Information sources for SCS

Briefly Regarding Demographics

Five trainees are aged over 46 years old, three are 36-45, and one is 26-35. Six are married, two divorced, and one single. Four have 2 children, one has 3, three have 1 and one has no children. Four are unemployed, two work full-time, one is retired, two work part time. Besides E6 who was married when attending S.C.S., all the others were in the same personal and professional situation when attending the S.C.S..

Age dropout: The trainees abandoned school at an early age between 11 and 14 years old that is in elementary school or up to the second year of junior high school.

A) Participants' profile: Personal data (age, marital status, occupation)

Code	Age	Marital Status	No of Children	Occupation
E1	46 and above	married	2	Full-time employment in the private sector
E2	46 and above	married	3	unemployed
E3	46 and above	divorced	2	unemployed
E4	36-45	married	1	Part-time employment in the public sector
E5	46 and above	married	2	unemployed
E6	36 - 45	divorced	2	unemployed
E7	26-35	married	1	Part-time Employment in the private sector
E8	36-45	single	0	Full-time employment in the private sector
E9	46 and above	married	1	pensioner

Age of leaving school: They left school at a young age between 11 and 14 years old that is at Elementary school or until the second grade of Junior High school.

B) The reasons for leaving school

Code	Age of leaving school	Class	Reasons for leaving school
E1	12	6 th Grade Elementary	Financial
E2	14	2 nd Grade Junior High school	Financial
E3	11	5 th Grade Elementary	Financial
E4	14	2 nd Grade Junior High school	Failed at the exams, work and ashamed to attend the same grade
E5	12	6 th Grade Elementary	Change of country, foreign language.

E6	12	6 th Grade Elementary	Financial
E7	15	2 nd Grade Junior High school	Family–parents forbade her to study further
E8	16	2 nd Grade Junior High school	Family
E9	12	6 th Grade Elementary	Financial

We note that the dropout ratios for most trainees (5 out of 9) were mainly economic related to general difficulties they were facing in their family environment. As a result, some trainees were involved in occupations for a living at an early age. Two trainees had no support from the family environment.

Another case that stands out is also the case of E7 whose parents did not let her continue in school for financial reasons. One trainee was discouraged by the school and another one by a country change, and a change in language, so a change of environment. The case of E4 is typical as it highlights the fact that she did not pass the second year of junior high school and she did not want to continue school because of the embarrassment she felt.

C) Information sources for SCS

E1 was informed about SCS through the internet. E2 was informed about SCS from one of her acquaintances. E2 was informed about SBS through an acquaintance of hers. E3 was informed about SCS through television. E4, E5, E6 by friends, some of which had had the SCS experience. E7 and E8 by teachers (school principal, teacher). E9 from a brochure.

D) The information on SCS, incentives for return to school, and support factors of this option

Code	Incentives for return to school	Incentives and support agents back to school
E1	Unfulfilled ambition	Two teachers at school, her husband and her children
E2	Improving knowledge	The family and most especially her daughter
E3	The need for professional and personal development	Her own self and all teachers in the school
E4	Unfulfilled ambition	All teachers in the school and her own self
E5	Improving knowledge	Her children and her girlfriends
E6	The need for better job	Teachers and a girlfriend urged her to apply to SCS
E7	The need for professional and personal development	Her child learning about SCS
E8	The need for professional and personal development	Her family, those who were around and the school itself
E9	Unfulfilled ambition	The ones who supported her in her studies were her husband, her daughter and grandchildren as well as her own self

We find that their main motivation to return to school after a long absence (approximately over 30 years ago) was the need to acquire knowledge and evolve personally as well as professionally. For three trainees (E1, E4, E9) it was the need to achieve their unfulfilled ambition, which had been created by leaving school in adolescence. E4 characteristically states that with her experience with the S.C.S. she felt

that she can accomplish things in her life. She has gained greater self-esteem and confidence and most importantly she no longer feels any shame and guilt for not having been able to continue school in the past. Similarly, E1 also points out that at her workplace (she works in the private sector) she has gained more self-esteem and self-confidence, and she does not feel at a disadvantage compared to other workers.

