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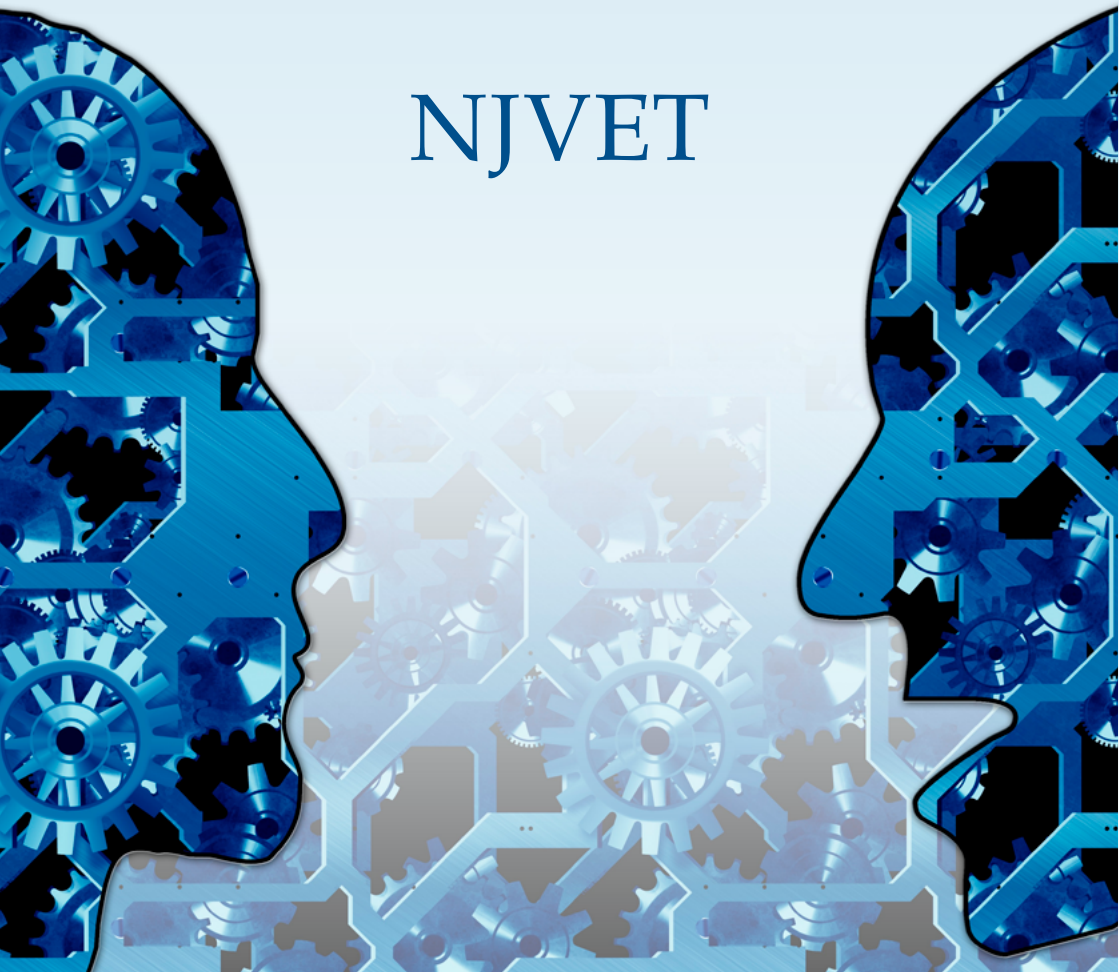




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Effects of coaching on wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study-interest

Suzette Kaper¹, Nina van Graafeiland² & Bart Vogelaar³

¹ Deltion College, Netherlands; ² Utrecht University, Netherlands;

³ Leiden University, Netherlands

(b.vogelaar@fsw.leidenuniv.nl)

Abstract

The current study aimed to investigate the influence of an evidence-based coaching intervention on students' wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest, among 93 first year social work students (aged 16–24) in the Netherlands. The coaching intervention that was implemented was based on the REGROW model. A pre-test-intervention-post-test design with two conditions was employed. The experimental condition ($n = 47$) received coaching from their mentor between pre-test and post-test, while the control condition ($n = 46$) received regular academic career counselling from their mentor. The results indicate that coaching has a positive effect on students' emotional wellbeing, but not on psychological and social wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest. In addition, it was found that students' evaluation of the coaching trajectory is predictive of their emotional wellbeing, specifically in relation to relatedness and pressure. In vocational education, coaching seems to be a valuable addition to academic career counselling. A structured practical coach model, such as the REGROW model, potentially combined with a coach card, could help implementing coaching in vocational education.

Keywords: vocational education, adolescence, coaching, wellbeing, perception of inclusion, study-interest



Introduction

In many countries, such as in the Nordic countries, one of the major challenges vocational education teachers face is the large number of student drop-out (Bolhaar et al., 2019; Jørgensen, 2011; Larsen & Thunqvist, 2018). Different approaches are taken to combat this issue, including for example student mentoring in the Netherlands (Meijers, 2008), a personal development plan for students in Sweden (Larsen & Thunqvist, 2018), a drop-out prevention programme in Finland (Vehkasalo, 2020), and individual educational plans in Denmark (Jørgensen, 2016). Despite these measures, drop-out rates in vocational education remain high in both the Nordic countries (Böhn & Deutscher, 2022), and in the Netherlands (Bolhaar et al., 2019).

Research shows that student drop-out can be related to student factors, such as low wellbeing, study-interest, perception of being included in school, motivation, anxiety, stress, and other personal challenges (Bolhaar et al., 2019; Jørgensen, 2011; Larsen & Thunqvist, 2018; Schmid, 2020; Winding et al., 2013). Specifically, Dutch and Nordic vocational students are missing individual support and are not feeling heard at school, while this seems to be positive for their wellbeing (Björk-Åman et al., 2021; Vanneste et al., 2016).

In none of the countries mentioned, however, coaching principles are used structurally to combat drop-out. Previous studies, even though they were conducted amongst special target groups, such as senior students and adolescents, suggested that individual coaching can have positive effects on students' wellbeing (Brandseth et al., 2019; Dulagil et al., 2016; Grant, 2020; Green & Norrish, 2013), inclusion in the classroom (Brandseth et al., 2019; Hagen, 2021), students' motivational study interest (Grant, 2020; Passmore & Lai, 2020), and success in academic goal striving (Atad & Grant, 2021; Dulagil et al., 2016). Therefore, the current study aimed to investigate whether a coaching intervention provided by the students' mentor would have a positive effect on the wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study interest of typically developing adolescent students enrolled in vocational education in the Netherlands.

Vocational education in the Netherlands vis-à-vis in Nordic countries

In the Netherlands, vocational education educates both young people and adults to be skilled workers, and offers study programmes at different levels, comparable with Danish study programmes where they use different levels of study programmes (Imola et al., 2021; Louw & Katznelson, 2019). The Dutch levels correspond with the duration of the study programme, with level one corresponding to one year of education and level four to four years (De Bruijn et al., 2017). Dutch vocational education provides practical study programmes, including school-based and workplace learning (Schaap et al., 2012), just like

Nordic countries (Jørgensen, 2011). The growing diversity of students who enter vocational education seems to be a major challenge for teachers in the Netherlands, as well as in Nordic countries (Schmid, 2020; Van Middelkoop et al., 2017).

An important role for Dutch teachers in vocational education is student guidance or mentoring. Mentoring in the Netherlands is aimed at stimulating students' learning development and performance by providing emotional support during their education. In general, a class (24 students) is linked to one or two mentor(s) for one year. Mentoring can occur both at the class and at the individual level, and generally occurs every week (Keijzer et al., 2022). As part of this mentoring process, each mentor also provides individual academic career counselling (*studieloopbaanbegeleiding, SLB*), a few times per year. In these short conversations, teachers support, coach and evaluate students' career competencies and learning progression (Meijers & Kuijpers, 2015). Nordic vocational education teachers also provide academic career guidance (Niemi & Jahnu-kainen, 2020). In the Netherlands as well as in the Nordic countries, these conversations focus more on student competencies than on their individual needs (Andreassen et al., 2019; Winters et al., 2009), while students seem to require more individual support, which as research shows is challenging for vocational teachers (Björk-Åman et al., 2021; Keijzer et al., 2022; Røise, 2020).

Another challenge in Dutch vocational education concerns the fact that teachers often have different backgrounds and experiences in teaching and mentoring students (Ketelaar et al., 2012; Magee et al., 2022; Winters et al., 2009). In general, a teacher training programme, qualifying for teaching at vocational education, concerns a three to four year Bachelors' programme, which is similar to the Norwegian educational system (Isacsson et al., 2018; Mbo Raad, 2020). In addition, it is also possible to acquire a Masters' degree in education at a Dutch university, which is similar to a teacher degree in Finland (Isacsson et al., 2018). Due to a shortage of Dutch teachers in vocational education, teachers can also obtain a pedagogical-didactic certificate, while teaching, within two years (Mbo Raad, 2020; Rijksoverheid, 2023; Van Middelkoop et al., 2017); comparable with a one year programme in Denmark (Isacsson et al., 2018). The different backgrounds of teachers in the Netherlands and some Nordic countries implies a need for professionalising teachers' pedagogical and didactic knowledge and skills, so they can support students more individually in their diverse, educational, and social challenges (Bolhaar et al., 2019; Brevik et al., 2023; Jørgensen, 2011; Jørgensen et al., 2018; Ketelaar et al., 2012). Perhaps that is why teachers in both the Netherlands and the Nordic countries are increasingly taking on a coaching role (Jørgensen, 2011; Kalalahti et al., 2020; Ketelaar et al., 2012). Nevertheless, Nordic and Dutch teachers seem to be missing tools and knowledge to coach their students (Ketelaar et al., 2012; Löfgren et al., 2022;

Niemi & Jahnukainen, 2020). Therefore, coaching might be an interesting tool for teacher professionalisation, considering the fact that coaching allows focusing on individual student needs (Adams, 2016).

Coaching in (vocational) education

Coaching can be defined as a solution-focused and systematic guiding process (Stober & Grant, 2006), in which awareness, reflection, autonomy and self-management are facilitated (Cox et al., 2014) to enhance positive personal growth and change (Anstiss & Passmore, 2017; Grant, 2014; Zyl et al., 2020). A coach creates (conversation) space for the coachee to be able to reflect, find solutions, and achieve goals in different domains of life (Adams, 2016; Madden et al., 2020). To establish this, a coaching framework, coaching techniques, a non-judgemental, objective and positive attitude (Adams, 2016; Grant, 2014, 2020), and time investment (Stewart & Palmer, 2009) are necessary to support the development of the coachee (Grant, 2013, 2020).

There are some theoretical and practical concerns that seem to impede implementation of coaching principles in education. From a theoretical point of view, there is limited research into the effectivity and implementation of evidence-based coaching programmes in (vocational) education (Grant, 2020; Hobson & van Nieuwerburgh, 2022). There are, moreover, few evidence-based models that have been evaluated in an educational context (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018). One such model is the REGROW model (Grant, 2011), a more recent version of the GROW model (Whitmore, 2002). The REGROW model is structured and simple to apply (Grant, 2011), and therefore potentially easy to use for teachers. Nevertheless, the REGROW model is not used frequently in education, and, to our knowledge, its effectivity for vocational education students has not yet been investigated.

From a practical point of view, there are large inter-individual differences in teachers' understanding of coaching (Ketelaar et al., 2012). Moreover, coaching is often provided by untrained teachers (Hobson & van Nieuwerburgh, 2022; Zumpe, 2022), and teachers might become too emotionally involved in students' process (Lippke, 2012). However, training teachers in coaching techniques seems to lead to improvements in their own professional development, wellbeing, leadership, and their objective stance towards students' personal and learning development (Adams, 2016; Grant et al., 2010; Ketelaar et al., 2012; Kraft et al., 2018; Lippke, 2012; Lukiianchuk et al., 2021; White, 2022). Moreover, coaching supports vocational education students' autonomy which, in turn, leads to higher wellbeing, competence, and motivation and seems to reduce drop-out (Bolhaar et al., 2019; Dulagil et al., 2016; Grant, 2014; Kaur et al., 2017; Lippke, 2012; Psifidou et al., 2021).

Wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study-interest

Defining wellbeing is challenging; it includes life satisfaction, happiness, positive emotions, positive psychological development, and fulfilling goals (Dodge et al., 2012). Wellbeing consists of three dimensions: Emotional, psychological and social wellbeing (Karás et al., 2014; Lamers et al., 2010). In the last twenty years, development of wellbeing (mental health) in education has become more important (Waters, 2017; White, 2016). Students' wellbeing is influenced by personal resources, study environment, study skills and teaching (Heinilä, 2013). This explains why students' (emotional) wellbeing might be influenced by the (perceived) emotional engagement between student and teacher (Arabiat et al., 2018; Krane et al., 2016; Pietarinen et al., 2014). More importantly within the scope of the current study, adolescents' (social) wellbeing seems to be positively affected by social support and a positive and challenging environment (Crone, 2018; Dulagil et al., 2016; Glozah, 2015; Young et al., 2019).

Students' perception of the extent to which they are included in the classroom seems to be related to experiencing a supportive environment. It can be defined as an individual's perception of belonging to a group (Jansen et al., 2014), in which there are large inter-individual and inter-group differences. The perception of inclusion consists of three dimensions: Emotional, social, and academic self-concept (Venetz et al., 2015). Social inclusion concerns friendship, perception, and interaction (Koster et al., 2009), while emotional inclusion concerns emotions related to belonging to a group (Urquhart, 2008). Academic self-concept concerns self-evaluation, self-perception of academic attitude and behaviour, and has two dimensions: change (flexibility to adapt) and stability (relatively stable psychologically) (Supervía et al., 2020). Although the potential effects of a coaching intervention on students' perception of inclusion have not been studied extensively, coaching among target groups in vocational education has been found to support a safe and inclusive learning environment (Christensen et al., 2021), and stimulate students' academic self-concept (Blegur et al., 2018).

Coaching also stimulates undergraduate university students' study-interest (Müller & Louw, 2004). Study-interest consists of feeling and value-related valences and intrinsic orientation (Schiefele, 1999, 2001). This seems to be related to motivational learning; intrinsically motivated students demonstrate higher study-interest than students with different motivational styles (Müller & Louw, 2004). These findings correspond to the self-determination theory, which posits that there are basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) that influence students' motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2004). In relation to coaching in education, research indicates that coaching leads to higher levels of motivation for school among (high school) students (Amorose & Anderson-Butcher, 2007). Coached students were more successful in achieving goals and

had a higher study-interest than students who were not coached (Ball et al., 2016; Borkar, 2016).

The current study

The current study aimed to investigate to what extent an evidence-based coaching intervention based on the REGROW model provided by the mentor has beneficial effects on first year vocational educational students' wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest. The first research question concerned the potential positive effect of coaching on students' wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest. It was expected that students who received coaching would show more positive growth from pre-test to post-test in wellbeing (Cronin & Allen, 2018), perception of inclusion (Qian et al., 2018), and study-interest (Müller & Louw, 2003) than their peers who did not receive coaching. In relation to wellbeing, it was specifically expected that those who were coached would show more improvement in all three aspects of wellbeing: emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing (Borkar, 2016; Cronin & Allen, 2018; Shorey et al., 2022).

The second research question concerned the potential relationship between the students' evaluation of the coaching intervention on the one hand, and wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study-interest on the other hand. It was hypothesised that students' evaluation of the coaching trajectory could predict their level of wellbeing (Cronin & Allen, 2018), perception of inclusion (Qian et al., 2018), and study-interest (Müller & Louw, 2003) at post-test.

Method

Participants

The researchers initially recruited 104 first year students in the Social work study programme in the Netherlands (Level 4) from one school. Some students did not consent to participate or had not completed all questionnaires due to the COVID-19 lockdown, therefore the final sample consisted of 93 participants (27 male and 66 female students) with a mean age of 17.98 ($SD = 1.71$; range 16–24). Within this number of participants, per class, students were allocated to the experimental condition ($n = 47$) or the control condition ($n = 46$). Each class was linked to a specific teacher who functioned as their mentor. For students younger than 16, their parents and the student gave written informed consent prior to the study taking place, and students 16 years or older gave written informed consent themselves. Approval for conducting the study was provided by the institutional Psychology Research Ethics Committee of the corresponding author.

Design and procedure

The current study employed a quasi-experimental pre-test – intervention – post-test design with two conditions: an experimental and a control condition. Those in the experimental condition received coaching between pre-test and post-test while those in the control condition received regular *SLB* from their mentor (see Table 1).

Table 1. Research design.

Group	Pre-test ¹	Coaching Intervention	Post-test ²	Coaching Evaluation ³
Experimental	X	X	X	X
Control	X		X	

Notes: 1. Pre-test: MHC-SF, PIQ-S, SIQ. 2. Post-test: MHC-SF, PIQ-S, SIQ. 3. Evaluation: APQ, SIQ2.

Students in both conditions completed a pre-test and a post-test. Students in the control condition received regular *SLB* from their mentor (once or twice a 10 minute conversation about students’ career and study progress), while students in the experimental condition received four coaching conversations from their mentor. After the post-test, students in the experimental condition evaluated their coaching trajectory. All questionnaires for both conditions were completed in the same week.

