

Editorial:

VET Teacher and Trainer Education

International Approaches and Perspectives

Silke Lange & Dietmar Frommberger

Learning in vocational education and training institutions and in-company training settings play a vital role in preparing individuals for the workforce and fostering lifelong learning and social inclusion. The teaching and training staff involved are of high importance in the educational processes and results. Empirical studies confirm the close connection between vocational education and training personnel and the quality of VET (e.g. Blom & Meyers, 2003 ; Ebbinghaus & Krewerth, 2014).

Personnel in VET face a variety of challenges: they teach and train groups of students who are particularly heterogeneous in terms of age, socio-economic and social background as well as educational biography. Such a diverse student body requires differentiated adaptation from the teachers and trainers so that the teaching content can be conveyed at the different student levels and the development of the students can be promoted. The teaching and training content itself is subject to continuous change, which is caused by scientific progress as well as economic and social developments. For example, sustainability-related aspects are now much more important in education and training, while other topics are disappearing in the wake of digitalization.

Qualification, further development and promotion of vocational training staff in schools and companies is the focus of attention worldwide when it comes to the further development of vocational education and training structures. Since the 1980s, in Europe there are efforts to improve the quality of trainers and teachers training through a European vocational training policy. One result of the European vocational educational research demonstrates the typification of vocational education and training staff on the basis of country studies. Here it becomes clear that teaching staff can be relatively well identified and differentiated, while in-company trainers are difficult to differentiate (Bahl et al. , 2008). In addition, the work of trainers is not recognised in many cases and

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therefore, vocational educational identity cannot be developed. However, there is expressed a growing interest in basic and additional training up to academic qualifications for training staff in companies (Bahl et al., 2008).

With the second issue of the International Journal of Vocational Education Studies we shed light on teachers and trainers in VET. Training the trainers and teaching the teachers differ regarding to their settings, contents and didactical approaches. For the thematic section we invited papers to explore and advance our understanding of the roles, challenges, and opportunities that VET teachers and trainers encounter. The focus of the contributions is on the personnel in VET-schools as is common in the research landscape.

Chris Zirkle, Eli Smeplass and Arve Leraand provide insights into the teacher training programs in the USA and Norway. Based on a qualitative comparison, they identify key elements of VET teacher training programs and discuss the importance of those programs for upcoming challenges of prospective teachers and overcoming the challenge of practice-oriented training.

Niklas Sanger deals with the modeling and measurement of teachers' digital skills. The TPACK model frequently used in this context does not take sufficient account of the particular challenges of VET teaching, as it relates primarily to digital skills for the use and application of learning technologies. With a further development of the model, he would like to integrate the digital skills related to the world of work into the TPACK model and presents a corresponding measurement instrument.

Robert Hantsch and Harald Hantke present an approach to overcoming the fragmentation and discontinuities in German VET-teacher education. Using a design-based research approach, a prototype for cross-level and cross-institutional cooperation in VET-teacher education is presented and the importance of cooperation in teacher education is discussed.

Mareike Beer, Alexandra Ritters and Martin Thieme-Hack address the topic of sustainability and Vocational Education for Sustainable Development and present an approach for the didactic design and organizational embedding of measures aimed at developing and expanding the skills of VET personnel related to sustainability.

Irina Rommel, Monserrat Vargas Mendez and Daniel Lascarez Smith present forms of qualification and entry pathways to the VET teaching profession in Costa Rica and discuss the different requirements as well as the level of professionalization.

Tina Gryson, Katrien Strubbe, Tony Valcke, and Ruben Vanderlinde deal with teacher cooperation as an approach to the further development of secondary education teaching. They present a project that investigates the influence of teacher design teams on teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and instructional practices in general subjects for vocational secondary education.

In the general section of this issue, there are two papers that deal with other topics relating to VET.

Junmin Li and Firat Deniz take a look at the textbook as a teaching medium. Despite digitalization, it is still very important in lessons in Germany today. Against the background of linguistic challenges in vocational education and training, the authors present an analysis of textbooks from a language-sensitive perspective.

Susanne Peters and **Christine Siemer** apply a behavioral economics approach to VET in their paper and examine the relationship between money and investment in VET in different European countries.

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