E9 also considers important the fact that she managed to realize the unfulfilled ambition she had to continue school since after attending S.C.S. she felt "filling" with knowledge and friends. Besides, her desire was so strong that the only person who urged her to begin her studies at S.C.S. after 48 years was herself.

Family and friends are encouragement factors and on two occasions (E4, E9) the personal self. Apart from the family environment, the role of SCS and teachers is worth noting in supporting and encouraging learners to pursue and complete their studies in SBS. The teachers at SCS, as E1, E3 and E6 characteristically mention, are very supportive and friendly, encouraging learners to continue their studies in SCS and helping them overcome any difficulties and obstacles.

E) Impressions and the degree of satisfaction with attendance at SCS

The impressions from studies in SCS are very positive for all trainees. Teachers have contributed in this image of the SCS. E1 characteristically mentions that for the first time she felt that she could have a friendly relationship with her teachers. She never felt disadvantaged in relation to them, since they treated her with respect and appreciation. From 1-5 the degree of satisfaction with their studies in SCS three trainees (E1, E2, E3) evaluate it with grade 4 and the other six with grade 5.

F) Expectations of women from attending the SCS

Interestingly, all women are interested in improving their knowledge, having as their basic motivation the need for self-improvement.

Three trainees aim through the development of the cognitive process at personal development in employment issues and at obtaining a high school diploma.

E9 characteristically mentions that what she expected was knowledge of herself. Self-knowledge and self-esteem are common reference site in all trainees. E5 characteristically mentions that she hoped to gain knowledge.

E4 shares the same view and she characteristically mentions that through the attendance of the SCS she hoped to gain other kind of knowledge as well, to meet people to learn interesting things about life, both personally and in general.

G) Encouraging other women to study at SCS

All trainees would recommend to other women to attend SCS. The reasons are mainly cognitive which are related to personal development and the enhancement of their self-image and self-esteem.

Characteristically, E2 mentions that the reason she would recommend to other women to attend the SCS are to receive as much knowledge as they can in order to feel better as people.

E3 similarly emphasizes the need to broaden her horizons.

E4 stresses that "attendance at SCS is an opportunity to do something for themselves".

E6 stresses that "attendance at SBS is a step because we must move forward."

E7 relates attendance at SBS with the acquisition of new ideas related to everyday life. What is more, she believes that the learning that takes place in SCS is exactly what she needs to learn.

H) Positive and negative aspects; difficulties from the experience of studying at S.C.S.

Code	Positive aspects	Negative aspects-Difficulties
E1	Attending the following courses: Physics, Mathematics, Language, Computers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of time and hours of attendance at SCS.
E2	The perfect, friendly relationship with their teachers, the creative work they did, the team work she did with her classmates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient heating Lack of teachers (at the beginning of the year)
E3	Improvement of her knowledge in a large scale, experiences, new acquaintances.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient facilities
E4	Cooperation in class, communicating with teachers, excursions, festivals the theatrical play, the projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of time
E5	The study hours at school when they were working in groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many study hours
E6	Very good teachers, knowledge, teamwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of teachers at the beginning of the year
E7	She finds nothing difficult since the teachers are excellent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dictation
E8	The love that she has received from people and especially the teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of certain teachers.
E9	The most pleasant hours she spent at school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No difficulty

Positive aspects of their attendance at S.C.S.. All trainees have a positive view of the study experience at S.C.S. It is interesting that teachers at S.C.S. have decisively contributed in the creation of the learners' positive attitude towards school. E8 characteristically talks about the love she has taken from people and especially from teachers, who deal with the trainees the right way.

E6 characteristically emphasizes teamwork and the fact that teachers are very good not only concerning the knowledge they have but also because of the attitude towards them. She considers that teachers give her the freedom to express her views on the issues being discussed not only in the classroom and on the break as well and most importantly to feel important and equal to them.

E2 also comments on the positive aspects she has gained with the attendance of the SCS, the perfect, friendly relationship with the teachers, the creative work they did, the knowledge they received, the collective work she did with her peers.