During the study, all students went in partial lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because practical education was partially allowed to continue on campus during lockdown, three of the coaching conversations took place at school, and the other one took place online in a secured digital environment. The online coaching used the same method as the physical coaching conversation and at all times privacy and ethical regulations of the school were adhered to.

Intervention and materials

Coaching intervention

The coaching intervention consisted of four conversations provided in a timeframe of 12 weeks with each conversation lasting 30 minutes. The coaching trajectory was based on the REGROW model (Grant, 2011), as this model is considered highly structured and relatively easy to apply. All teachers that provided the coaching were provided with a self-developed Coach Card (see Figure 1), to help them structure their coaching conversations. In general, all conversations, with the exception of the first conversation, which started with a wonder question (see Figure 1), had a similar structure. First, the students’

wellbeing was scored, after which the coach led the student through the different steps of the model (review, evaluation, goal, reality, options, and wrap-up). At the end of each conversation the coach asked the student to evaluate the session.

COACH CARD	Wellbeing: 0 – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 – 8 – 9 – 10 <i>(0 is low and 10 is high)</i>	30 min.
R	REVIEW - Did you think about the past week(s)? - What did it bring you?	
E	EVALUATION - How did you experience the last conversation? - What have you changed? How did you noticed that? - What went well? - What obstacles/problems are you running into? - Who did you ask for help?	
G	GOAL Wonder question - What do you want to achieve? - What makes you happy? - What gives you a lot of energy? - What is your goal, are your goals? (Cut long term into sub-goals) - What do you need to get there?	
R	REALITY - Where do I stand now (regarding the desired goal)? - How are you feeling? - What does your week look like? What do your circumstances look like?	
O	OPTIONS - How are you going to achieve that? - What are your (creative) options to achieve your goal(s)? - The coach repeats all mentioned options. - The coachee chooses the best option.	
W	WRAP-UP - Action: you start working on the option(s) of your choice. - What is your plan? - What do you need to do to achieve your goal(s)? - What could get in the way? - Do you need help? - Make the goal SMART. - Visualization might help in this.	
The coach asks feedback about.....		
Experiencing the conversation	Felt heard and seen	Tips for the coach
Attitude Coach: Open and positive Equal Listing, summarize and ask questions	Attention Stimulate autonomy Reflect	No judgment No good/wrong Student writes goal(s) down Open questions Do not push
Based on Grant, 2011 REGROW Coach Model		

Figure 1. Coach Card based on the REGROW model (Grant, 2011).

Training in coaching for teachers

Teachers in the experimental condition were provided with a short training programme to familiarise them with coaching techniques and refresh their knowledge about adolescent students and their learning processes. The training programme, which was developed for this study and provided by the first author, consisted of two three-hour sessions. The first session consisted of a general theoretical background related to adolescence and evidence-based coaching, specifically the REGROW model (Grant, 2011), after which teachers practiced their newly acquired knowledge and skills with their colleagues under supervision of the first author. The second session recapitulated the theoretical

background, after which the participants practiced coaching techniques and use of the coach card with colleagues and students that did not participate in the study.

Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF)

The MHC-SF (Karás et al., 2014; Lamers et al., 2010) is a questionnaire which measures wellbeing and takes 5–10 minutes to administer. The scale has 14 items and subscales: emotional wellbeing (3 items), social wellbeing (5 items), and psychological wellbeing (6 items). The questionnaire has been translated to Dutch. Respondents score items on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 5 (every day). The questionnaire has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$).

Perception of Inclusion Questionnaire Student (PIQ-S)

The PIQ-S (Zurbriggen & Knickenberg, 2020) is a questionnaire which measures perception of inclusion. It has 12 items and three subscales: emotional inclusion (4 items), social inclusion (4 items), and academic self-concept (4 items), and it takes 10 minutes to administer. Respondents score items on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (certainly true). There is a student, teacher, and parent version. The current study used the student version. The questionnaire has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$). The questionnaire has been translated into Dutch.

Study Interest Questionnaire (SIQ)

The SIQ (Schiefele, 1999, 2001) is a questionnaire which measures feeling-related valences (item 1–7), value-related valences (item 8–14), and intrinsic orientation (item 15–18) and takes 10 minutes to administer. Respondents score items on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (completely true). The questionnaire has been translated into Dutch. The questionnaire has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .78$).

Activity Perception Questionnaire (APQ)

The APQ (Deci et al., 1994; McAuley et al., 1989; Plant & Ryan, 1985; Ryan, 1982; Ryan et al., 1983, 1990, 1991) is one of the five parts of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI) and is a questionnaire which measures participants' subjective experiences in relation to a target activity. The scale has 25 items and three subscales: interest/enjoyment (8 items), value/usefulness (9 items), and perceived choice (8 items) and takes 15 minutes to administer. Respondents score items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 7 (very true). The questionnaire has been translated into Dutch. The questionnaire has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach's $\alpha = .96$).

Subject Impression Questionnaire (SIQ2)

The SIQ2 (Deci et al., 1994; McAuley et al., 1989; Plant & Ryan, 1985; Ryan, 1982; Ryan et al., 1983, 1990, 1991) is one of the five parts of the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI). The SIQ2 is a questionnaire which measures how an individual feels in relation to a second person participating in a target activity. The scale has 29 items and 5 subscales: relatedness (8 items), interest/enjoyment (7 items), perceived choice (5 items), pressure/tension (5 items), and effort (4 items) and takes 15 minutes to administer. Respondents score items on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 7 (very true). The questionnaire has been translated into Dutch. The questionnaire has been shown to have a high internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$).

Results

Initial analyses

Prior to conducting our analyses, we investigated whether the experimental group and control group showed any differences at baseline. To do this, a one-way MANOVA was performed, including age, and pre-test scores as dependent and condition as the independent variable. This model was not significant (Wilk’s $\lambda = .93$, $F(1,90) = 0.82$, $p = .591$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$), indicating no significant group differences. Mean scores for each condition are displayed in Table 2. Both conditions had a similar gender distribution ($\chi^2(1, N=93) = 1.46$, $p = .227$), which is displayed in Table 3.

Table 2. Basic statistics for questionnaire scores and age for each condition at pre-test.

		Experimental condition	Control condition
Emotional wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.45	3.45
Social wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	2.61	2.68
Psychological wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.62	3.45
Social inclusion	<i>M (SD)</i>	13.80	13.41
Emotional inclusion	<i>M (SD)</i>	12.85	12.63
Academic self-concept	<i>M (SD)</i>	11.98	11.67
Study-interest	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.03	2.92
Age	<i>M (SD)</i>	17.85	18.14

Table 3. Gender distribution over the different conditions.

	Experimental condition	Control condition	Total
Female	36	30	66
Male	11	16	27
Total	47	46	93

Table 4. Multivariate and univariate RM MANOVA outcomes of the effect of coaching on wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study-interest.

	Wilk's λ	F	p	η_p^2
Multivariate effects				
Session	.87	1.78	.102	.13
Session x Condition	.91	1.11	.364	.09
Univariate effects				
Emotional wellbeing				
Session		.20	.657	.002
Session x Condition		5.68	.019	.06
Social wellbeing				
Session		.48	.492	.01
Session x Condition		1.47	.228	.02
Psychological wellbeing				
Session		.54	.465	.01
Session x Condition		.88	.352	.01
Social inclusion				
Session		3.16	.079	.03
Session x Condition		.01	.906	< .001
Emotional inclusion				
Session		4.57	.035	.05
Session x Condition		1.89	.173	.02
Academic self-concept				
Session		1.65	.202	.02
Session x Condition		1.33	.252	.02
Study-interest				
Session		7.46	.008	.08
Session x Condition		< .001	.990	< .001

The effect of coaching

The potential effect of coaching on student-reported perception of inclusion, study-interest, and wellbeing of all participants was examined through a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (RM MANOVA). Session (pre-test vs. post-test) was included as within-subjects factor, and condition (experimental vs. control) as between-subjects factor. Student-reported scores of emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing, social, and emotional inclusion, academic self-concept, and study-interest were included as dependent variables. All multivariate and univariate within-subject effects are displayed in Table 4. The multivariate results indicate no significant effect of Session or Session x Condition. Basic statistics for the different measures are provided in Table 5. Additionally, mean scores of all variables are displayed in Figure 2. In addition, between-subject effects are displayed in Table 6. None of these effects were significant. This means there were no group differences on wellbeing, perception of inclusion, nor study-interest.

Table 5. Basic statistics for all scores regarding wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest at pre- and post-test.

		Experimental		Control	
		Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
Emotional wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.46 (.84)	3.63 (.88)	3.45 (.92)	3.19 (.96)
Social wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	2.61 (.99)	2.66 (.90)	2.69 (.90)	2.52 (.89)
Psychological wellbeing	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.62 (.77)	3.63 (.93)	3.46 (.77)	3.32 (.85)
Social inclusion	<i>M (SD)</i>	13.80 (2.07)	13.43 (2.01)	13.42 (2.48)	13.00 (2.26)
Emotional inclusion	<i>M (SD)</i>	12.85 (2.30)	12.67 (2.20)	12.64 (1.82)	11.84 (2.61)
Academic self-concept	<i>M (SD)</i>	11.67 (2.04)	12.09 (1.98)	11.98 (1.71)	12.00 (2.15)
Study-interest	<i>M (SD)</i>	3.03 (.38)	2.93 (.43)	2.92 (.33)	2.82 (.50)

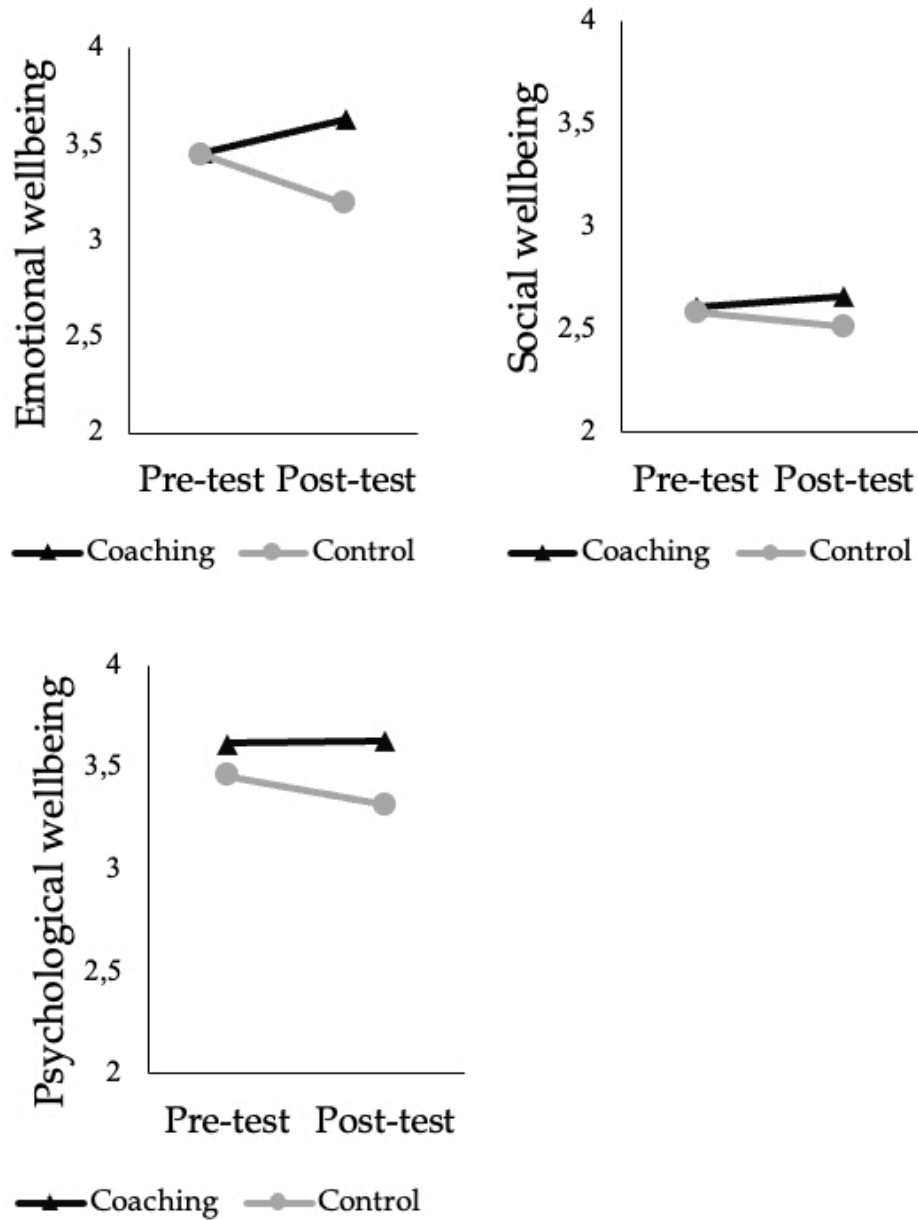


Figure 2. Pre-test and post-test scores regarding wellbeing (upper row), perception of inclusion (middle row), and study interest (lower row), divided by condition.

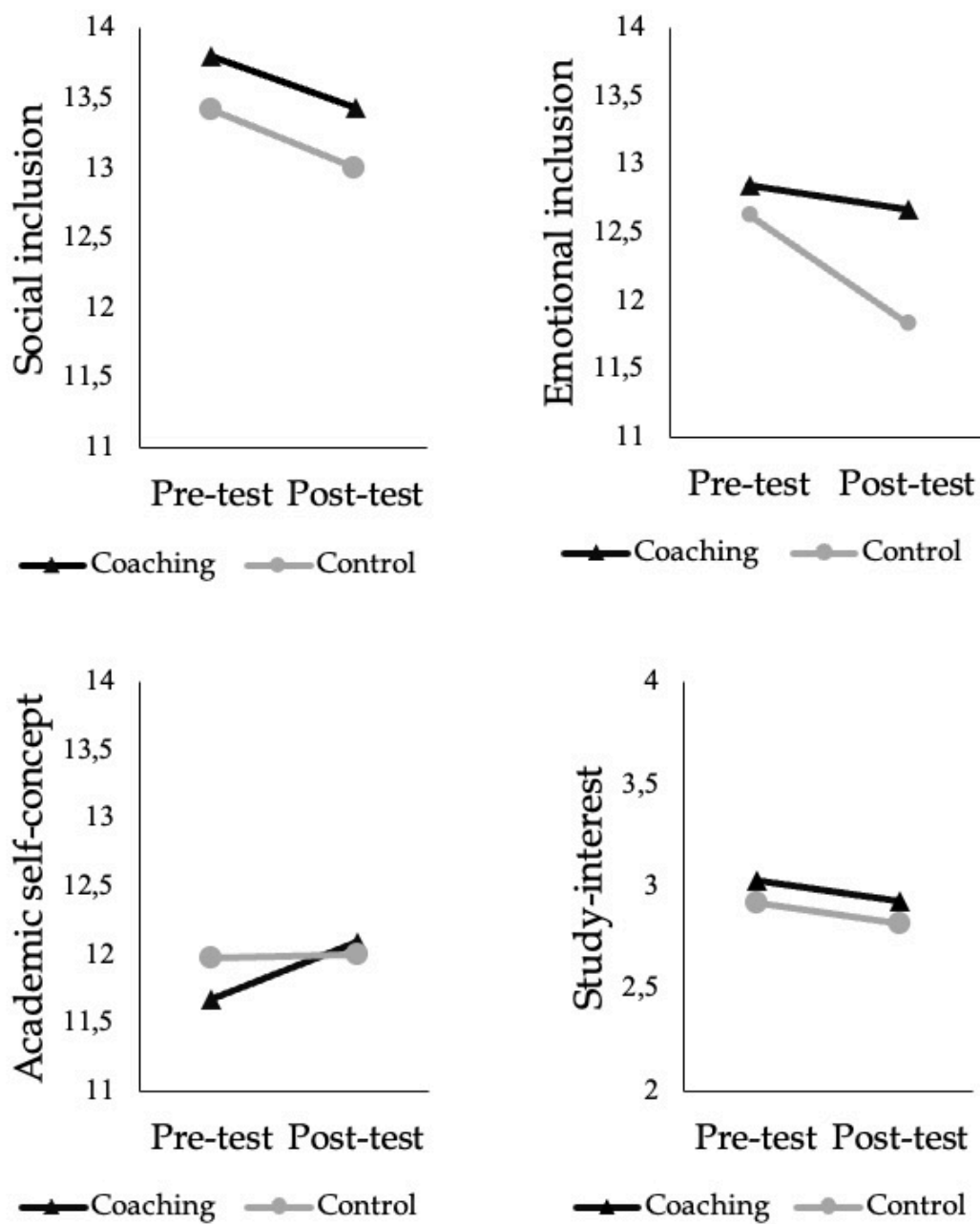


Figure 2. (Continued.)

Table 6. Between-subject effects of all variables included in RM MANOVA concerning the effect of coaching on wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest.

