



Editorial: The journal turns thirteen

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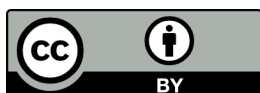
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Welcome to the first issue of the *Nordic Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, volume 13! The journal is growing up, and we are already having a teenager. Considering that metaphor, this could be seen as a milestone, but it also means that there will be development to come during the next few years. For example, we have some exciting special issues in the pipeline, which we are looking forward to in 2024.

In the beginning of the summer, the NordYrk network met again at the conference in Bergen, Norway, and we had the opportunity to meet other vocational education and training (VET) researchers from the Nordic countries and beyond. There are exciting things happening in 2024 for the network too, with the annual conference taking place in Iceland for the first time. We will meet in Reykjavik in June next year to discuss new research findings and develop our network!

In this issue

In this issue we can present four new research articles from Denmark and Norway. The first contribution is *Demokrati på erhvervsuddannelser med afsæt i social- og sundhedsuddannelser* (Democracy at vocational education based on social and health care programmes) by **Henriette Duch** and **Tobias Kidde Skov**, VIA University College, Aarhus, Denmark. VET does not only include vocational contents and learning objectives. In Denmark, the VET institutions are also, since the year 2000, expected to educate the students for participation in the democratic society. The authors take a student perspective when they study the



implementation of this requirement through interviews and make an analysis based on a theoretical approach from John Dewey. The findings show a diversity among students as well as between subjects. Some students are active concerning democratic questions while others are more reluctant to speak up. Questions about democracy are most visible in the subject of social science, but more limited in other subjects. Duch and Skov conclude that the teacher is important for how much focus democracy gets in VET and that some students could be excluded in this sense, and they call for more research about how to address this matter.

The three remaining articles are written by researchers from OsloMet – Oslo Metropolitan University in Norway. In *Fra logg til blogg: Yrkesfaglæreres digitale kompetanseutvikling gjennom designbasert praktikerforskning* (From log to blog: Vocational teachers' digital competence development through design-based practitioner research), **Svanhild Kristine Berntsen** and **Hedvig Skonhoft Johannesen** present an intervention study in Norwegian vocational education and training, exploring the development of vocational teachers' professional digital competences. The study has a design-based practitioner research approach where teachers are also researchers and participating observers. The study investigates the implementation of a new artefact, an ePortfolio blog as a boundary object in subjects of vocational specialisation with youth enterprise as the method. In the article we get to read about how the study identified participatory knowledge about vocational teachers' development opportunities and competence profiles as related to the use of technology as boundary objects, and the text comments on new boundary-crossing practices. The article also contributes with interesting insights to how practitioner research provides opportunities for development.

The second Norwegian contribution is *Organisatoriske særtrekk i samordningen mellom skole og arbeidsliv i yrkesfagutdanningen: Empirisk belysning gjennom en norsk casestudie* (Organisational characteristics in the coordination between school and working life in vocational training: Empirical illumination through a Norwegian case study). In this article **Merete C. Rekdahl** and **Jan Merok Paulsen** deal with the transition between school and work in the Norwegian VET system. The article is based on a case study involving upper secondary schools, vocational communities situated at department levels, and labour market partners. The study focuses on critical factors of successful inter-organisational collaboration between schools and subject departments which are well-performing in terms of a high degree of student completion in VET. The study highlights the importance of collaborative learning through the creation and development of specific organisational routines directed towards the core practices of vocational didactics. Furthermore, the study finds that the process of local adaptation activated at the subject-department level and directed towards corresponding businesses and relevant parts of the public sector is important to successful school and work transitions.

Finally, **Eldbjørg Marie Schön** and **Ellen Beate Hellne-Halvorsen** present the study *Hvordan tilrettelegge for læring av yrkesteori?* (How to facilitate students for learning vocational theory?). The topic of the study concerns the work of vocational teachers in motivating students to learn vocational theory at the educational programme for Restaurant and Food Science (RM). The study draws on data from focus group interviews with vocational teachers and a survey of students. The findings show that students at the RM programme struggle with their motivation to learn theory, as they are more focused on learning from practice. The vocational teachers state in the interviews that they commence teaching vocational theory in the classroom before they proceed to practical work through vocational guiding and differentiation in teaching practical tasks. The results from the survey with the students are in compliance with the teachers' perspectives, however the students also contribute views on specific teaching methods that enhance their motivation for learning.