E7 also shares the same opinion, and she characteristically mentions that she finds nothing is too difficult at the SCS, since the teachers are excellent. E4 points out the supportive role of teachers and she characteristically mentions that the main difficulties in her studies at the S.C.S. was that sometimes she could not go because of lack of time, due to some personal problems and she missed lessons and material, and sometimes she stayed behind but with the help of her teachers and their support she did fine.

Among the strengths of studying at S.C.S. is the way of learning. In particular, the good practices in S.C.S. such as projects, festivals, excursions, theatrical performances. E4 characteristically mentions that she liked the cooperation they had in the classroom, the communication that she had with her teachers, the excursions they went on, the celebrations they had in school, the theatrical play they had the first year, the projects that they had the second year. E9 points out about her attending the S.C.S. that these were the most pleasant hours she spent in school. She did not feel tired and did not have any absences. E8 also points out that at S.C.S. learning takes place calmly and confidently and that there is a mood for student life. What is also remarkable is the impression that some trainees have formed on the material of some courses. Especially E8 states that the material of the courses is good and relaxing.

Negative aspects of their attendance at S.C.S.: The fact that there were no teachers for all courses is a decisive factor in the not smooth operation of the school. E6 characteristically mentions that what she would like to improve at the SCS is to see all the teachers from the beginning of the school year. E2 points out that she "would like to have more teachers and that they are there to teach from the beginning of the year." E8 also characteristically mentions that one of the main difficulties she has faced in her studies is the lack of some teachers. Learners' weakness in some subjects is a factor discouraging attendance. E8 characteristically mentions spelling at the language literacy lesson as a basic difficulty in her studies. Another negative aspect in attendance at S.C.S. is lack of infrastructure.

E8 characteristically mentions spelling in the language literacy lesson as a basic difficulty in her studies. Another negative factor in attendance at SBS is lack of equipment.

E4 characteristically mentions that she would like to see the following improvements at the S.C.S.: The state should help make the buildings better so that students and teachers can give their best in their field and generally treat S.C.S. schools in a more sensitive way as far as the financial part is concerned and generally in every area. E2 also has a similar view commenting that the school material needs some upgrading as well.

Another negative aspect in the school operation is the timetable which is a constraint, since some trainees fail to be diligent in their studies on a daily basis due to their other obligations. E1 characteristically mentions that the main difficulties in the attending the S.C.S. was lack of time and the hours of attendance in S.C.S.

I) Suggestions for the Improvement of Education in SCS-The Role of Distance Learning

Suggestions for improving S.C.S.: According to the views of nine women trainees in S.C.S. it is important to improve education in S.C.S. mainly on building infrastructure, heating issues, technological equipment, and improvement of attendance hours. The most immediate and pressing issue is the immediate filling of S.C.S. positions with the necessary teaching staff. E8 characteristically mentions that she "would like to see the lack of teachers be improved concerning the operation of the S.C.S.." E7 has a similar proposal since she considers that what made her attendance difficult was the inadequate number of teachers at the S.C.S.. E6 similarly states that what she would like to see improved at the S.C.S. is for all the teachers to be at the school from the beginning of the school year.

Distance education in S.C.S.: Of the nine trainees only three (E1, E3, E5) expressed positively at the prospect of distance education at S.C.S.. In particular, E3 would like to repeat the subjects of Literature and English through this way because the material of these courses is delivered quickly and she does not have enough time to learn the new information, and moreover she cannot easily retain what she learns because of her age. E1 commented that distance learning will probably help her with the computers lesson

(meaning in the IT course). E5 believes distance learning would also help her in Mathematics.

On the contrary, the other trainees do not consider they need distance education. They focus on the collaborative learning approach through which they cultivated friendships not only with the other students but also with their teachers. This fact is the main reason they prefer face to face courses. E8 characteristically mentions that distance learning is impersonal.