	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η_p^2
Emotional wellbeing	1.83	.179	.02
Social wellbeing	.03	.871	< .001
Psychological wellbeing	2.34	.130	.03
Social inclusion	1.01	.318	.01
Emotional inclusion	1.56	.215	.02
Academic self-concept	0.8	.775	.001
Study-interest	1.96	.165	.02

Wellbeing. The univariate effects revealed no significant effects of Session on the three variables representing wellbeing. However, a significant Session \times Condition effect was found for emotional wellbeing ($F(1,89) = 5.68, p = .019, \eta_p^2 = .06$). This is reflected in the mean scores for the separate conditions. When investigating the mean scores of all participants, little difference is observed between pre and post-test ($M = 3.45$ vs. $M = 3.42$). However, when looking at the conditions separately, it is noticed that the emotional wellbeing of students who received coaching increased slightly ($M = 3.46$ vs. $M = 3.63$), while these scores decreased for students in the control group ($M = 3.45$ vs. $M = 3.19$).

Perception of inclusion. The univariate effects revealed a significant Session effect for emotional inclusion ($F(1,89) = 4.57, p = .035, \eta_p^2 = .05$), but not for social inclusion ($F(1,89) = 3.16, p = .079, \eta_p^2 = .03$), or academic self-concept ($F(1,89) = 1.65, p = .202, \eta_p^2 = .02$). No significant effects of Session \times Condition were found on all three variables representing perception of inclusion.

Study-interest. The univariate effects revealed a significant effect of Session ($F(1,89) = 7.46, p = .008, \eta_p^2 = .08$), but not of Session \times Condition ($F(1,89) < .001, p = .990, \eta_p^2 < .001$).

Evaluation of coaching

In order to investigate whether students' evaluation of the coaching session was predictive of their wellbeing, perception of inclusion, and study-interest, seven linear regressions were performed. In these analyses, post-test scores of emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing, social, and emotional inclusion, academic self-concept, and study-interest served as the dependent variables. Activity interest, usefulness, and perceived choice, were included as predictors, alongside coach relatedness, interest, perceived choice, pressure, and effort. Results of these analyses are displayed in Table 7.

Wellbeing. The predictive model for emotional wellbeing was significant ($F(8,33) = 2.35, p = .041, R^2 = .36$), indicating that coached students' emotional wellbeing could be predicted by their evaluation of the coaching sessions. Analysis of the coefficients indicated that the only significant predictors were coach relatedness ($B = -.54, p = .029$), and pressure ($B = -.32, p = .034$). These regression coefficients are negative, indicating that higher scores on relatedness and pressure were predictive of lower scores on emotional wellbeing. The model was not significant for social wellbeing ($F(8,34) = 1.98, p = .080, R^2 = .32$), or psychological wellbeing ($F(8,33) = 2.17, p = .056, R^2 = .35$), therefore providing no support for our hypotheses regarding these variables.

Perception of inclusion. The predictive model was not significant for emotional inclusion ($F(8,33) = 1.70, p = .135, R^2 = .29$), or social inclusion ($F(8,33) = 1.79, p = .116, R^2 = .30$), therefore providing no evidence for our hypotheses in relation to these variables. For academic self-concept, results again revealed a non-significant predictive model ($F(8,33) = 1.86, p = .101$).

Study-interest. The predictive model was not significant for study-interest ($F(8,33) = 2.21, p = .053, R^2 = .35$), therefore providing no evidence for our hypothesis.

Table 7. Regression coefficients for evaluation predictors of wellbeing, inclusion and study-interest.

	R ²	F	Constant	AI	AU	APC	CR	CI	CPC	CP	CE
Emotional Wellbeing	.36	2.35*	5.56*	-.22	.02	.14	-.54*	.40	.04	-.32*	.10
Social Wellbeing	.32	1.96	2.78*	-.20	-.10	.42	-.10	.35	-.25	-.30	-.03
Psychological Wellbeing	.35	2.17	3.36*	-.20	-.04	.27	-.13	.20	.05	-.28	.004
Social Inclusion	.30	1.79	11.76*	.15	.50	-.28	.42	.16	-.39	-.36	-.03
Emotional Inclusion	.29	1.70	12.29*	.66	.06	.62	-.32	.62	-.22	-.17	.18
Academic Self Concept	.31	1.86	8.26*	-1.17*	.14	1.17	.40	.75	-.45	.40	-.04
Study-interest	.35	2.21	2.38*	.03	.11	.08	-.09	.07	-.09	.05	.03

* $p < 0.05$, AI = activity interest, AU = Usefulness, APC = Perceived Choice, CR = coach relatedness, CI = Interest, CPC = Perceived choice, CP = pressure, and CE = effort.

Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate the effects of a coaching intervention based on the REGROW model on Dutch first year vocational education students' wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest. It also aimed to investigate whether coached students' evaluation of a coaching trajectory could predict their wellbeing, perception of inclusion and study-interest after the coaching trajectory.

Findings of the current study indicated that coaching had positive effects on students' emotional wellbeing, in line with other studies amongst adolescent

high school students (Anstiss & Passmore, 2017; Dulagil et al., 2016; Green et al., 2014). Moreover, we found that students' evaluation of the coaching trajectory could predict their emotional wellbeing. These findings highlight the importance of students' perception and view of the coaching trajectory, as research shows that coaching evaluation and feedback supports individual development (Sargeant, 2019; Schmid & Garrels, 2022). More specifically, we found that pressure and relatedness the student experienced during the coaching intervention, both part of motivation, could predict their emotional wellbeing after the coaching intervention; students' emotional wellbeing is lower if they experience more pressure during coaching. More notably, students that experienced a high feeling of relatedness reported lower emotional wellbeing, contrary to our hypothesis. This could potentially be explained by the fact that high levels of relatedness could indicate a lack of professional distance from the teacher (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2004), while it is important that a coach takes an objective stance towards the coachee (Adams, 2016; Grant, 2014; Lippke, 2012). This stance, including supporting students' autonomy, could potentially facilitate adolescent students to take control of their own learning process (Núñez & León, 2015), increase their motivation (Brevik et al., 2023) for school and decrease the feeling to drop-out (Kaur et al., 2017). Although the changes in emotional wellbeing were small, and will need to be investigated further, this finding does highlight the importance of coaching as a potential tool in boosting vocational education students' wellbeing. Contrary to our expectations, it seems that students' coaching evaluation was not related to their perception of inclusion, and coaching did not bring about significant changes in psychological and social wellbeing, or study-interest.

An important factor that could have influenced our results is the pandemic and lockdown. During the COVID-19 pandemic vocational education changed from physical classes to (partial) online instruction (Daniel, 2020; Syauqi et al., 2020), and social distancing made it more difficult for students, especially vulnerable students whose health was already at risk (Clemens et al., 2020). The social restrictions as part of the lockdown have been found to affect adolescents' psychological and social wellbeing and perception of inclusion, especially considering that adolescents are sensitive for exclusion (Young et al., 2019). Another reason could be that the coaching intervention was not specifically aimed at improving students' perception of inclusion which seems to be more complex and might take more time to change (Urquhart, 2008). In relation to the potential effects of the COVID-19 lockdown, we found that the emotional wellbeing of students who were coached seemed to increase, while those in the control condition demonstrated a decrease. These findings seem to provide a first indication that an evidence-based coaching trajectory might serve as a protective

factor in relation to students' emotional wellbeing during a stressful period such as the lockdown.

Moreover, all measures collected were self-report questionnaires by students and some participants did not want to participate or dropped out later, as a result of which the number of participants is relatively small. Of course, this study only included the student perspective. Perhaps in future research parents' or teachers' perspectives could shed additional light on student wellbeing. Another perspective worth investigating is the potential relationship between wellbeing and drop-out. In this research students from both conditions were aware of the fact that they were coached or not. Moreover, teachers were provided with a short training and perhaps the coaching intervention was too short: Perhaps a longer and more intensive trajectory would lead to more changes (Waters & White, 2015).

Practical implications, recommendations, and conclusion

The findings of the current study highlight that coaching in Dutch vocational education could have a positive effect on students' emotional wellbeing, even during a stressful time such as the lockdown. Coaching could be of interest to vocational education in the Nordic countries, especially now that students' wellbeing in school has become more important since the pandemic (Sormunen et al., 2022). More importantly, the Nordic countries have similar challenges regarding high student drop-out in vocational education and the growing diverse student populations that seem to need more adequate individual support (Björk-Åman et al., 2021; Jørgensen, 2011). A highly structured and practical evidence-based model, such as REGROW model (Grant, 2011) with the use of a coach card (see Figure 1) could help implement coaching in Nordic and Dutch vocational education to improve students' emotional wellbeing and use students' evaluation about their coaching process in order to support the diversity of students' personal and learning needs in vocational education (De Bruijn et al., 2017; Dulagil et al., 2016; Jørgensen, 2011). The REGROW method and coach card seem simple to combine with academic career guidance and is individually applicable.

Professionalising teachers in coaching techniques (with a short training provided by an expert) expands their expertise, strengthens their coaching role and objective stance towards students, as a part of career guidance (Adams, 2016; Ketelaar et al., 2012; Lippke, 2012; Lofthouse, 2019; Niles et al., 2019). As a result, this might increase students' health, autonomy, and motivation for school (Brandseth et al., 2019; Passmore & Lai, 2020; Schmid, 2020).

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Notes on contributors

Suzette Kaper, MA, works as a manager and researcher at the vocational educational institution Deltion College in the Netherlands.

Nina van Graafeiland, MSc, is a PhD candidate at the Department of Education at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. She worked on this study as a student-assistant. Her PhD project is focused on using social network analyses to investigate multilingual classroom interactions.

Bart Vogelaar, PhD, works as an assistant professor and Principal Investigator at the Developmental and Educational Psychology Unit of Leiden University in the Netherlands. His research interests include cognitive development, potential for learning and coaching. In addition, he is a licensed healthcare psychologist (GZ Psycholoog).

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Praktisk yrkesopplæring på nett: En case-studie av yrkesfaglæreres undervisningspraksis under covid-19-pandemien

Practical vocational training on the internet: A case study of vocational teachers' teaching practice during the covid-19 pandemic

Frode Torgeir Andersson¹,
Marit Lensjø¹ & John Eivind Storvik²

¹OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet, Norge; ²Nord universitet, Bodø, Norge
(marlen@oslomet.no)

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to develop knowledge about the experiences of technical vocational education and training teachers in Norway during the covid-19 school closures in the spring and autumn of 2020. Data has been obtained through an electronic questionnaire with open, text-based answers. 18 vocational teachers participated in the survey, which shows that the closure had major consequences for vocational students in the technological education programs. The home school's narrow framework conditions made it difficult to replace the school's practical workshop and hands-on training. The study shows that the closure has triggered major differences in how vocational training was carried out. While some students only participated in digital home school, other students were able to have more practice in firms and enterprises than in ordinary school life. Excluded from school, training firms, and leisure activities, many students felt lonely and passive and some were eventually in danger of dropping out of school. The study shows that the vocational teachers took extensive responsibility and worked hard to find relevant and practical tasks for their students in the crisis that arose. One-to-one conversations between teacher and student as well as a close school-home collaboration became decisive for the students' experience of social and professional belonging.

Keywords: vocational teachers, technological occupations, vocational education and training, digital home school, student-teacher relationships, teaching in times of crisis



Innledning

Denne artikkelen handler om hvordan norske yrkesfaglærere gjennomførte undervisningen i utdanningsprogrammene bygg- og anleggsteknikk (BA), teknologi- og industrifag (TEK), elektro- og datateknologi (EL) samt service og samferdsel (SS) under skolestengingen våren og høsten 2020. Disse utdanningsprogrammene er utdanningsveien til mer enn 100 praksisorienterte yrker – fra kjemiprosess og kjøretøy, til elektriske systemer og bygningskonstruksjon. Majoriteten av yrkesopplæringen i den norske skolen foregår i programfagene (PF) og yrkesfaglig fordypning (YFF), der undervisningen skjer i spesialinnredede lokaler eller i praksisbedrift med eller på ulike installasjoner og konstruksjoner. Bruken av spesialverktøy, maskiner og materialer utgjør selve navet i elevenes læring, og skiller de praktiske, handlingsorienterte teknologifagene fra andre yrkesutdanninger. Eben og Spetalens (2021) studie av elever på restaurant og matfag, viser at lærerne og elevene gjennomførte synkron undervisningsøvelser hjemme på egne kjøkken. Praktisk undervisning i tekniske fag som sveising, snekring og elektrisk arbeid var det imidlertid ikke like enkelt å legge til rette for i hjemmeskolen.

PF og YFF er de største fagene i den norske yrkesutdanningen, regnet i antall timer. Undervisningsøktene er ofte praktiske og prosjektorienterte, og kan strekke seg over hele dager. Da skoleverkstedene stengte, ble de lange undervisningsøktene omgjort til nettundervisning, og det ble den enkelte yrkesfaglærers ansvar å sørge for undervisning og oppfølging av klassen. Nedstengingen og de strenge smittevernreglene rammet også lærebedriftene og førte til at YFF ble avlyst for mange av yrkesfagelevne (Utdanningsdirektoratet [Udir], 2021). Da elevene ble hindret i å gjennomføre praksis i bedrift, måtte yrkesfaglærerne, i tillegg til PF, overta den praktiske undervisningen i YFF. Dermed hadde mange yrkesfaglærere nettbasert undervisning med elevene i inntil 70 til 80 prosent av klassens timer.

I kjølvannet av pandemien har flere rapporter belyst skolenes håndtering av nedstengingene. Imidlertid er det lite kunnskap om hvordan de teknologiske yrkesutdanningene ble gjennomført våren og høsten 2020, og hvordan skolestengingen påvirket samspillet mellom lærere og elever i den skolebaserte delen av yrkesopplæringen. Det er det denne studien er ment å avhjelpe.

Drøyt tre år etter den nasjonale skolenedstengingen 12. mars 2020 viser rapporten "Evaluering av pandemihåndteringen" (NOU 2023:16) at nedstengingen spesielt rammet ungdom, som plutselig mistet både skole, aktivitets- og fritidstilbud. For ungdom som bodde alene eller levde med vanskelige familieforhold og høy botetthet, ble isolasjonen krevende. Nedstengingen og karantene- og smittetiltakene gikk dessuten særlig ut over læringen til elever i yrkesfag som skulle tilegne seg praktisk yrkeskompetanse før de kunne gå ut i lære (Federici & Vika, 2020; NOU 2023:16). Selv om norske utdannings-

myndigheter prioriterte yrkesfagelevenes tilstedeværelse i skolen, var våren og høsten 2020 preget av smitteutbrudd, hjemmeskole og karantene- og smittevernsbestemmelser. Mye digital undervisning og selvstendig hjemmearbeid førte til mindre sosial og faglig læring (Bakken et al., 2021; Mælan et al., 2021; Udir, 2020).

Mange teknologiske yrkesfag bygger på mesterlæretradisjoner, der læring foregår mens eleven eller lærlingen kan observere, imitere og snakke med læremesteren (Eikeland, 2015). Opplæringen og det tette samspillet mellom lærling og mester foregår parallelt med produksjonen og styres av de utfordringer som avdekkes gjennom arbeidets progresjon. Underveis i lærlingens arbeid har mesteren anledning til å vise, korrigere og vurdere lærlingens lære- og arbeidsprosess (Gamble, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Ifølge Polanyi (1958) er det i praksis og i omstendighetene rundt praksisen at den komplekse yrkeskunnskapen avdekkes, oppdages og tilegnes. Vi snakker om kunnskap både av intellektuell og praktisk karakter som omfatter både tyskernes "wissen" og "können" og Gilbert Ryles "knowing what" og "knowing how" (Polanyi, 2000, s. 18). Forstått på denne måten framstår yrkeskunnskapen som prosessuell og dels taus, og den rommer kunnskap som ikke kan tilegnes gjennom undervisning alene (Billett, 2016; Lensjø, 2020). Uten muligheter for å drive med elevaktiviteter og prosesser som normalt foregår i skoleverkstedet, kan det ha blitt spesielt krevende for yrkesfaglærerne å gjennomføre teoribasert nettundervisning.

Som lærerutdannere ved to av universitetene som tilbyr det treårige bachelorstudiet yrkesfaglærerutdanning (YFL), ønsket vi i denne studien å belyse YFL-studentenes undervisningserfaringer i videregående skole våren og høsten 2020. Til forskjell fra andre lærere rekrutteres yrkesfaglærere i teknologiske fag oftest direkte fra arbeidslivet og inn i skolen, der de blir ansatt på vilkår om å ta lærerutdanning (Grande et al., 2014). 80 prosent av YFL-studentene som deltok i studien, var ansatt som yrkesfaglærere under pandemien. Studien har fokus på deltakernes lærerrolle, og vi velger å omtale informantene våre som yrkesfaglærere, ikke YFL-studenter.

Studiens problemstilling griper direkte inn i den doble yrkesfaglærerrollen som krever at yrkesfaglærere både har lærerkompetanse og oppdatert kompetanse fra det yrkeslivet som fag- og yrkesopplæringen kvalifiserer for (Meld. St. 16 (2001–2002)). Formålet med studien er å besvare følgende spørsmål:

- *Hvordan gjennomførte yrkesfaglærere i teknologiske fag sin undervisningspraksis gjennom de fullstendige og delvise nedstengingene av videregående skoler våren og høsten 2020?*

Artikkelen bygger på en nettbasert spørreundersøkelse som ble sendt ut til 60 studenter på yrkesfaglærerutdanningen (YFL). Av disse valgte 18 å delta. For å få en dypere innsikt i informantenes erfaringer ønsket vi en kvalitativ tilnærming på studien, og spørsmålene i nettskjemaet ble formulert slik at de oppfordret

informantene til å skrive åpne og utfyllende svartekster. Artikkelen har en empirisk, deskriptiv tilnærming.

