



Editorial: Autumn 2019 – The most comprehensive issue this far

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Another issue of the *Nordic Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, NJVET, is finalised! This is the first issue with a partly new editorial group, and we are happy to continue the development of the journal together. Eight peer-reviewed research articles means that this is the most comprehensive issue of our journal this far. Seven of the present articles are written in English and one in Danish. This means good opportunities for readers from beyond the Nordic countries to take part of Nordic VET research. And, if you are not familiar with the Nordic languages, we want to point out that even our articles that are written in Danish, Norwegian, or Swedish, always have an English abstract, English keywords, and an English translation of the title. There through, all our authors make their contribution to the area of VET research in general, but particularly to the Nordic VET research.

Eight examples of Nordic VET research

This issue includes three contributions from Denmark, two from Finland, two from Sweden, and also one article that is written in cooperation between Sweden and Finland.

The first article is from Denmark, *'The mannequin is more lifelike': The significance of fidelity for students' learning in simulation-based training in the social- and healthcare programmes* by **Vibe Aarkrog**. Elaborating the concepts of fidelity and learning, the article investigates the factors that influence the students' perception of



fidelity and the relationship between fidelity and the students' learning processes. The result shows that employing a high technological mannequin has some positive effect on students' learning, moreover, that the students perceived the fidelity of the simulation differently depending on their experiences. Therefore the author argues that decisions on the degree of fidelity should be made considering the students' practical experiences.

In the second article, *Integrated teaching for vocational knowing: A systematic review of research on nursing-related vocational education and training*, **Maria Christidis** from Sweden presents a review of studies on subject integration or thematic approaches in VET. That is, the focus is integration between general and vocational subjects in school-based parts of VET. In the review, Christidis identifies three types of integrated teaching: 'through embeddedness or streaks, problem-based learning, and between school and workplace'. The methodological approach in the included studies was mainly quantitative, and it is argued that this influences the understanding of integrated teaching and vocational knowing. Thus, Christidis identifies a need for more qualitative studies on integrated teaching.

In the third article, *Transfer and reflection in the Danish dual model: Findings from development in the Danish vocational education and training programmes*, **Arnt Louw** and **Noemi Katznelson** from Denmark presents perspectives on the central question of transfer in the danish VET-model. The article is based on a qualitative study of 21 development projects carried out at different VET school throughout Denmark. The article points out that transfer between school and work is all too often the student's individual responsibility to make. A central argument in the article is therefore that transfer established on an institutional level helps VET students create transfer and a sense of coherence in the education on an individual level. Finally, the article argues that the concept of reflection is a strong tool for the students' connection-making and sense of coherence between school and work.

The fourth article is written in cooperation between **Hamid Asghari** from Sweden and **Birgit Schaffar** from Finland. In *The human right to work: The tension between intrinsic and instrumental values in five teachers' stories from the industrial technology programme*, they elaborate on and discuss the tensions in the value of work for human life, starting with the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The article analyses in a narrative perspective data from the life stories of five vocational teachers. The findings show that the right to work can be seen as three tensions, where one is simultaneously an universal right and under conditions, and the second is the paradox of work as a place to belong under the logic of profit. The third tension is between doing a good job and maintaining professional pride and self care. The discussion in the article addresses how vocational teachers can prepare their students for work while installing also knowledge about civic rights and how to potentially influence structures in the labour market.

The fifth article, *Vocational students' identity formation in relation to vocations in the Swedish industrial sector*, is written by **Lisa Ferm, Daniel Persson Thunqvist, Louise Svensson** and **Maria Gustavsson**. The topic of the article is identity formation among VET students in the industrial sector. The empirical contribution is qualitative interviews with 28 VET students at four different upper secondary schools in Sweden. The analytical focus is on the students' learning trajectories as shaped by their social backgrounds, and by their views of work-based learning, industrial vocations and future plans. The findings show vocational identity formation as a non-linear process. One student group showed commitment and gravitated towards industrial vocations, group two were flexibility-oriented students that were open to careers outside the industrial sector, whereas the third group were ambivalent students with no coherent career plans. The authors conclude that their contribution to the discussion about vocational identity formation is that the vocational student's learning trajectory types and social categorisations must be included and understood in the context of the upper secondary school environment.

The sixth article is about *Motivational sources of practical nursing students at risk of dropping out from vocational education and training* in Finland. In their qualitative interview study, **Elisa Salmi, Tanja Vehkakoski, Kaisa Aunola, Sami Määttä, Leila Kairaluoma**, and **Raija Pirrtimaa** show a complicated pattern of motivational sources among the practical nursing students. The motivational sources differ concerning the internal or external locus of control and are related to engagement in or disengagement from studying – or ambivalence towards studying. A consequence of the complicated motivational pattern is a need of variation in the ways of supporting students at risk of dropping out.

The seventh article, *Forhindringer for samarbejde om pædagogisk udvikling mellem skoleledere og lærere: Belyst gennem et aktions-forskningsprojekt i erhvervsuddannelserne* (Obstacles to collaboration on educational development between school leaders and teachers: Seen through an action research project on vocational education and training) is a Danish study by **Henrik Hersom** and **Dorrit Sørensen**. Based on an action research project, the article explores central challenges to educational development projects. A central argument in the article is that school management mainly focuses on strategy and objectives whereas teachers mainly focus on everyday practice and experiences. Thus, the article points out three central and interesting management related obstacles that need to be addressed in order for lasting organisational changes to be established from educational development projects and experiments.

The eighth and last article is a study from Finland by **Sanna Ryökkynen, Raija Pirrtimaa**, and **Elina Kontu**. In *Interaction between students and class teachers in vocational education and training: 'Safety distance is needed'*, they investigate Finnish VET students who receive intensive special support, and their perceptions of the interactions with their class teachers. They find that the students describe

interaction with their class teachers positively. Furthermore, the article shows that the interactions were study-oriented, while the discussions on the students' future such as career plans or finding a place in the society were excluded. The authors critically point out that there is a need to give the students a voice.

Now we are looking forward to our next volume, which is volume 10 of NJVET. The first issue of 2020 will be a special issue on technology-mediated learning in VET, but there will also be issues with a broad content of research in the field of vocational and professional education and training.