RESULTS OF TRIANGULATION

The answers which were given by the two teachers resulted in the following conclusions:

- The annual and total average of the women who have attended S.C.S. is 25 in a total of approximately 45 per year. On average, the women who attend S.C.S. are 35 years old. Most women left school at the age of 13 and were enrolled in the first grade.
- The main reasons why they left school were: Marriage - pregnancy at a young age, poor performance at school, work (family financial difficulties).
- They started looking for a second chance at education from the age of 30.
- They were informed about MCS by friends or relatives, advertisements or even by the media.
- Women choose to attend SCS for the following reasons: The S.C.S. are easier to attend - friendly schools for adults, there is no pressure on the issue of home study, there are no exams, the lesson is in accordance with the learners' needs. They also have the opportunity to improve their knowledge, to find a better job and to aim at professional development. The unfulfilled ambition they have had to attend school and the fear of unemployment have also been high motivations in their choice to study at S.C.S.
- The main difficulties women encounter while attending S.C.S. are working and family responsibilities, which are an obstacle to their consistent attendance at S.C.S.; as a result, they are absent more often.
- The people who support women's attendance of the S.C.S. are mainly from their family and friendly environment and, in many cases, significant support is provided by the school teachers.
- The women feel very satisfied with their attendance at SCS for the following reasons: They very much appreciate the school, the friendly environment, the respect the teachers show to their weaknesses, the acceptance and encouragement they provide them. It is important that they enjoy studying at the SCS as it increases their confidence (they did not believe that they were worth as students before) seeing that they understand the learning objects. They feel fortunate that there is this institution and that they are given this opportunity to study.
- Completing their studies they hope to gain more self-esteem, knowledge, experiences, and friendships.
- They recommend to other women to attend the SCS for the positive friendly environment that exists in the S.C.S., the knowledge they gain, the friendships that grow not only with other trainees but also with the trainers.
- They estimate that distance learning would help women attend the SCS only in cases when people face disability problems or difficulty in commuting because of their residence in an inaccessible area. They argue that under no circumstances should the state abolish the proximity in teaching and training provided in SCS.
- Distance learning could help create a flexible learning environment that will complement the teaching provided in SCS in cases of women trainees that are unable to attend the SCS on a daily basis due to work obligations. Generally, as far as distance learning is concerned, the study shows that as they do not know exactly what it is, they do not a complete picture of its contribution.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The study of these data as well as the results of triangulation leads to the following conclusions:

✓ The role of SCS and their importance to the education of women is crucial to the process of their reconnection with the educational system. Research shows that all nine women trainees evaluate their schooling experience in the SCS positively. Similarly, in the research of Mystakidou (2015) 71.3% of the graduates felt perfectly satisfied with their studies in SCS as far as satisfying their individual needs and expectations are concerned. Moreover, in the survey of Sipitanou & Platsidou (2010:7) the trainees mentioned in quite high degree positive attitudes towards learning (average = 4.2 on the scale 1-5).

According to Kotti (2008:37) the trainees express great love for S.C.S. and gratitude to all those involved in it. In the present research, the impressions and the degree of satisfaction of women trainees are shown by their attendance at SCS. The majority of women (6 out of 9) evaluate with the grade 5 on the scale 1-5 their study experience at S.C.S. The remaining three evaluate it with the grade 4.

✓ They identify the positive points relating to the collaborative learning style, the knowledge they gained, the creative work that took place in SCS, the communication with the teachers, their supporting role towards them in the difficulties they encountered. Unlike the research of Prigos (2008:59), which notes that on the issue of support for learners in SCS, females enjoy less support compared to men from both parents and the wider family environment, this research highlights mainly (apart from the supportive role of the family) the supportive role of teachers in SCS for the majority of the women (5 out of 9 trainees).

✓ A new finding that emerged through this research and which enhances the role and importance of S.C.S. is that all trainees highly recommend to other women to attend the S.C.S. having as their basic criterion the acquisition of knowledge and new experiences.