Den historisk uventede nedstengingen våren 2020 utløste en dugnadsånd som omfattet både utdanningsmyndigheter, skoler, lærere, foresatte og lokalmiljøer verden over (UNESCO, 2023). En OECD-rapport (2021) viser at mange utdanningssystemer var i stand til å tilpasse seg situasjonen på en eller annen måte. Skoler og lærere viste stor motstandskraft i forsøk på å kompensere for krisen gjennom lederskap, initiativ og en innovativ ånd (Vincent-Lancrin et al., 2022). Forskning viser at svært mange lærere var positive til å fase inn ny teknologi da nedstengingen av skolene var et faktum (se bl.a. Toto & Limone, 2021). Eben og Spetalens studie understreker imidlertid at en stor utfordring knyttet til bruk av digitale plattformer i yrkesopplæringen er organisering av relevant trening i yrkesfaglige arbeidsoppgaver: "Det handler både om ramme-faktorer som verksteder, verktøy og råvarer, men også om yrkesfaglærerens mulighet til å demonstrere, veilede og vurdere elevens arbeid" (Eben & Spetalen, 2021, s. 73).

Selv om elever og lærere i den norske skolen disponerte pc til bruk i skolearbeidet, ble det krevende å skulle gjennomføre praktisk yrkesopplæring via digital hjemmeskole (Federici & Vika, 2020). Federici og Vikas rapport viser at flertallet av lærerne mente at nettbasert undervisning var utfordrende, fordi enkelte elever hadde mikrofon og kamera avslått mens undervisningen pågikk. Med avstengt kamera ble enkeltelevne skjult for læreren og medelevene. Når de ikke kunne se elevene, opplevde lærerne at de ikke hadde kontroll over elevenes deltakelse i undervisningen. Det er bred enighet om at nettbasert undervisning har hatt store konsekvenser for elever og lærere (se f.eks. Andersen et al., 2021). Et spørsmål vi reiser i vår studie, er om bruk av digitale verktøy under nedstengingen har bidratt til å styrke elevenes opplevelser av inkludering eller utenforskap. Rapporten av Andersen et al. (2021) bekrefter at nedstengingen fikk sosiale og faglige følger som det er viktig å belyse, noe vi ønsker å bidra til gjennom denne studien.

Etter den innledende konteksten følger en gjennomgang av det doble yrkesfaglige feltet. Deretter presenteres teoretiske perspektiver, etterfulgt av en redegjørelse av det metodiske og analytiske arbeidet. Funn og drøfting presenteres fortløpende i tre kapitler. Et hovedfunn er at lærerne snakket oftere og mer åpent med elevene underveis i hjemmeskolen enn de gjorde i den ordinære undervisningen på skolen. Én-til-én-samtaler styrket elev-lærer-relasjonen og gjorde det enklere å tilpasse opplæringen til elevenes behov. Et overraskende funn er at majoriteten av yrkesfaglærerne som deltok i denne studien, på kreativt og svært ulikt vis klarte å tilrettelegge for elevaktiv og praktisk opplæring til tross for nedstengingen. Avslutningsvis gjøres en oppsummerende drøfting.

Yrkesopplæring i det doble praksisfeltet mellom skole og bedrift

Mer enn halvparten av norske elever i ungdomsskolen søker et yrkesfaglig utdanningsprogram i videregående skole (Udir, 2022). Hovedmodellen for fag- og yrkesopplæring er to år i skole og to år i bedrift (Udir, 2022). Yrkesfaglærere har fag- eller svennebrev og erfaring fra arbeidslivet, i tillegg til treårig bachelorutdanning for yrkesfaglærere, eller kombinasjonen fagskole og pedagogisk utdanning. I rollen som yrkesfaglærer vil mye av undervisningen som foregår i den skolebaserte delen på videregående trinn 1 (Vg1) og videregående trinn 2 (Vg2), være rettet mot arbeidslivets sosiale og faglige kompetansebehov. Store deler av undervisningen foregår i praksisnære situasjoner i skoleverkstedet, der bruken av verktøy, utstyr og maskiner er sentralt for at elevene skal utvikle yrkeskompetanse og arbeids- og sikkerhetsrutiner i yrkesfaget de utdanner seg til (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2013b; UHR, 2018).

Ut fra et yrkesdidaktisk perspektiv må yrkesopplæringen i de brede programfagene dreie seg vesentlig om læringsoppgaver som er relevante og tilpasset elevenes yrkesvalg, og som det er mulig å gjennomføre innenfor skolens rammer (Lensjø, 2017). Faget YFF skal gi elevene muligheter til å oppleve realistiske arbeidssituasjoner og spesialisere seg i et ønsket yrke, blant annet gjennom praksis i bedrift. Gjennom praksis i bedrift blir eleven og de ansatte kjent med hverandre, og ofte ender praksis i YFF med at eleven tegner lærekontrakt og fullfører yrkesutdanningen i praksisbedriften. Mange tolker derfor YFF-faget som en inngangsbillett til arbeidslivet (Meld. St. 20 (2020–2021)). Yrkesfaglærerens samarbeid med bedriftene har avgjørende betydning for at innholdet i YFF, og undervisningen i programfagene, inngår i en helhet, slik at elevenes læreprosesser i skole og bedrift oppleves mer sammenhengende, yrkesrelevant og motiverende (Lensjø, 2017).

Samtidig som skolene og deler av det norske samfunnet stengte ned, var flere sektorer og næringer i full drift gjennom hele pandemien. Dagligvarehandel, transportnæringen, industrien og bygg- og anleggsnæringen er eksempler på sektorer som jobbet nær sagt som normalt, men underlagt strenge smittevernstiltak og koronarestriksjoner. Uforutsigbart og ulikt smittetrykk i ulike deler av landet gjorde at mange bedrifter vegret seg for å tilby elever praksisplass. Samtidig var det andre bedrifter som åpnet dørene slik at elevene hadde mer praksis enn det timetallet som er fastsatt i YFF.

Yrkesfaglæreridentitet i spenningsfeltet mellom fagarbeid og skole

Yrkesfaglærere har en sterk identitet knyttet til arbeidslivet og egen bakgrunn som fagarbeider, der kulturelle redskaper, regler og tradisjoner er sentrale for språk, handlinger og det arbeid som utøves i og av praksisfellesskapet (Wenger, 1998). I tråd med hvordan Polanyi (1958, 2000) utdyper den prosessuelle, tause

kunnskapen, anses identitetsutvikling i situert læringsteori som et resultat av de sosiale konstruksjonene som oppstår i de kulturelle omgivelsene: Der er for fællesskabet og den lærende knyttet en dybere fornemmelse af værdien ved at delta til det at blive en del af fællesskabet (Lave & Wenger, 1991, s. 94). I det produksjons- og prosessorienterte arbeidslivet inngår kriser og uforutsigbarhet som en naturlig del av samarbeidet og yrkesutøvelsen. Det innebærer at uforutsette hendelser, kriser og konflikter må løses fortløpende, og i mange yrker og profesjoner er krisehåndtering og konfliktløsning en vesentlig del av arbeidet (Bråthen, 2022).

Industrien og byggenæringen er sektorer som er styrt av prosess og framdrift og der uforutsette hendelser kan skape forsinkelser eller ulykker som utløser kritiske situasjoner. Dette er næringer som krever at individer, grupper og team på alle nivåer utfører sine oppgaver under høy grad av stresspåvirkning. Krisehåndtering i jobbsammenheng kan bidra til at fagarbeidere i robuste arbeidsmiljøer blir løsningsorienterte og utvikler en mestringstro som gjør dem mentalt og faglig forberedt på kriser og i stand til å løse disse krisene på ulike og alternative måter (Billett, 2011; Bråthen, 2022).

Korona-viruset kastet Norge ut i en langvarig krisesituasjon. Midt i denne krisesituasjonen var det lærernes ansvar å ivareta sine elever og å sikre dem et sosialt og faglig miljø i hjemmeskolen. Den plutselige overgangen fra yrkespraksis i verksted til digital undervisning i hjemmeskolen endret rammebetingelsene for undervisningen og utfordret lærernes didaktiske ferdigheter. Å bli lærer handler ifølge Lund og Järnerot (2020) om å utforme sitt profesjonelle jeg ved å trekke på ulike spektre av personlige erfaringer, mestring og relasjonskompetanse. Med utgangspunkt i yrkesdidaktisk relasjonstenkning (Hiim & Hippe, 2001) kan de nye rammebetingelsene i hjemmeskolen ha gjort lærerne oppmerksomme på den didaktiske bristen som oppsto mellom elevenes uendrede læringsbehov og -mål på den ene siden og fraværet av relevant læringsinnhold på den andre. Siden yrkesfaglærerne er ansvarlige for elevenes læring, kan koronakrisen og hjemmeskolen ha mobilisert deres kompetanse i krisehåndtering og ha styrket både deres forhold til elevene, deres forhold til lærerrollen og deres egen læreridentitet.

I spenningsfeltet mellom fagarbeid og lærerarbeid er yrkesfaglærernes mål å utvikle kompetanse til å knytte sammen de to motsetningsfylte rollene (Fejes & Köpsén, 2014; Sarastuen, 2020). Den doble yrkesidentiteten som fagarbeider og yrkesfaglærer, rommer kunnskaper og erfaringer som kan overføres mellom arenaene, noe som må anses som helt vesentlig for yrkesfaglærere. Kelchtermans (2005) hevder at lærerstudenters identitetsforståelse og -utvikling særlig knyttes til studentens følelser og selvforståelse i forholdet mellom seg og de strukturelle betingelsene for lærerjobben, noe som ble krevende for alle lærere under koronakrisen og skolestengingen i 2020.

I et situert perspektiv på læring forstås ikke læring bare som tilegnelse av kunnskap. Nye situasjoner former oss og gir nye muligheter for refleksjon og identitetsskapende og profesjonell handling (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Den doble fagarbeider- og læreridentiteten er noe som utvikler seg over tid, gjennom interaksjoner i og på tvers av ulike læringskontekster. Det betyr at yrkesidentitet kan være overlappende og romme autonomi og ekspertise som er utviklet gjennom mange år i ulike arbeidsmiljøer, på byggeplassen eller i industrien. I overgangen fra fagarbeider til yrkesfaglærer er yrkesutøvelsen og -kulturen det bærende elementet som danner mening i både lærerens og elevens verden (Lensjø, 2021, 2022). Som lærer og signifikant voksenkontakt for ungdommer er det imidlertid viktig å kjenne seg trygg på egen rolle og egne verdier og framstå som en autentisk person som elevene har tillit til (Lingås, 2016).

Artikkelens teoritilfang drar inn perspektiver som kan bidra til analysen av den kriselignende situasjonen som oppsto i de teknologiske yrkesutdanningene da skolene stengte ned.

Metodisk tilnærming

Som lærerutdannere og veiledere for YFL-studenter ved to norske universiteter som tilbyr treårig YFL-utdanning, hadde vi tett kontakt med egne studenter og praksisveilederne i skolene gjennom våren og høsten 2020. Vi var derfor klar over at de nasjonale tiltakene rammet teknologiske utdanningsprogrammer hardt. Det gjorde at vi ønsket å gjennomføre en systematisk undersøkelse av YFL-studentenes erfaringer fra nedstengingen våren 2020 og den etterfølgende tiltaksperioden høsten 2020. I tråd med Johannessen et al. (2010) mente vi at en case-studie ville egne seg godt til å undersøke skolestengingen som et fenomen eller en tidsavgrenset hendelse. Caseundersøkelser kan med fordel gjennomføres ved å kombinere forskjellige metoder, som intervjuer eller spørreskjemaer, slik at man får samlet inn mye informasjon og detaljerte data (Yin, 2003). Vi valgte å sende ut spørreskjema via et nettskjema utviklet av Universitetet i Oslo (UiO, 2020). Nettskjemaet er tilgjengelig for studenter og ansatte ved UiO og andre institusjoner som har avtale om bruk av netjtjenesten, noe OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet og Nord universitetet har. Nettskjemaet vi utformet har åpne tekstruter der informantene selv kunne beskrive og nyansere tekstsvarene. Via universitetenes digitale læringsportaler la vi ut informasjon om studien, og inviterte tre klasser med YFL-studenter i teknologiske fag til å delta i en anonym, frivillig undersøkelse. Spørreundersøkelsen ble sendt ut til 60 studenter, men av disse valgte kun 18 å delta. Det sparsommelige utvalget viser begrensningene ved denne typen småskalastudier. Likevel bidrar studien med ny kunnskap på et spesifikt felt, og den reiser viktige spørsmål som det bør forskes videre på.

For å synliggjøre bredden innenfor teknologiske fag mente vi det var viktig å kartlegge deltakernes yrkesfaglige bakgrunn. Deltakerne i studien er blant annet boreoperatører, platearbeidere, tømrere og elektrikere. For å oppfordre informantene til å gi fylldige og nyanserte fritekstsvar brukte vi mye tid på å formulere spørsmål (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). En del av svarene er stikkordspregede, så vi har normalisert språket litt, men uten å endre meningsinnholdet. Spørsmålene rettet seg mot hvilke læremidler som ble benyttet før og under nedstengingen, og hvordan nedstengingen påvirket undervisningen i yrkesfagene. Et av spørsmålene var: Hvilke praktiske arbeidsoppgaver gjennomførte elevene i perioden skolen var stengt? I andre spørsmål ønsket vi å kartlegge studentenes erfaringer med nettbasert undervisning i videregående skole før og under nedstengingen. Et av spørsmålene i denne bolken var: Ble det tatt i bruk andre læremidler under nedstengingen og kan du beskrive forskjellene fra det som ble brukt før nedstengingen? Avslutningsvis ønsket vi å få vite mer generelt hvilke erfaringer informantene hadde gjort seg i den skolestengte perioden – hvilke problemer de møtte, og hvordan de løste disse problemene. Et av spørsmålene her var: Kan du beskrive hvilken undervisningspraksis som ble gjennomført under nedstengingen av skolen?

Etiske betraktninger

Informasjon om studien ble sendt ut sammen med en invitasjon til å delta og et samtykkeskjema. Studentene ble informert om at deltakelsen var frivillig, og at prosjektet var godkjent av Norsk senter for forskningsdata (NSD). Studien har ikke undersøkt personsensitive forhold. Siden utvalget begrenset seg til 60 personer og deltakerne oppga sin yrkesbakgrunn, ble deler av informantgruppen gjenkjennbar for oss. I *vår* doble rolle som utdanningsforskere og lærerutdannere opplevde vi dermed å stå overfor et dilemma som dro inn hensynet til deltakernes integritet i *deres* doble rolle som studenter og yrkesfaglærere. To faktorer ble viktige i den etiske vurderingen av deltakernes og vår egen integritet: For det første retter ikke studien seg mot deltakernes rolle som studenter, men som yrkesfaglærere, og for det andre hadde vi ikke noen formell rolle i videregående skole utover de periodene studentene gjennomførte avtalt profesjonspraksis. Det gjorde at deltakerne kunne svare på spørreskjemaet uten risiko for å påvirke sin posisjon som student. Imidlertid var det viktig for oss å ivareta deltakernes anonymitet og integritet, slik at de ikke ble gjenkjent i den publiserte studien (se f.eks. Johannessen et al., 2010). Det at yrkesfaglærere og fagarbeidere utgjør en stor populasjon, gjorde deltakerne mindre identifiserbare. Men vi var også nøye med å ikke angi bosted eller skole i eksempler, situasjoner og sitater. Våre relasjoner til deltakerne i studien kan ha påvirket svarene deres, og vi tar forbehold om at det kan være tilfelle.

Gjennom sitt "innenfra-perspektiv" i skolen deler deltakerne personlige erfaringer fra samspill og kommunikasjon med egne elever. Dette reiser spørsmål om tredjeparts-integritet, det vil si hvorvidt elever som ikke har deltatt i studien, kan kjenne igjen beskrevne situasjoner som inkluderer dem selv eller medelever (Schmid, 2023). I forskning der man ser på samspill mellom personer, er det spesielt viktig å fjerne merkelapper som kjønn, bosted eller skole, noe vi har vært spesielt opptatt av. I forskning på sårbare barn og unge kan studier av konkrete situasjoner utløse dilemmaer knyttet til anonymitet og integritet. Samtidig er det gjerne konkrete eksempler og situasjonsbeskrivelser som kan bidra med viktig kunnskap (se f.eks. Schmid, 2023; Tangen, 2010).

Selv om deltakerne vil kunne gjenkjenne seg selv i sitater, mener vi det er lite sannsynlig at deltakerne kan spores av andre lesere. Vår samlede vurdering er at studien ivaretar personvernet og integriteten til deltakerne og til tredjepersoner som dras inn, deriblant deltakernes elever, kollegaer og ledelse.

Analyse

Med utgangspunkt i de gitte spørsmålene i spørreskjemaet fant vi inspirasjon i det Malterud (2017) kaller systematisk tekstkondensering. Metoden har en pragmatisk 4-trinns tilnærming til tverrgående analyse av kvalitative data. Informantenes svartekster fra hvert av de 12 spørsmålene ble kopiert inn i Nvivo, som er et software-program for analyse. Første fase av analysene startet med at vi leste igjennom hele datamaterialet for å få en oversikt og vurdere mulige temaer. Siden informantenes åpne svar var knyttet direkte til gitte spørsmål, var datamaterialet oversiktlig og allerede grovsortert i det vi velger å kalle meningsenheter. Eksempelet i tabell 1 viser utdrag av analysen, der deltakerne først har svart på hvilke praktiske, pedagogiske utfordringer de støtte på under nedstengingen, og deretter hvordan de løste problemene:

Tabell 1. Eksempel på grovsortering av meningsenheter.

	Hvordan løste du/dere de praktiske problemene som oppstod?
Meningsenheter	Vi kontaktet foreldrene og fikk dem til å bistå og purre på elevene.
	Telefonkontakt direkte med elevene
	Vi tok inn 1 elev til skolen og hadde en dag med assistent i tillegg
	Vi ringte de opp en og en og hadde egne undervisningsgrupper og enklere oppgaver med dem.
	Jeg ringte til elevene og snakket med dem

Eksempelet i tabell 2, viser hvordan hver enhet ble kodet, sammenlignet og deretter sortert i subgrupper (Malterud, 2017). Subgruppene viste relevante nyanser og variasjoner i materialet. En sentral del av den stegvise prosessen var å lage felles merkelapper som kjennetegnet meningsenhetene og subgruppene (se bl.a. Graneheim & Lundman, 2004):

Tabell 2. Eksempel på sortering i subgrupper.

	Lærer-/elevrelasjoner. Læreres initiativ
Subgrupper	Vi ringte de opp en og en og hadde egne undervisningsgrupper og enklere oppgaver med dem.
	Telefonkontakt direkte med elevene
	Jeg ringte til elevene og snakket med dem

I tredje fase ble innholdet i meningsenhetene kondensert, dekontekstualisert og studert i en kontinuerlig fram-og-tilbake-prosess mellom deler og helhet (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2017). Etter denne prosessen satt vi igjen med tre kodegrupper av meningsbærende enheter. I fjerde og siste fase sammenfattet vi det Malterud (2017) beskriver som kondensater, til tre analytiske tekster som representerer et utvalgt og relevant aspekt av hovedfunnene i casestudien. De tre kategoriene er sammenfattet under følgende overskrifte: teknologi, samarbeid og undervisningspraksis.

Resultater

Teknologifagenes kunnskapslogikk bygger på en uløselig sammenheng mellom yrkest teori og praksis. Funnene i denne studien indikerer at utestengingen av elevene fra skoleverkstedet utløste en reell krisesituasjon for yrkesfagelevne i teknologiske fag. En tømrerlærer sier: "Jeg mener det ikke finnes en ideell situasjon for undervisning i yrkesfag uten praksis i verksted."

Yrkesfaglærernes kontakter utad (bransjenettverk) og bedriftenes vilje til å ta inn elever i praksis er faktorer som skapte store forskjeller mellom elever i samme utdanningsløp. På den ene siden har mange elever hatt mer praksis i bedrift under nedstengingen enn i den ordinære skolehverdagen, mens andre elever har vært fullstendig isolert og ikke har hatt noe praksis. To utsagn som illustrere dette, er en elektrofaglærer, som forteller: "I perioden da skolen var stengt, hadde ikke elevene noen praktiske oppgaver." På samme spørsmål svarer en byggfaglærer: "De fleste elevene var ute i bedrift, mens noen gjorde og dokumenterte arbeid hjemme."

Et viktig aspekt som synliggjøres i studien, er hvordan elevenes yrkesutdanning ble overlatt til den enkelte lærer, og at den samme yrkesutdanningen ble gjennomført grunnleggende forskjellig. Et annet aspekt er yrkesfaglærernes bekymring over egne elevers psykiske helse i den isolasjonen som ungdommene ble påført da yrkespraksis helt eller delvis ble erstattet av digital undervisning. Studien påpeker at skolestengingen rammet de praktiske ungdommene spesielt hardt. En TEK-lærer sier: "Klassene burde vært noen dager på verkstedet fordi de elevene som har valgt dette yrket ofte er praktisk anlagt." Å bli utestengt fra skolens faglige og sosiale miljø fikk stor betydning for ungdommene. Nedstengingene, men også karantenebestemmelsene og smittevernreglene førte til at både skolene og fritidsaktiviteter ble stanset, slik at mange ungdommer ble sittende isolert hjemme i lange perioder.

Teknologi

Innledende fase av nedstengingen, fra skoleverksted til digital plattform

Da skolestengingen var et faktum 12. mars 2020, var det skolens førsteprioritet å ta i bruk digitale plattformer. Deltakerne i denne studien forteller at det i den tidlige fasen var flere elever som ikke hadde nettverk hjemme, og som heller ikke hadde råd til å installere nettverk. I noen tilfeller bidro skolene med midler for at elevene skulle kunne delta i undervisningen. Yrkesfaglærerne erfarte at elevenes digitale kompetanse ikke var så høy som forventet, og det tok lang tid å skaffe nødvendige kabler og utstyr og å få alle elevene til å koble seg til og å bruke skolens plattform. Spesielt brukte lærerne mye tid på de elevene som var lite motivert for skolen. En lærer på service og samferdsel forteller:

Mange av de elevene som ikke ønsket å være på skolen var i denne perioden vanskeligere å få med seg på Teams. Spesielt de fremmedspråklige med dårlige norsk-kunnskaper, mange av de var helt fraværende en periode. Vi ringte de opp en og en og hadde egne undervisningsgrupper og enklere oppgaver med dem, men det var vanskelig da flere var over 18 år og tok dette valget selv. Vi brukte mye tid på å få med oss disse elevene.

Dugnad og delingskultur på digitale plattformer

Plutselige og stadige endringer i smittevernreglene bidro til uforutsigbarhet og stor møtevirksomhet i skolen. I perioder gjaldt trafikklysmodellen, der fargekodene rødt, gult og grønt indikerte smittetrykket, som ga føringer for elevenes tilstedeværelse (Udir, 2022). Tiltakene fordret tidvis parallellundervisning, der lærerne hadde ansvar for en kohort elever i skolen, samtidig som de skulle ivareta en elevgruppe digitalt. De strenge karantenebestemmelsene ved mulig smitte og smitteutbrudd forårsaket stort fravær og stadig behov for avklaringer og reorganisering for å tilpasse undervisningsmetoder og -tilnærminger. Etablerte Facebook-sider for lærere og yrkesfaglærere ble et samlingspunkt der lærere fra hele landet delte erfaringer og drøftet digitale undervisningsopplegg.

Studien avdekker at yrkesfaglærernes digitale kompetanse var svært varierende. I overgangen til nettundervisning fikk mange hjelp fra datakyndige kollegaer, skolens IT-avdeling og skoleledelsen, både til å koble opp data-systemer på eget hjemmekontor og til å ta i bruk skolens digitale plattformer, for eksempel Microsoft Teams, som er en digital samarbeids- og kommunikasjons-plattform. De som fikk lite hjelp fra kollegaer og skoleledelsen, forteller at de brukte mye tid på å koble seg selv opp på Teams og deretter hjelpe elevene med å koble seg til. En lærer fra service og samferdsel forteller om store samarbeidsproblemer og mange konflikter internt på skolen: "Lærerne fikk lite bistand fra skoleledelsen, og det ble en bratt læringskurve. Lærte utrolig mye om hvordan dette kan gjøres annerledes og bedre om skolen igjen må stenge."

Fremmedgjørende yrkest teori ispedd lett underholdning

Analysene viser eksempler på hvordan heldigital undervisning førte til en oppløsning av det sosiale og faglige praksisfellesskapet i skoleverkstedet. På spørsmål om hvordan undervisningspraksisen ble gjennomført, svarer en lærer på bygg- og anleggsteknikk: "Ingen fikk verkstedpraksis eller utplassering. All undervisning ble flyttet over på Teams." En elektrofaglærer skriver: "Flere elever ble sittende ensomme på hyblene sine. Etter hvert reiste de hjem til foreldrene." Lærernes opplevelse av krisen ble forsterket av frykten for at elevene skulle slutte, noe som bekreftes av en TEK-lærer: "Elevene var på tur til å slutte på grunn av kun nettundervisning."

Den digitale undervisningen gjorde det krevende å fange opp dagsformen til elevene for å tilpasse undervisningen. Gjennom de digitale plattformene var det vanskelig å lage praktiske og yrkesrelevante oppgaver som elevene kunne arbeide med hjemme. Mye av den digitale undervisningen fikk et forelesningspreg, ved at lærerne snakket om praksis. To lærere i elektrofag bekrefter dette slik: "Elevene gjorde ingen praktiske oppgaver. All undervisning ble teoretisk." For å gjøre teorien mer praksisnær viste lærerne filmopptak av ulike arbeidsoppgaver. Men siden elevene ikke kunne delta selv, ble undervisningen kjedelig for dem. En lærer fra service og samferdsel forteller: "Vi viste film og ga elevene oppgaver, og vi brukte Kahoot for å gjøre timene mer morsomme." Gjennom ulike spill og konkurranser forsøkte lærerne å variere undervisningen og å legge mer vekt på sosiale aktiviteter som skulle gi elevene opplevelse av tilhørighet og mening i mangel på reelle arbeidsoppgaver. Filmer på YouTube ble brukt som et slags digitalt oppslagsverk, mens noen lærere svarte at lærerne spilte inn filmer som de kunne vise elevene.

En TEK-lærer streamet ordinær klasseromsundervisning der han viste elevene praktiske øvelser, motordeler, konstruksjoner eller bruk av verktøy som i en vanlig skoletime med elevene fysisk til stede. TEK-læreren forteller: "Vi brukte OneNote og Smartboard. Da hadde elevene skisser og notater fra det vi gikk

igjennom til enhver tid. Mens jeg var i klasserommet, fulgte elevene med via web-kamera.”

Begrenset digital interaksjon for yrkesfagelever

De nettbaserte løsningene i Teams og Zoom åpnet for gruppearbeid og interaksjon mellom elevene via grupperom (breakout-rooms). Enkelte benyttet skolens tilgjengelige Office-pakke til å produsere egne videoer og modeller som de delte med elevene. En yrkesfaglærer på TEK forteller: ”Vi har bygget opp mini-modeller elevene kan programmere på, større programmeringer kunne de dele programmet i OneDrive med meg, så kunne vi teste det med eleven på Teams. Så kan vi gå igjennom programmene på delt skjerm.”

Samarbeid

På nett med elevene

Under skolestengingen valgte mange elever å skru av pc-kameraet slik at de ikke var synlige for seg selv, medelever og lærer. En elektrofaglærer sier: ”Elevene deltok, men ville ikke bruke web-kamera.” Å skru av kameraet innebar at lærerens undervisning og kommunikasjon foregikk i møte med ”svarte skjermer”. Ved overgangen til nettundervisning valgte elever og studenter over hele landet å skru av kameraene sine, og fenomenet ”svarte skjermer” ble raskt et allment begrep (se f.eks. Breiby et al., 2022). At de måtte undervise uten å se elevene vakte ulike reaksjoner hos lærerne, noe som bekreftes i denne studien. Når de ikke kunne observere egne elever, ble det vanskelig for lærerne å ha dialog, korrigere og gjøre didaktiske grep underveis for å sikre at elevene forsto stoffet eller oppgaven. En annen elektrofaglærer skriver: ”Jeg fikk ikke sett elevene og kunne ikke fange opp dagsformen deres. Vanskelig å justere/tilpasse læringstrykket.”

Analysene viser at lærere tolket elevenes tilbaketrekning bak ”svarte skjermer” ulikt. En av lærerne skriver at elevene logget seg på undervisningen, men at de ikke deltok: ”Alle elevene måtte ha på kameraet da vi møttes på Teams. Vi så tidlig at elevene logget seg på, men de var ikke til stede.” Elevenes kamera-nekt førte imidlertid til at flertallet av lærerne bekymret seg for elevenes livssituasjon, og mange av lærerne i studien forteller at de oppsøkte og hadde løpende kontakt med elevene gjennom én-til-én samtaler.

Fra fellesskole til digital hjemmeskole – med ulikheter på direkten

I norsk skole er mangfold og inkludering kjerneverdier. Et overordnet mål er at forskjellene mellom barn og unge kan reduseres gjennom undervisning og samspill i fellesskolens arena. De lærerne som bisto elevene i overgangen til hjemmeskole, fikk et unikt innblikk i elevenes familie-, bo- og livssituasjon. Lærerne forteller at noen elever bodde trangt med storfamilien, og at dette

hindret arbeidsro og alenetid. Andre bodde på hybel langt fra familie og venner og var fullstendig isolert. Andre igjen bodde hos familien sin og levde et tilnærmet normalt liv. Analysene viser at lærerne var bekymret for hvordan den pålagte isolasjonen og passiviteten påvirket elevenes psykiske helse. Yrkesfaglærernes hovedfokus ble å motivere elevene til å tenke positivt og se framover. En lærer på TEK skriver: "Fokus ble på å holde positivitet rundt nettundervisningen og å holde motet til elevene oppe."

Det kan være mange grunner til at elevene vegret seg for å skru på kamera under nettundervisningen. En forklaring kan være at det var krevende å synliggjøre sitt eget ansikt og egen bo- og livssituasjon på direkten foran hele klassen.

Kommunikasjon og individuell veiledning

Yrkesfaglærerne har brukt mye tid på å kommunisere med hver elev på telefon eller Teams. Gjennom én-til-én-samtaler kunne lærerne lytte til og snakke uforstyrret med elevene. En TEK-lærer i bilfag, tunge kjøretøy skriver: "Jeg ringte dem og vi snakket sammen. Lyttet og hadde fokus på å bygge gode relasjoner." Lærerne opplevde at de fortrolige samtalene var viktige for lærer- elevrelasjonene og elevenes opplevelse av å bli sett. Dette støttes av en elektrofaglærer som forteller at han fikk bedre kontakt med elevene under nedstengingen enn han hadde hatt i den ordinære skolen: "Elevene ble påvirket av at det var mindre sosialt samvær. Jeg ringte dem og som lærer fikk jeg anledning til å snakke mer med hver enkelt elev i løpet av en arbeidsdag." Også Drugli (2017) og Moen (2016) fremhever hvordan én-til-én-samtaler mellom lærer og elev kan skape relasjonelle rom hvor ungdommene kan oppleve en trygghet de ellers ikke finner i klasserommet med andre elever til stede.

Det kommer også fram at noen elever jobbet bedre hjemme alene, ikke fordi de ikke trivdes på skolen, men fordi de fikk arbeidsro og klarte å konsentrere seg bedre om skolearbeidet. Dette framheves i følgende utsagn: "Det kan være godt for noen elever å kunne fokusere på oppgavene uten forstyrrende elementer." Én-til-én samtaler på telefon kan ha bidratt til at elevene i større grad har våget å være åpne om egne læringsbehov. Faglige og sosiale samtaler kan ha gitt mer individuell veiledning og tilpasset opplæring, noe som igjen kan ha styrket elevenes opplevelse av mestring. En elektrofaglærer utdyper det slik: "Noen elever opplevde større læringsutbytte, andre mindre. Jeg fikk mer tid til elevsamtaler og gjennomgang av arbeidet de hadde utført. Det blir gjort i mindre grad på skolen sammen med elevene, da det fort blir mye uro i klassen om jeg tar med en elev ut."

Det at lærer og elev snakket sammen om framtiden, om muligheten for praksisplass og lærekontrakt, kan ha vært viktig for å hjelpe elevene til å se framover og til å se nytten av å jobbe med skolearbeidet.

Undervisningspraksis

Forsøk på elevaktiviteter i hjemmet

Analysene i studien viser at digitale plattformer alene var en begrenset læringsarena for elever på de praktiske, tekniske yrkesutdanningene. Yrkesfaglærerne gjorde mange forsøk på å lage oppgaver som elevene kunne gjøre hjemme eller ute i nærmiljøet. Mens enkelte oppgaver var yrkesrelevante, handlet oppgavene like mye om å fylle elevenes dager med aktiviteter. En tømrerlærer skriver: "Problemet var å finne praktisk arbeid til elevene. Vi prøvde alt, fra å vanne blomster til å slå på en list eller å lese fagblader." En elektrofaglærer skriver: "Et eksempel på yrkesrelevant praksis var kartlegging og vurdering av energisparingstiltak i egen bolig, eller oppmåling, tegning og beregning av areal." Yrkesfaglærerne forteller at det var opp til dem selv å planlegge og gjennomføre undervisningsinnhold. Opplæringen ble dermed sterkt preget av enkeltlæreres erfaringer, kreativitet og nettverk, samt av elevenes bosted og ressurser i familien.

Usikkerheten over hvor lenge nedstengingen skulle vare, samt tapet av praksisplass i YFF og faren for å miste læreplassen var en bekymring som kan ha gått ut over elevenes motivasjon og fremtidstro. Den nasjonale nedstengingen gjorde det vanskelig å omgå reglene, selv i områder uten smitte. Studien viser imidlertid kun ett eksempel på at elever som sto i særlig fare for å slutte, fikk tilgang til skoleverkstedet: "Vi tok inn 1 elev til skolen og hadde en dag med assistent i tillegg. Det var en elev som var i ferd med å slutte."