✓ The crucial role of teachers in S.C.S. is also reflected by the fact that the majority of the women trainees considers as one of the negative aspects of their study experience in S.C.S. the lack of teachers from the beginning of the school year. In particular, five out of eight women face structural obstacles, which according to Cross (1981), Mackeracheretall (2006, as cited in Giannakopoulou, Thanou 2013:4) are related with the organization and operation of the educational institutions, such as the lack of teachers, inadequate infrastructure, etc. Unlike other researches (Giannakopoulou & Thanou, 2013, Karalis, 2013, Sipitanou & Platsidou, 2010), who consider that the difficulties of women in Adult Education programs are related to socio-cultural barriers, such as the established male and female roles, the social standards and traditions, the lack of time due to work commitments and because of childcare, this research highlights the main difficulty encountered by women trainees in their attendance at SCS, which is the lack of teachers.

✓ From the opinions and perceptions of women trainees it appears that the incentives to return to school are the satisfaction of the unfulfilled ambition for three (03) trainees while for the remaining four (04), the need for personal and professional development and for improving knowledge. These data agree with the research of Pavlidou (2012:59) which shows that the reasons the trainees went to SCS were the unfulfilled ambition and the knowledge. The creation of the unfulfilled ambition is related to the fact that the majority of the learners (5 out of 9 women) left school for economic - financial reasons. Similarly, at the research of Prigou (2008, p:62) the primary reason for leaving school is the economic.

✓ **The expectations of women from their studies in SCS are:** Unlike the Kyriazopoulou research (2015) which shows that the majority of students in the SCS of Agii Anargiri expect that with the diploma they will be able to get a job, in the present research only two (02) trainees consider finding a job their basic expectation. Similarly, at the research of Mystakidou (2015), 88.7% of the respondents expressed optimism that the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in SCS would facilitate to a higher or lower degree their professional development. In the present research seven (07) trainees expect to gain knowledge, experiences, and friendships without associating them though with their career path.

✓ **Possibilities and prospects. The role of distance education.** The possibilities and prospects arising are expansion of the institution, direct and timely staffing of S.C.S., better information to women who may be the target group, improvement of infrastructure. As for the perspective of distance education what is interesting is that of the nine trainees only three believe it will be useful because they do not know how it works and how it can help them. Similarly, according to Pavlidou (2012) the trainees in the SCS of Aridea have a negative attitude towards the use of New Technologies in the course of numerical literacy due to ignorance. However, there is also a certain percentage of students who have a positive attitude towards this perspective. In a pilot study of Linardatou & Papadakis (2013) on the trainees in the SCS of Acharnes during the school year 2012-2013 it was found that the participation of women is greater in the teaching of the Greek language by combining face to face and distance learning as well as the effectiveness of its implementation, since their learning results in the Greek language have improved, this boosted their confidence and changed their attitude towards their participation in programs of lifelong learning.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

What would facilitate more the women who attend S.C.S. is a mixed flexible study program (a combination of face to face and distance learning) with which they could cover the learning gaps created due to their absences.

With this purpose it would be useful to investigate such an education perspective. In this context it would be useful to investigate the role of teachers in the S.C.S. and especially their supportive role in this education model.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the AUTHORS



Dr. Evangelia (Gelly) MANOUSOU has done postgraduate studies in Educational Informatics, holds a Ph.D. in Distance Learning Education and post-doc in the field of the necessary skills for students who are doing their thesis. She is currently working as headmaster of primary school as well as a tutor counsellor at the Hellenic Open University. She has trained teachers on many subjects for more than 1000 hours on behalf of the Ministry of Education. She has participated in Grundvich and Erasmus projects. She was in charge of Environmental Education for the Prefecture of the Cyclades Islands as well as a member of the Pedagogical Institute. She has written a great variety of pedagogical material and articles, she has participated in several research projects and is a regular collaborator in the pedagogical journal: «Window to Education» and "Window Junior" in subjects related to the environmental and health-oriented activities. She participates actively in many environmental and cultural, nongovernmental organizations.

Dr. Evangelia MANOUSOU
Tutor Counsellor, Hellenic Open University,
Paradeisou 23, 171 23 Nea Smirni GREECE
Mobile: 00306947723139
Email: manousoug@gmail.com



Charitini LINARDATOU completed her studies at the University of Crete (Rethymno), in Philosophy Faculty, Department of Philosophy and Social Studies (1992). She continued postgraduate studies (Msc) in Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University Paul Valery (Montpellier III) specializing in the mask rituals (carnival) (1995). Since she began working as an adults' trainer in Second Chance Schools and Vocational Training Centers in Athens her interest has focused on adult education where she completed her postgraduate studies (Med) at the Hellenic Open University (HOU) having acquired expertise in Distance Education of detainees (2012). She has participated as a speaker at International Conferences in Open and Distance learning (ICODL 2013, 2015) and in Art in Education. Her articles, also, with collaboration have been

published in the Journals (Open Education in Greece and European Journal of Open, Distance and E-learning, EURODL). Her research interests lie at the adult education, adult learning (women, socially excluded persons, detainees) in distance education and the art in education. She works as a teacher of Greek literature in school of Secondary Education in Cephalonia.

Charitini LINARDATOU
Med. Msc. Teacher
Marinou Geroulanou st. 27 Lixouri 28200 Cephalonia GREECE
Phone number: 2671093041,
Mobile number: 6973019947
Email: xlinardatou@yahoo.gr

REFERENCES

Athanasiadou, Ch., (2002). The social position of women in "Young women with a university education and the reconciliation of private and public sphere in adulthood planning", Doctoral thesis. Thessaloniki. Aristotle university. School of Psychology. Retrieved on 20/3/2015 from the website:

http://repository.edulll.gr/edulll/bitstream/10795/1468/6/1468_03_Athanasiadou.pdf

Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th ed.). Athens: Metexmio

Efstratoglou, A. & Nikolopoulou, V., (2008). Learners' Supply and Demand in Second Chance Schools. *Adult Education magazine*. Quarterly publication of the Adult Education Scientific Association. Ed. Metexmio. Issue 13, pp. 3-9.

Giannakopoulou, E. & Thanos, K. (2013). Tracing educational adult women experiences in adult education programs: new data and old problems. *Adult Education magazine*. Quarterly publication of the Adult Education Scientific Association. Issue 30, pp. 3-7.

Kaminioti, A. (2013). *Health and labor market. Interaction during the economic crisis. In the Work and Employment in Greece. Annual Report 2012*. National Institute of Labour and Human Resources (EIEAD). Athens. Retrieved from

<http://eiead.gr/publications/docs/%CE%95%CE%99%CE%95%CE%91%CE%94,%20%CE%95%CE%A4%CE%97%CE%A3%CE%99%CE%91%20%CE%95%CE%9A%CE%98%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%97%202012.pdf>

Kantaraki, M., Pagkaki, M. & Stamatelopoulou, E. (2008). Gender occupational discrimination (Vertical and Horizontal): Discrimination and inequalities against women in education. Observatory for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Actions of Educational Policy on Gender Equality. Observatory for Equality in Education (P.I.E.) EPEAEK II (4.1.1.e). Retrieved from: http://www.kethi.gr/attachments/137_EPAGELMATIKOS_DIAXORISMOS_EKPAIDEUSI.pdf

Karalis, Th. (2013). *Incentives and barriers to adult participation in Lifelong Education*. Athens: GESEE Labour Institute and GSEBEE Small Businesses Institute

Kotti, D. (2008). Experiential learning: from theory to practice. Second Chance School of Acharnes. Magazine *Adult Education*. Quarterly publication of the Adult Education Association. Ed. Metehmio Issue 13. pp. 35-41

Kyriazopoulou, Ef. (2015). *The economic and cultural capital of SCS trainees and their expectations in the economic crisis. The case of the SBS of Ag. Anargiri*. University of Patras. Department of Education. Patras. Retrieved on 18/7/2016 <http://nemertes.lis.upatras.gr/jspui/bitstream/10889/8760/3/Kyriazopoulou%28ptde%29.pdf>