Skole og hjem spiller på lag

Ved å kontakte elevenes foresatte fikk lærerne flere foresatte til å bidra med praktiske oppgaver som elevene kunne gjøre i hjemmet eller hos familie og venner. Også en oppfordring til de foresatte om å ta i bruk nettverket sitt genererte mer eller mindre yrkesrelevante praktiske oppgaver og småreparasjoner, og en lærer på TEK skriver: "Elevene var ute og reparerte diverse ting i nabolaget, alt fra gressklippere til traktorer." En tømrerlærer forteller om foreldre som veiledet elevene hjemme: "De som hadde foreldre i byggebransjen, fikk kjørt hjem påbegynte oppgaver (utemøbler med mer) og ferdigstilte dem hjemme i egen garasje."

Praksis i bedrift, eller ingen praksis

Under nedstengingen og i tiltaksperiodene var det bedrifter som vegret seg for å ta inn elever i praksis på grunn av smittefaren. Studien bekrefter at mange elever av den grunn ikke fikk tilbud om opplæring i bedrift i YFF-faget, slik at yrkesfaglærerne måtte finne alternativ opplæring til elevene i disse timene også. Andre bedrifter valgte tvert imot å ta inn elever både i YFF og i PF. Mange bedrifter i byggenæringen tok imot elevene: "Vi startet på Teams, men allerede

etter påske var de fleste elevene ute i bedrift”, forteller en tømrerlærer. En antakelse vi har, er at bedriftenes vilje til å ha elever i praksis kan ha sammenheng med lokalt smittetrykk. Mens Østlandet og enkeltområder i Norge opplevde et høyt smittetrykk, var det andre områder som var nær sagt smittefrie. Dette illustreres godt gjennom beskrivelsen til en annen tømrerlærer: ”All undervisning ble flyttet over på Teams. Elevene hadde ingen verkstedpraksis eller praksis i bedrift.” Studien bekrefter dermed et stort sprik mellom opplæringen av elever innenfor samme utdanningsprogram.

Diskusjon

Utestengte yrkesfagelever i krise

Hensikten med denne artikkelen var å undersøke hvordan yrkesfaglærere i teknologiske fag gjennomførte undervisningspraksisen sin gjennom de fullstendige og delvise nedstengingene av videregående skoler våren og høsten 2020. Analysen har vist at digital nettundervisning var passiviserende og en lite egnet læringsform for yrkesfagelever i teknologiske utdanninger. Den nasjonale nedstengingen førte dessuten til svært ulik gjennomføring av undervisningspraksis i de teknologiske utdanningsprogrammene. I tillegg til å være utestengt fra skolen var en tredel av elevene også utestengt fra praksisbedriften i faget YFF. To tredeler av elevene hadde imidlertid mer praksis i bedrift enn i den ordinære skolehverdagen.

For det første indikerer funnene at manglende praksismuligheter og det store timeantallet som var basert på praktisk opplæring, gjorde at yrkesfaglærerne fikk en krevende undervisningssituasjon. Med elevene på hjemmeskole, forsøkte lærerne å erstatte yrkespraksis med faglige beskrivelser, teknisk tegning eller skriftlige oppgaver, ofte supplert med relevante bilder eller film. De digitale flatene ga imidlertid ikke elevene anledning til å involvere seg i eller utføre praktiske handlinger selv, noe som begrenset deres muligheter til å forstå den kompleksiteten som ligger taus og implisitt i det prosessuelle konstruksjonsarbeidet (Polanyi, 1958, 2000).

Funnene indikerer at den digitale undervisningen førte til stillesitting og passivitet. Hjemme foran pc-skjermen var elevene forhindret fra å delta i de faglige og sosiale konstruksjonene som oppstår underveis i det praktiske arbeidet i verkstedet. I tråd med det Koronautvalget (NOU 2023:16) og Andersen et al. (2021) finner i sine rapporter, erfarte yrkesfaglærerne i denne studien at elevene opplevde seg sårbare i den digitale hjemmeskolen. I den tette kontakten som oppsto mellom dem og elevene, erfarte lærerne at flere elever sto i fare for ikke å fullføre utdanningen. Det førte til at yrkesfaglærerne brukte mye tid på å bygge støttende og positive relasjoner med elevene. At dette har hatt stor betydning for

de sårbare elevene, er noe som blant annet understøttes av Drugli (2012), som hevder at relasjonsskapende arbeid kan fremme risikoutsatte elevers motivasjon for å jobbe og lære. Særlig gjelder dette elever som har lite egenmotivasjon. At elevgruppene til de undersøkte yrkesfaglærerne hadde liten egenmotivasjon, var noe lærerne gjenkjente under nedstengingene. Men ved å oppsøke elevene enkeltvis viste lærerne at de brydde seg om eleven og at de hadde forventninger til at eleven gjorde lekser og jobbet med skolearbeidet. At dette er viktig, støttes av tidligere forskning som har vist at lærerens forventninger kan ha avgjørende betydning for elevenes motivasjon og ønske om å fullføre utdanningen (Schmid et al., 2021). Med pandemien i bakspeilet, er det viktig å huske at ingen samtaler foregår i et emosjonelt vakuum og at pandemien og skolestengingen kan ha utløst følelser som frykt, oppgitthet eller maktesløshet. Dette er faktorer som kan ha gjort den genuine samtalen mulig (Arneberg & Overland, 2023). Funnene indikerer at én-til-én-samtalene gjorde lærerne mer oppmerksomme på elevenes sårbarhet, og motiverte yrkesfaglærerne til å finne kreative løsninger for å øke elevaktiviteten.

Møte med elevenes avstengte skjermer skapte bekymring blant yrkesfaglærerne, og studien viser at uroen for elevene gjorde at yrkesfaglærerne hadde mye direkte kontakt med elevene på telefon eller Teams. Gjennom den direkte kontakten med elevene fikk yrkesfaglærerne innsyn i elevenes svært forskjellige bakgrunn, og bo- og familieforhold. Et viktig spørsmål som reises i studien, er om elevenes sårbarhet også kan knyttes til den digitale hjemmeskolen, der elevene, deres ressurser og livssituasjon ble direktesendt ut til medelever og lærere. Ansikt til ansikt med klassen befant ungdommene seg i en krevende sosial posisjon, fjernt fra det naturlige samspillet og samarbeidet i skolens klasserom eller verksted, der elevene i langt større grad kan verne sine private grenser. Via kamera ble elevenes hjemssituasjon synlig på en måte som kan ha virket invaderende og framstått som en trussel mot ungdommens personvern og integritet. Det er ikke eksplisitt undersøkt om det er sammenheng mellom den digitale eksponeringen av elevene og den økingen i mobbing og ekskludering som fant sted under og etter pandemien (NOU 2023:16), men forstått på denne måten kan den digitale hjemmeskolen ha utløst en situasjon som vi foreslår å kalle Norges største sosiale eksperiment i moderne tid. For å skjerme seg, kan elevenes løsning ha vært å skru av kamera og lyd. Dette reiser en problemstilling som vi mener det bør forskes videre på.

Funnene i studien viser at majoriteten av yrkesfaglærerne, til tross for den nasjonale nedstengingen, planla og fulgte opp praktiske og elevaktive læringsoppgaver. Yrkesfaglærernes tidligere arbeidserfaring fra robuste arbeidsmiljøer i industri- eller bygg- og anleggsnæringen kan ha gjort dem bedre forberedt på å løse de dilemmaene som oppsto under skolestengingen. Ifølge Billett (2011) foregår læring i arbeidslivet tradisjonelt ved å ta i bruk, overlapp og overføre

eksisterende yrkeskunnskaper til nye kontekster for å løse nye oppgaver. Studien gir kreative eksempler på hvordan yrkesfaglærerne mobiliserte foresatte, som tok i bruk eget nettverk og engasjerte nabolag, venner og familie, slik at elevene kunne gjøre små reparasjoner og oppgaver. For å få elevene ut av den ensomme og passive tilværelsen har man latt noen elever delta i praktisk arbeid i hjemmet, mens andre elever har fått bygget ferdig elevoppgaver hjemme. Samtidig synliggjør funnene i studien at det er store forskjeller i gjennomføringen av samme utdanning. Mens noen bedrifter nær sagt overtok hele opplæringsansvaret for elevene, var det andre som stengte dørene helt på grunn av smittefaren for egne ansatte. I denne sammenhengen er det sannsynlig at forskjellig smittetrykk i ulike deler av landet, er en faktor som kan ha påvirket bedriftenes muligheter for å ta imot elever i praksis.

Om forfatterne

Forfatterne står oppført i alfabetisk rekkefølge og har bidratt like mye i arbeidet med artikkelen.

Frode Torgeir Andersson er universitetslektor ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet der han underviser og veileder ved yrkesfaglærerutdanningen, teknologiske fag. Han er tilknyttet forskningsgruppen Bærekraft og teknologi i arbeid og læring. Andersson forsker på digitalisering og hvordan teknologiske endringer påvirker fag- og yrkesopplæringen.

Marit Lensjø er førsteamanuensis ved OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet der hun underviser og veileder ved yrkesfaglærerutdanningen, teknologiske fag. Hun er tilknyttet forskningsgruppen Bærekraft og teknologi i arbeid og læring. Lensjøes forskningstilnærming er fenomenologi (kroppsliggjort kunnskap) og etnografi i fag- og yrkesopplæring i videregående skole og arbeidsliv, samt i yrkesfaglærerutdanning/høyere yrkesfaglig utdanning.

John Eivind Storvik er universitetslektor og ph.d.-stipendiat ved Nord universitet i Bodø der han underviser på yrkesfaglærerutdanningen og master i yrkesdidaktikk. Han forsker på yrkesfaglæreres kompetanseutvikling og var initiativtaker til forskningsgruppen Læring og teknologi. Hans hoved-interesse er hvordan teknologi kan fremme læring.

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A holistic student-centred guidance framework supports Finnish vocational education and training students in building competence identity

Anu Raudasoja¹, Soili Rinne² & Sanna Heino²

¹Järviseuutu Vocational Institute, Finland

²Häme University of Applied Sciences, Finland

(anu.raudasoja@jamin.fi)

Abstract

This study deals with competence-based and student-centered Finnish initial vocational education and training (IVET). The main research question is how holistic guidance supports the building of the student's competence identity in Finnish IVET. The holistic guidance in competence- and work-based vocational education and training is formally implemented when a personal competence development plan (PCDP) is drawn up for each student and informally in various interaction situations in studies, work, and leisure time. The guidance actors supported student's personal growth, guided learning and provided career guidance. For this study, interviews were carried out with IVET students (n=15) and IVET teachers (n=29). The analysis carried out combined data-based and abductive qualitative content analysis methods. In the analysis results, the different guidance actors were organised into the following five levels of guidance: 1) IVET teachers, tutors, and workplace instructors, 2) IVET study counsellors and special needs teachers, 3) student welfare personnel, 4) leisure time actors and hobby instructors, and 5) employment specialists. Based on the results, a framework was designed for holistic student-centred guidance in Finnish IVET. This framework describes how active student agency and multidisciplinary guidance work can support the building and updating of the student's competence identity. This study revealed that guidance processes are complex and highlights that many actors are, not only guidance specialists, needed to fulfil the task.

Keywords: holistic guidance, initial vocational qualifications, competence identity, guidance framework, student-oriented guidance



Introduction

Common objectives and principles for lifelong guidance have been drawn up for the member states of the European Union. In these, the objective of career and study guidance in vocational education and training (VET) is defined as supporting students in making meaningful and successful choices, decisions and solutions in their careers and educational choices (European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network, 2016, p. 34; see also Vuorinen, 2017). However, the current concepts of guidance emphasise the students' active role as a person building their own lives. Guidance can thus be defined as a comprehensive state of self-knowledge and agency development and life planning (Kettunen et al. 2020; McLeod, 2013; Vehviläinen, 2014) rather than as a process that supports successful education and career choices. The present discussion highlights that guidance should also concentrate on learning in the actual guidance processes (see e.g., Bergmo-Prvulovic, 2022; Thomsen, 2014), to support individuals' career competences and their wellbeing.

Student guidance can be defined as work that crosses disciplinary boundaries and has at its core the strengthening of the client's agency in a way that increases their overall wellbeing (Onnismaa, 2007; Vehviläinen, 2014, p. 24). Multidisciplinary guidance is viewed as a network of student service arrangements both within and between organisations (Helander et al., 2020, p. 5; Korhonen & Nieminen, 2010). In workplace- and customer-oriented VET in Finland (Räisänen & Goman, 2018, p. 9), student guidance is multidisciplinary cooperation that considers all the areas of life in which the person operates, as profession and work are only one part of a person's life career (Korhonen & Nieminen, 2010; Vanhalakka-Ruoho, 2015, pp. 39–54).

VET provides a framework for multidisciplinary and holistic guidance that encompasses the whole of life, as the student's guidance process often involves many different actors, including study counsellors and teachers at educational institutions, instructors for work-based learning, and the student's family and friends (cf. European Commission, 2020, p. 31; Korhonen & Nieminen, 2010; Musset & Kurekova, 2018). It is essential to consider how different actors can contribute to supporting the student's agency in relation to their different guidance needs. The roles adopted by professionals are often predefined as very set and working across boundaries of expertise is not always easy (Akkerman & Bruining, 2016; Bergmo-Prvulovic, 2015, pp. 3–8; Isoherranen, 2012, pp. 110–112).

The actors involved in student's guidance may have very different guidance goals (cf. Magee et al., 2022, pp. 273–274) at either the conscious or unconscious level. In the transition that has taken place in career guidance from sharing information to the communal exploration of guidance-related questions, the role of guidance professionals is no longer the role of a content expert, but rather of an expert in processes and communal spaces (Kettunen, 2017, pp. 18–20; see also

Bakke et al., 2018, p. 52; Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014, pp. 13–15). Guidance services should be clear, multi-channel and individualised so that all parties involved are aware of how guidance and support services are implemented and who is implementing them (Karusaari, 2020, p. 150).

Vocational education and training in Finland includes initial, further, and specialist qualifications and also preparatory training. Finnish initial vocational education and training's (IVET) main purpose is to prepare people with competences in order to entry into the world of work or, for adults, specific occupations. The Finnish vocational education supports continuous learning, offering methods to improve skills for life, work, and further studies. In the Finnish VET, personalisation processes play an important role in holistic guidance. The process starts with a guidance session, where the qualifications competence objectives, student's life situation and future goals are discussed to find the best ways to achieve the student's goals and support learning. As part of personalisation, a personal competence development plan (PCDP) is drawn up which includes the planning of the competence to be acquired, and the guidance and support measures required by the student (Finlex Data Bank, 2017).

The impetus to conduct this study came from the changes that have taken place in VET (see Cedefop 2019a, pp. 23–25, 2019b, pp. 10–11; European Union, 2020), changes through which guidance has been and continues to be undergoing a transformation.

The aim of this study is to describe how the implementation of holistic guidance in Finnish IVET supports building the student's competence identity.

A holistic model for student-oriented guidance

Watts and Van Esbroeck (1998) have created a holistic student-centred guidance model which takes account of both the different levels of guidance and different guidance roles (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000). Using this holistic guidance model, it is possible to form an overall understanding of the actors and their areas of responsibility as well as the content areas of the guidance. In Finland, the model has been used a lot and it has been applied and modified to reflect the Finnish education system and the world of living. In the model (Figure 1), guidance actors' range of tasks and guidance content areas are related to the student's holistic guidance needs (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 10; Koskela & Rantanen, 2020, p. 121).

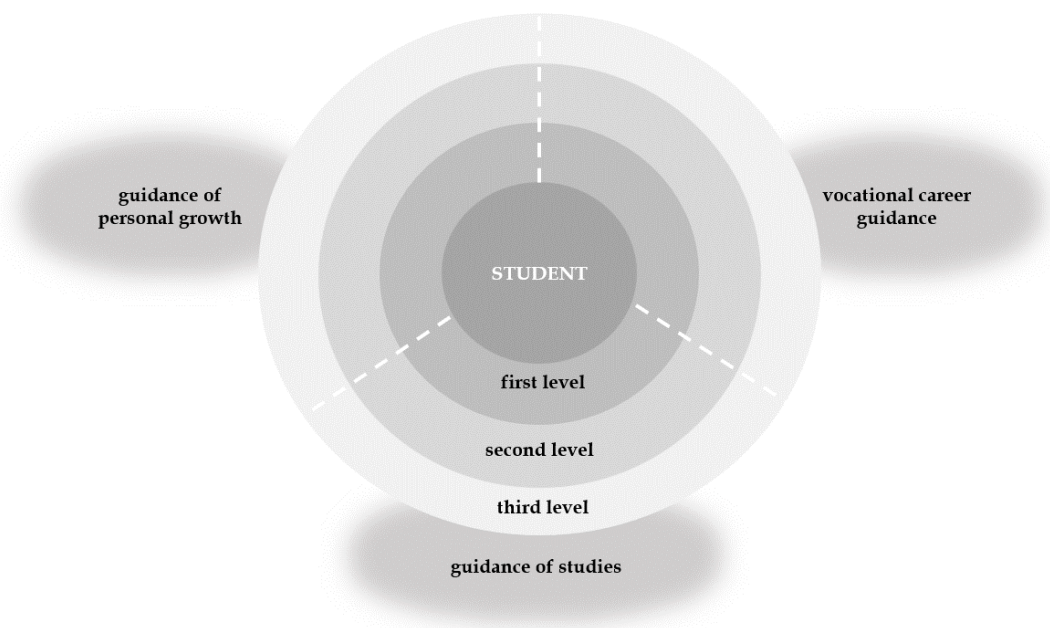


Figure 1. Framework for a holistic student-centred guidance model adapted to Finnish IVET (cf. Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 10; Koskela & Rantanen, 2020, p. 121; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998, p. 23).

The starting points for the holistic student-centred guidance model are the student's need for guidance, the accessibility of guidance services in terms of both location and availability, pre-emption of problems, and multi-professional cooperation (Ala-Krekola-Suni, 2012, p. 35). In the model, the guidance content areas are study guidance, professional career guidance, and personal growth guidance (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998, p. 22). These three content areas of guidance are interrelated and interconnected (Ala-Krekola-Suni, 2012, p. 35).

Study guidance supports the student's agency and choices, especially when studying and learning. Professional career guidance supports professional development, career choices and transitions in working life. Personal growth guidance means supporting the person's life situation and clarifying the related personal and social questions. The model emphasises the overlapping nature of the content areas, cooperation between guidance actors and the holistic nature of guidance issues from the perspective of the individual (Vanhalakka-Ruoho, 2014, p. 35; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998, p. 22).

The different guidance actors are grouped into three different levels, the first of which is part of formal teaching (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000), which in this case means IVET. This first level includes teaching staff, such as vocational teachers and tutors, who interact regularly and closely with the student in the teaching and learning processes (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 12; Watts & Van

Esbroeck, 2000, p. 178). Teaching staff should provide guidance to the student in each content area of the holistic guidance model (Tuomela et al., 2020).

At the second level are the actors linked to teaching within a vocational institution, such as study counsellors, special needs teachers, and student affairs office personnel, who each have guidance tasks. They are often specialists within the educational institution, and their guidance work focuses on more individual, personal guidance and on resolving problems (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 12; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000, p. 178). IVET teachers guide their students towards these second level support services and operate also as guidance partners in multidisciplinary cooperation (Koskela & Rantanen, 2020, pp. 120–121).

At the third level, there are various differentiated actors who specialise in different guidance content areas. These third-level actors include people who support personal growth – such as a public health nurses, social workers, and psychologists – as well as actors in vocational and workplace guidance, such as career counsellors and workplace instructors. This third guidance level includes specialised guidance actors who are not involved in direct pedagogical activities, but support students' learning in many ways (Herranen & Penttilä, 2008, p. 12; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000, p. 178).

Guidance that supports the building of competence identities

The aim of education is to develop the functional capacity of future citizens and therefore guiding the identity process as a tool and a conscious goal of teaching is justified (Ropo, 2015, s. 29). Identity is built through social processes in a variety of contexts, meaning through relationships with other people and groups of people. A personal identity is what an individual wants to present about themselves in different situation. When telling about themselves and their lives, the students build their personal identity. Everyone relates their own personal identity to the identity which is given or offered to them by others (Rodgers & Scott, 2008; Virkkala, 2020, pp. 145–146)

The concept of competence identity is based on Christiansen's (1999) conception of competence, which is an identity based on one's skills and abilities. He describes the building of identity as a process where the individual acquires new competence and compensates for possible shortcomings by acquiring the extra skills needed alongside their existing competence (Christiansen, 1999, pp. 553–554). The building of competence identity is based on constructivist theory of learning, in which the student builds new knowledge based on previous knowledge as a result of his or her own actions (cf. Geurts & Meijers, 2009, p. 491; Virkkala, 2020, p. 146).

In connection with competence-based training, competence identity has been examined from the perspective of being and doing (Gonsalves & Zaidi, 2016; Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2012, pp. 1185–1186). One example of this would be

competence-based practical nurse training in which the aim is both to become a practical nurse in terms of one's competence and also to have the identity of a practical nurse in different roles and communities (cf. Colley et al., 2003, p. 23; Gonsalves & Zaidi, 2016; Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2012, pp. 1185–1186). From the perspective of competence identity, VET is about a process of growth towards a particular professional identity, with the training providing comprehensive support to this growth process (Colley et al., 2003).

The building and updating of competence identity can be supported by developing the student's views of themselves as a learner, expert, and worker (Figure 2). Different views of one's own agency and competence – which take shape through interaction and feedback – support the students in achieving their goals (cf. Ahlgren & Tett, 2010; Jarvis-Selinger et al., 2012, pp. 1185–1186). Different views support students to understand their own competencies and developmental needs and means more deeply. From the perspective of agency and competence building, it is important that the student recognises their own competence and can set goals related to their studies (Colley et al., 2003; Hegna, 2019; Raudasoja et al., 2019). Being a student supports the learner's ability to influence the ways they acquire competence and the emphases of their studies (Klotz et al., 2014; Raudasoja et al., 2019). When an individual is aware of what knowledge and skills they need to develop throughout their life, they can be helped to define how, where, when, and through whom they can acquire new knowledge and skills (Savickas et al., 2009, pp. 244–245).

Competence identity is built and shaped through interaction in social environments, and it is closely connected to agency and competence (Raudasoja et al., 2019). Building a competence identity is a multidimensional, multi-layered, dynamic process that extends through the whole of life and involves the individual as an active agent in identifying their own competence (Raudasoja et al., 2021). In this study competence identity is viewed as an ongoing process in which the different guidance actors support students – to acquire new competencies, in their personal growth and achieve a deeper understanding of themselves as learners, experts, and professionals.

From the perspective of building a student's mosaic-like competence identity, workplace-orientated and competence-based competence acquisition are important for being able to construct one's role as an expert in different learning and work communities and to assess one's activities comprehensively in relation to the requirements of working life (cf. Ferm, 2021; Hegna, 2019; Klotz et al., 2014; Raudasoja et al., 2019). During their IVET training, the learners acquire competence that enables them to find employment in tasks that correspond to their competence both now and in the future (Ahlgren & Tett, 2010; Gonsalves & Zaidi, 2016; Raudasoja et al., 2019).

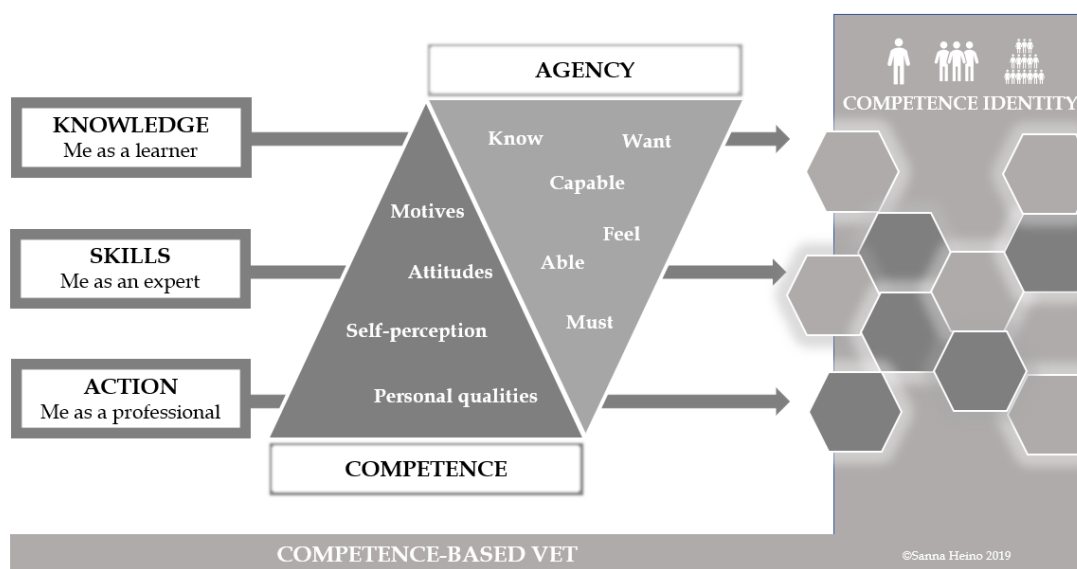


Figure 2. Building competence identity in competence-based VET (Raudasoja et al., 2019).

Research data and analysis

Data collection

The purpose of the study was to describe how holistic guidance supports the student's competence identity in Finnish competence- and work-based IVET by interviewing students and teachers in IVET. Research permits were obtained from the four IVET institutions. We had a contact person in all four IVET institutions who send invitation letters to students and vocational teachers, representing as wide differentiation in gender, background, and professional field as possible. The interviewees gave their consent for the interviews. In total, 44 people participated in the interviews. Of these, 15 were IVET students (7 men and 8 women), and 29 were vocational teachers (12 men and 17 women). The interviews with teachers lasted around 45 minutes and the student interviews lasted around 30 minutes. The three interviewers were the authors of this article, who have previously worked as teachers in IVET but were not known to the interviewees.

The main question of the study was: How can a holistic student-centred guidance model support the building of the student's competence identity in Finnish initial vocational qualifications? The answer to this question was sought out using the following sub-questions:

1. What were IVET students' perceptions on their holistic guidance needs and guidance actors?
2. What holistic guidance roles did the teachers feel they had in Finnish initial vocational qualifications?
3. What kind of framework could describe students' holistic guidance needs?

The data was collected as semi-structured thematic interviews with teachers and students in IVET during the years 2018 and 2019. The interview questions were based on the personalisation of Finnish vocational education and training, which is defined in legislation. All the interviews included the same key themes in the personal study plan which are previously acquired competence, acquiring missing competence in different learning environments, demonstrating competence, details of guidance and support measures, and the student's future plans, but the exact form of the questions and the order of the topics varied (Hirsjärvi et al., 2004). The interview questions provided the information for the research questions, both regarding the implementation of holistic guidance and the development of competence identity in IVET. The information obtained during an interview is always tied to the particular research environment, which in this case is IVET and the holistic guidance carried out there in the building of the student's competence identity, which is of interest for this particular research (Silverman, 1993, pp. 90–114). What stood out in the interviews was the interviewees' experiences of the matter being studied and their ability and willingness to discuss the topic (Kylmä & Juvakka, 2007, pp. 79–80). The research has been carried out according to the criteria set for scientific research (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2019).

Methodological approaches of analysis

In this study the analysis method was abductive qualitative content analysis, which is located in between inductive and deductive approach. The abductive approach considers inductive reasoning and a theoretical framework when carrying out the analysis. This study examined the respondents' views on the building of competence identity and on teachers views on their guidance tasks and roles from holistic student-centred guidance and the responses were mirrored to the theoretical framework and experience-based knowledge obtained in practice (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, pp. 113–117). The theoretical approach of the analysis had not been decided before the interviews, so it did not guide the interview themes. The theoretical analysis is implied and involved certain theoretical linkages, such as the holistic guidance model (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 10; Koskela & Rantanen, 2020, p. 121; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998, p. 23) and the competence identity model (Raudasoja et al., 2019) used as the framework for this study. The theoretical frameworks helped to code the

data, combine them, and create new levels of guidance to suit Finnish initial vocational qualifications (cf. Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, pp. 98–99). The goal is to search for a new way of theorising about the phenomenon.

The steps applied in the abductive qualitative content analysis were:

1. In the first phase of the analysis, the material was carefully examined in order to form an overview.
2. In the second phase the data were classified and coded into a table using the Excel software, applying a theory based on the Watts and Van Esbroeck (1998, p. 23), Koskela and Rantanen (2020, p. 121), and Herranen and Penttinen (2008, p. 10) frameworks, where the scope of the guidance actors' range of tasks and guidance content areas are related to the student's holistic guidance need. At this point, it was noticed that the framework needed to be reformulated to suit Finnish IVET. The ideal framework was modified to suit Finnish competence- and work-based IVET by adding two new levels, and actors were relocated at different levels, based on empirical findings, considering the students' and teachers' perspectives. Then were checked that the text extracts corresponded to the topics of the holistic guidance new five levels.
3. In the third phase the data were analysed from the perspective of the building of the competence identity model (Raudasoja et al., 2019, and it was ensured that the compilation table contains all the important information.
4. The fourth phase examined how the holistic guidance model supports the development of students' competence identity (cf. Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2002, pp. 113–117).

Research results

We present the results of the abductive content analysis in three parts according to the research questions. First, we look at what kind of guidance needs students have and from whom they receive guidance. Secondly, we look at what kind of guidance roles vocational teachers have. After this, we present the results of how the holistic guidance model supports the construction of the student's competence identity in vocational education.

IVET students' perceptions on their holistic guidance needs and guidance actors

Students receive guidance in competence-based IVET from many different people according to their personal situation. Key persons in terms of studies are vocational teachers, tutors, workplace instructors, study counsellors, and special needs teachers. Special support and guidance are provided by special needs

teachers and guidance counsellors and, in relation to wellbeing, also by student welfare personnel. In addition, some students receive support from people related to leisure time and hobbies, as well as employment experts.

Guidance offered by IVET teachers, tutors, and workplace instructors

The planning of student's initial vocational qualification studies began with a personalisation process in which study paths corresponding to their needs were shaped in cooperation with them as part of the personal competence development plan (PCDP), which was then updated whenever needed, and at least once a year, as the studies progressed. The students described to the IVET teachers their own life story, their different life stages, and their roles in different contexts, at the same time shaping an image of themselves as a learner and expert. Through this, they also got to know themselves better, strengthened their own positive agency, and constructed their own competence identity in interaction with the teacher. One student spoke of their PCDP in the following way:

So, the original PCDP was like a basic solution for the whole thing. So, my PCDP was set up so that [...] first I had to do the normal studies, but then I progressed a bit faster than all the others, so my PCDP was adapted, and the catering studies were added. Then after a year the general upper secondary school part was taken out ... so now it's like I have a completely personal study plan. (Student 16)

As part of the personalisation process, the students had assessed, together with the IVET teacher, the competence they had previously acquired, and what guidance, support, or possible special support measures the student needed, considering their entire life situation. They felt that they were heard and were able to influence the content of their studies if they so desired. One student described the processing of making the PCDP in the following way:

Everyone learns best in different ways. When making a PCDP, the focus should be on how this student would learn best. (Student 3)

Students acquire new competence – which gets recorded in their PCDP – through various formal and non-formal learning environments within either their VET institution, workplace, or free time. However, concrete doing in social interaction with others and under the guidance of teachers, instructors, and workplace instructors emerged as the most important form of acquiring competence in both VET institutions and workplaces. One student explained their preferred way of acquiring competence:

I learn best by doing it. It's just so good here because it's not just theory, so I remember it better. (Student 8)

Acquiring competence in the workplace was for the students a meaningful experience that increased self-efficacy and supported the student in developing

positive agency and building their competence identity (Goman et al., 2021). The students expressed the desire to be spending enough time in the workplace under good supervision. They defined good instruction as a process in which the instructors first show how it is done, then they themselves get to try it out and experiment, thus accumulating competence and developing their vocational skills. One student gave the following perspective on a successful training agreement period:

I got a lot more from the on-the-job-learning than I get from school – they do things differently there than how the teachers explain it. (Student 6)

The students also described the individual study paths shaped through the personalisation process, which involved personal solutions developed together with the teacher and workplace instructor based on the needs of both the student and the workplace. This allowed the students to assess their role as learners, experts, and workers and to construct their own activities comprehensively in relation to workplace requirements. One student described competence acquisition, guidance, and documentation as follows:

I've been in an on-the-job-learning now for four months straight. During my first year, I also had a two-month stretch in the workplace. We use Kotopro [an online tool for documentation], in which I upload pictures of work sites and jobs so that the teachers can follow what I'm doing. At the same time, this also means I can see myself for what I have done. (Student 10)

The students planned their professional future and lifelong learning by creating scenarios for their study path and building their competence identity. They were able to describe what knowledge and skills they needed to achieve their goal. Some students described clear decisions they had made about professional specialisation. An example of this is the following thought from a student who was completing a double degree:

So, my plan is that I focus on general upper secondary school and with those qualifications I apply to study psychology at university. If I don't get in, then maybe I'll work for a little while. Perhaps I'll do my military service. (Student 6)

The students felt that teachers supported their personal growth by supporting different life situations and by finding solutions for organising the studies in a different way. This is illustrated by the following student's account:

Most of them have been really encouraging and motivating, and if you have any problems in your personal life, they are really understanding, and you can openly ask for more time for something if you need it. I'd say they've been really supportive; the teachers have – in all different ways – at least for me. (Student 16)

Guidance offered by IVET study counsellors and special needs teachers

The students felt that they needed information, advice, and guidance from the IVET study counsellor to support the progress of their studies, so that they would be aware of what they needed to do and where to find the necessary information. The students considered it important to monitor their studies regularly together with the IVET teachers and IVET study counsellors in order to make sure that everything was done as it should be. One student explained their own situation as follows:

I would need more guidance. Yesterday, I went through with the IVET study counsellor some requirements that I had never heard about before. It seems that the student-teacher communication hasn't gone so well. And so now, in my final year, I'm starting to panic because I should be graduating in the spring but suddenly these surprises come along. If I had been more systematic with it, however, things would be better now. (Student 3)