Landritsi, I. (2007). Trainees of Second Chance Schools: research on their characteristics and their cultural capital in the SCS of Patras, Pyrgos and Agrinio. Doctoral thesis. University of Patras. Social and Human Sciences. Department of Education. Graduate Program. Retrieved on 19/08/2016 from the website: <http://nemertes.lis.upatras.gr/jspui/bitstream/10889/629/1/%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A0%CE%9B%CE%A9%CE%9C%CE%91%CE%A4%CE%99%CE%9A%CE%97%20%CE%95%CE%A1%CE%93%CE%91%CE%A3%CE%99%CE%91%20%CE%99%CE%A9%CE%91%CE%9D%CE%9D%CE%91%20%CE%9B%CE%91%CE%9D%CE%94%CE%A1%CE%99%CE%A4%CE%A3%CE%97.pdf>

Linardatou, Ch. & Papadakis, S., (2013). Teaching the Greek Language through blended learning in the Second Chance School (SCS) of Acharnes. In A. Lionarakis (eds.) *PROCEEDINGS Volume 4 - Section A: theoretical papers, original research and scientific articles*. 7th International Conference in Open & Distance Learning. November 2013. Athens, Greece. <http://eproceedings.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/openedu/article/view/728>

Manual for integrating gender in employment, social inclusion and social protection policies (2008). Luxembourg. DG of Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. European Commission. DOI 10.2767/19755

Mystakidou, Th. (2015). Effectiveness of Second Chance Schools: Learners' opinions from Eastern Macedonia and Thrace SCS. *Science Education Network of Adults in Crete*. Issue 17 13.11.2015. Retrieved on 18/7/2016 from the website: <http://cretaadulteduc.gr/blog/?p=928>

Panitsides, E. (2013) *Lifelong education a modern "Panacea" wider private and social benefits*. Thessaloniki University of Macedonia Publications Retrieved from [http://www.academia.edu/5457738/Panitsides E. 2013](http://www.academia.edu/5457738/Panitsides_E_2013)

Patsiomitou, S. (2015). Gender equality in education: Women teach-men rule/administrate? Retrieved on 12/11/2015 from the website:
<http://www.researchgate.net/publication/273130870>

Pavlidou, A. (2012). The numerical literacy in Second Chance Schools. Doctoral thesis. MSc Educational and Social Policy. University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki 2012. Retrieved on 17/8/2016 from the website:
<https://dspace.lib.uom.gr/bitstream/2159/15256/3/PavlidouAthinaMsc2012.pdf>

Prapas, P. (2005). Systematic observation of the "Second Chance Schools" program for the promotion of educational practices. Case Study. Doctoral thesis. Athens: HOU. Retrieved from <https://apothesis.eap.gr/handle/repo/20308>

Prigou, A. A. (2008). *Second Chance Schools. Expectations and vocational rehabilitation in the region of Thessaly. The gender dimension*. Doctoral thesis. University of the Aegean. Department of Early Childhood Education and instructional design. Retrieved on 17/07/2016 from the website:
<http://hellenicus.lib.aegean.gr/bitstream/handle/11610/14088/file0.pdf?sequence=1>

Robson, C. (2007). *Real world research*. Athens: Gutenberg

Roussos, S. (Ch.ch). (Scient. Resp.). *Political and economic implications of dropouts locally. Issues of participation in political institutions and labor market integration*. University of Peloponnese, Social Sciences, Political Science and International Relations. Retrieved on 3/23/2015 from the website:
<http://www.neagenia.gr/appdata/documents/Διρρρρρ.doc>

Shamir, B. (1985). Sex Differences in Psychological Adjustment to Unemployment and Reemployment: A Question of Commitment, Alternatives or Finance? *Social Problems*, Vol. 33, 67 – 79

Sipitanou, A. & Platsidou, M. (2010). Personal assessments of learners in Second Chance Schools for positive attitudes, abilities and difficulties. *Adult Education Magazine Adult Education*. Quarterly publication of the Adult Education Association. Issue 21, pp. 3-11.

Waters, L. E., & Moore, K. A. (2002). Reducing latent deprivation during un employment: The role of meaningful leisure activity. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75, 15-32.

Zotou, V. (2005). Men's and women's profile at Second Chance Schools. Doctoral thesis. Aristotle university of Thessaloniki. Graduate Program, Pedagogical gender equality. Retrieved from <http://ikee.lib.auth.gr/record/74594?ln=el>