The students would also have needed support and guidance to obtain the special support planned for them. The need for support and guidance had been specified in the PCDP as part of the personalisation process, but the necessary cooperation between the IVET teacher and the vocational special needs teacher had not taken place because the information had not been passed on to the special needs teacher (Goman et al., 2021). One student described thus the situation for themselves and their friends:

It was good that my reading disorder was discussed in the beginning, but then nothing was done about it - the talk should lead to action. I have managed OK, but I have friends who cannot manage alone without guidance and haven't found for themselves a learning method that works. (Student 3)

Guidance offered by student welfare personnel in IVET

The students considered it important that they can process questions related to their own studies, wellbeing, and health with persons not involved in their education programme, as part of the support for their personal growth. The importance of student welfare personnel was clearly visible in the way they helped students find their own strengths and resources and then learn to utilise these in developing their agency and building competence identity. One student offered the following perspective on their situation after receiving such support:

Daring to take on new challenges and not just staying at the starting line. (Student 3)

The support of student welfare personnel in maintaining and promoting student motivation was considered significant for promoting agency and progress in studies. The students had received guidance and started to understand the connections between learning at the VET institution and at the workplace as part

of a broader framework. This insight led to the following statement from one student:

The motivation that pushes you onwards here at school is important [for working life]. (Student 5)

Guidance offered by leisure time actors and hobby instructors

In the process of acquiring competence in line with their degree requirements and PCDP, students utilised opportunities for ubiquitous learning and hybrid leisure operating environments also during evenings, weekends, and holidays. In the verification and recognition of this competence, leisure time actors and hobby instructors worked in cooperation with teachers. One nursing student described how they had acquired professional competence during their free time:

I coach football 2-3 times a week. I have learnt about children through football - I know how to deal with them. (Student 1)

On the other hand, competence acquired during free time also developed the students' generic skills, such as group work, communication, and problem-solving skills. As in the student's example below, this competence can be acquired by taking care of shared matters in the VET institution and/or in wider society:

I was a tutor in comprehensive school and on the board of the student union, I am in the regional youth council and am aiming to become a tutor, and I'm now on the board of the student union again. (Student 8)

Guidance offered by employment specialists

In IVET, employment was an important goal for many students, and some of them were already in employment alongside their vocational studies. From the student perspective, the most familiar employers were the instructors and personnel managers at on-the-job learning environments - people they had got to know through on-the-job learning and then received both substitute work as well as evening, weekend, and summer work. The employment prospects were not strong in all sectors, so the students felt it was important to establish relationships with workplaces where they were acquiring competence, receiving professional career guidance, and getting support for personal growth. Under the teachers' guidance, the students also familiarised themselves with recruitment companies and the possibilities for subsidised employment. One student described their process of finding employment in the following words:

During my last on-the-job-learning, I got a job at an old people's home and now I got a summer job there. (Student 7)

IVET teachers and their roles in the holistic guidance framework

What kind of guidance roles did the IVET teachers have? Based on the qualitative content analysis of the IVET teacher interview material, three key objectives were found for the teachers' guidance roles:

- Supporting growth
- Guidance of learning
- Career guidance

Supporting growth means that IVET teachers support the student's growth into a civilised person and a member of society as the Finnish law of VET requires. Guidance of learning means supporting the student's operational capabilities, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that influence learning and maintain motivation to study. Career guidance supports the student's agency, professional development, choices, and transitions to working life.

Supporting growth

In this study IVET teachers and tutors/instructors are seen as supporters of the student's growth because they interacted closely with the student in the process of competence acquisition (see also Goman et al., 2021). Some VET institutions had experimented with a system in which VET teachers acted as students' personal tutors throughout their studies. The personal tutor offered the student holistic guidance, in which the whole life situation and related personal matters were discussed. One IVET teacher described the role of the personal tutor as follows:

The person who sees the student every day, supervises them and makes a plan for them. (Teacher 19)

IVET teachers were strongly involved in supporting the student's life management through guidance and support as well as through special support provided in cooperation with vocational special needs teachers and IVET study counsellors. They also cooperated with student welfare personnel and workplaces to support the student's growth. They would have liked to guide and support students more than they were currently able to with the resources allocated to them. This situation is illustrated by the following example:

Young people have a great deal of problems, and they are not self-directed. The lostness of those in need of special support is really concerning. (Teacher 9)

Guidance of learning

The IVET teachers defined their own role as a supervisor of student learning from many different perspectives. They guided the student's studies individually and prepared the PCDP together with the student and, where needed, also with other

people involved in supporting their studies. The teachers supported the student's personal growth and learning in a student-oriented manner, strengthened the student's positive agency by considering strengths, and supported the students by offering opportunities to acquire competence in an individual manner and build a competence identity. One teacher described in the following way the opportunities available for acquiring competence in the school's workshop:

You [the student] can practise as much as you need. Special support and guidance are readily available here. (Teacher 16)

IVET teachers collaborated with IVET study counsellors in areas related to the students' progress in their studies, choices made during the studies, and planning and applications for further studies, all as part of the vocational career guidance and study guidance offered. One IVET teacher described the division of work between themselves, and the study counsellor as follows:

The study counsellor gives precise facts, while the teacher gives the overall guidelines. (Teacher 12)

IVET teachers also cooperated with special needs teachers and workplace instructors in matters related to the student's special support and guidance, which also served to support the student's personal growth. Multidisciplinary cooperation across professional and organisational boundaries emerged as a key factor in situations where the IVET teachers had become concerned about the progress of a student's studies and the need for pedagogical support. One IVET teacher described how the initiation of multidisciplinary cooperation could be summarised in the following question:

Are there learning-related problems and how can support be provided? (Teacher 14)

The IVET teachers highlighted the significant role of student welfare personnel in guiding the student's learning and in supporting personal growth. The IVET teachers said that they discussed with the student welfare personnel the student's physical, psychological, and social wellbeing as well as the ways in which the student could be supported in a multiprofessional manner. In some cases, the field selected by the student is not suitable for them, due for example to allergies that they have, so in such cases a new, more suitable field is sought out together by the student, the teacher, the IVET study counsellor, and the student welfare personnel. In this case, the key question for the cooperation is:

How do you guide a special needs student towards a new, more suitable field? (Teacher 17)

Career guidance

IVET teachers tell that they play a significant role in career guidance of their students. They carry out career guidance-related cooperation that directly involves employers, public Employment Service offices, recruitment companies, subsidised employment actors, rehabilitative work actors, and various kinds of workshops.

From the IVET teachers' point of view, workplace instructors also play a significant role in students' career guidance. The workplace instructors visited the school to discuss work-related issues and promoted entrepreneurship. The IVET teachers planned competence acquisition together with the student and the workplace instructor in a job-specific manner. They described how they supported workplace instructors in their tasks, for example through workplace instructor training.

In addition to helping them acquire competence at the workplace, IVET teachers told of how they supported students' access to employment in many other ways. They carried out a variety of cooperation projects with companies, guided the students to apply for occasional work directly from companies, and visited various recruitment events together with the students. Sometimes IVET teachers were called by companies and asked if students were available for work. Sometimes finding employment for the student was more challenging, and the IVET teacher used all available networks to support the student in their transition to working life. One IVET teacher described their role in the following way:

I call around my own contacts and try to get the student into work through the back door. (Teacher 20)

The IVET teachers felt that the different leisure time actors and hobby instructors played their part in supporting and guiding the student's personal growth and the building of their competence identity in different kinds of hybrid operating environments. The IVET teachers recognised their significance as educators. One IVET teacher described in the following way the importance of hobbies in their own field:

Students acquire missing competence through hobbies. (Teacher 3)

A revised holistic student-centred guidance framework for Finnish VET

In this section, the results of the qualitative content analysis are presented using the revised holistic student-centred guidance framework, which was updated based on the content analysis results to include five levels of guidance actors. This expanded model fits better in the context of Finnish IVET (cf. Herranen & Penttinen, 2008; Koskela & Rantanen, 2020; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998). The new model includes the following levels:

1. IVET teachers, tutors, and workplace instructors

This first level includes teaching staff, such as vocational teachers, tutors, and workplace instructors, who interact regularly and closely with the student in the teaching and learning process, but also when students are building their competence identity. They are supporting growth, guiding of learning, and doing career guidance in IVET in Finland. Compared to the original holistic guidance framework (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 12; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000, p. 178), workplace instructors were added to the first level, because they play a key role as instructors in Finnish competence-based and working life-oriented IVET.

2. IVET study counsellors and special needs teachers

At the second level are the study counsellors and special needs teachers (Herranen & Penttinen, 2008, p. 12; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000, p. 178). The focus of their work is supporting growth, guiding of learning, and doing career guidance in IVET.

3. Student welfare personnel in IVET

At the third level are student welfare personnel in IVET such as a public health nurses, social workers, and psychologists. This third guidance level includes specialised guidance actors who are not involved in direct pedagogical activities, but support students' learning and growing in many ways (Herranen & Penttilä, 2008, s. 12; Watts & Van Esbroeck, 2000, s. 178).

4. Leisure time actors and hobby instructors

Based on the research results, a fourth level was added to the framework of student-centered holistic guidance, which includes leisure and hobby instructors. In competence-based IVET, competence can also be acquired in leisure time, so the instructors of these activities play a significant role in supporting growth and building the students' competence identity.

5. Employment specialists

Based on the research results, a fifth level was added to the framework of student-centered holistic guidance, which includes employment specialists. They play a significant role in enabling working life-oriented IVET for students, offering part-time job during their studies, and employing students after completing their degree.

The number of actors in student-centred holistic guidance at the five different levels shows how complex guidance processes and support are and emphasises that many actors are needed to complete the task. The actors must also work

closely together to ensure that the student's holistic guidance is implemented in the best possible way.

Conclusions and reflection

This study deals with the building of the competence identity in competence-based Finnish IVET and how holistic guidance can support it. The research results are in line with the results of Musset and Kurekova (2018), European Commission (2020), and Korhonen and Nieminen (2010), providing a framework for multidisciplinary and holistic guidance in VET that considers all areas of life – a student guidance process in which the work of many different dimensions of guidance actors and guidance factors are intertwined, supporting the building of students' competence identity.

Based on the results, vocational teachers had three different roles in their guidance of students. Depending on the context and particular situation, they supported personal growth, guided learning, and provided career guidance, in line with the overall results of Watts and Van Esbroeck (1998, p. 23), Koskela and Rantanen (2020, p. 121), and Herranen and Penttinen (2008, p. 10). According to Helander et al. (2020), multidisciplinary guidance and support in VET can be viewed as a network of service systems. The research results also highlighted the boundary expertise of guidance actors, in line with the findings of Vehviläinen (2014) and Onnismaa (2007).

The research results indicated that building competence identity (see e.g., Christiansen, 1999) should be seen as a process, in which an individual acquires new competence that is needed alongside their existing competence. In Finnish VET, the building of the students' competence identity was promoted by supporting their agency and developing their views of themselves as learners, experts, and employees, in keeping with the findings of Raudasoja et al. (2019). Different views of one's own agency and competence – which take shape through interaction and feedback – supported the IVET students in achieving their goals.

Based on the research results described above, a revised framework was put together for holistic student-oriented guidance in Finnish IVET and VET (Figure 3). This framework describes how active student agency and multidisciplinary guidance work can support the building and updating of the student's competence identity.

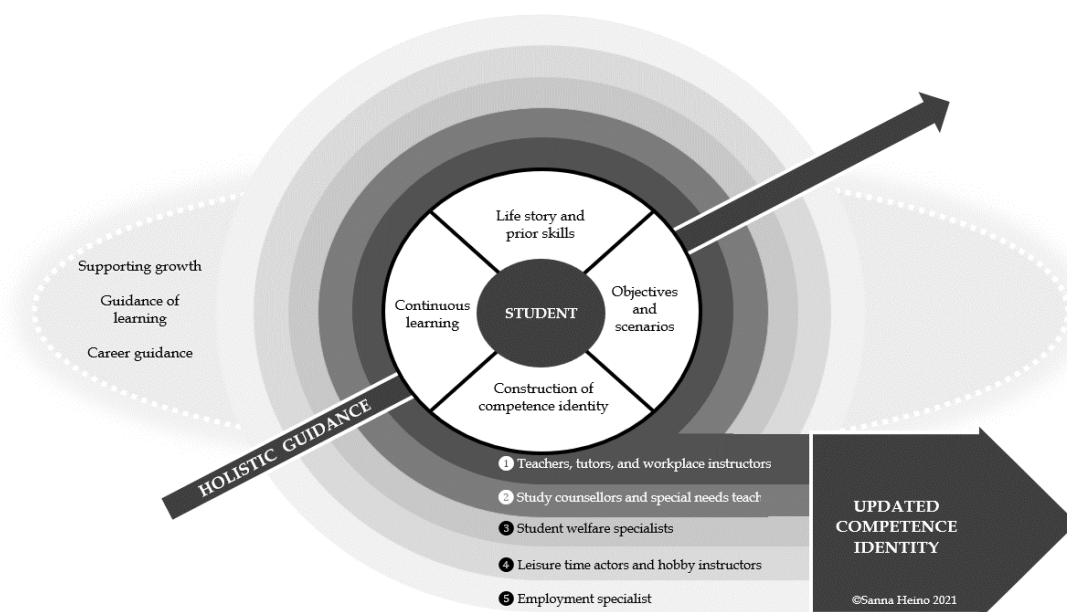


Figure 3. A revised holistic student-centred guidance framework for Finnish vocational education and training.

This holistic student-centred guidance framework for Finnish VET is an idealised version of reality. The personal needs of IVET students for holistic guidance may differ from what is described in the framework. There are also differences between educational institutions and workplaces in the number of teaching and guidance staff, their competencies, and the resources available to them.

The core of the framework describes the student's active agency in the building of their study path and their own life (cf. Vehviläinen, 2014). A PCDP is prepared for each student, and as part of this, the student expresses their life story in a way that considers all areas of life and describes their prior learning. As part of the personalisation process. As part of the goal setting, the student also participates in making a plan that covers the necessary guidance and support measures as well as any special support measures for supporting the student in building their new competence profile and competence identity (cf. Finlex Data Bank, 2017).

One possible limitation of this study is the small number of interviewees, and they were all made in IVET, meaning that the analysed results could have been somewhat different if a larger number of VET interviews had been carried out or a different method of data collection had been used. However, the reliability of the interviews is increased by the fact that the same thematic areas were examined with all the interviewees and the data has been analysed by three researchers who then together formed a shared view of the data. The limitations

of this research give good reason to extend the research either by carrying it out at a broader and even international level – thus providing more reliable results – or by focusing on the interviews only on the students' views.

As changes have taken place in working life and in the operating environment for VET, guidance has become more complex. The complexity of guidance issues is a challenge for the coordination and development of guidance work. This holistic student-centred guidance framework shaped for Finnish VET can be applied by education providers, for example, when updating their guidance plans. The framework can also be utilised for orientating teaching and guidance staff so that they are familiar with the guidance objectives set for their work. In addition, the holistic student-centred guidance framework for Finnish IVET is suitable for illustrating the diversity and multiplicity of guidance work in the training of vocational teachers, student counsellors and special needs teachers. It is essential to notice that in guidance processes the students learn about themselves and their own competences, and the process gives them skills for future career planning.

Notes on contributors

Anu Raudasoja, Ed.D., study councillor and vocational teacher, works as a principal at Järviseutu Vocational Institute in Finland. Her research interests are VET, study counselling, competence identity, special education and inclusion.

Soili Rinne, M.A. and study councillor, is a PhD candidate at University of Lapland, Finland. She works as a senior lecturer at Häme University of Applied Sciences in Finland. Her research interests are VET, study counselling, competence identity, and foreign language teaching.

Sanna Heino, M.Sc. and study councillor, works as a senior lecturer at Häme University of Applied Sciences in Finland. Her research interests are VET, study counselling, competence identity, special education and inclusion.

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Vocational students in the hospitality industry explain guests' sexual harassment

Maria Hedlin & Eva Klope

Linnaeus University, Sweden

(maria.hedlin@lnu.se)

Abstract

This study's purpose is to contribute knowledge which can be used as a basis for vocational teachers in hospitality when they discuss sexual harassment with their students. We therefore explore how students in training for vocations in the hospitality industry explain why some guests subject staff to sexual harassment. The empirical material consists of focus group interviews with students in the Swedish Hotel and Tourism programme and the Restaurant Management and Food programme. Twenty-two focus group interviews were conducted, 2-8 students participated in each group. The interviews took place in ten different municipalities in southern Sweden. The students' explanations are that the sexual harassment is an issue linked to the generation, an issue of information, an issue of personality, an issue related to alcohol, an issue to do with male nature, and an issue of guests taking advantage of their status. These different explanations are linked to overarching discourses. Several of these are historical discourses that have been repeated for a long time. For teachers in the hospitality vocational education programmes a pedagogical point can be to highlight all the explanations and discourses in order to examine together with the students the assumptions on which their explanations rest.

Keywords: discourses, hospitality industry, sexual harassment, vocational culture, vocational students



Introduction

A key aspect of vocational education is that the student is socialised into the job and is expected to become part of the vocational culture (Colley et al., 2003). Vocational cultures however can contain problematic elements. One such example is the sexual harassment from guests in the hospitality industry. In the Swedish Discrimination Act (2008), sexual harassment is defined as behaviour of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity. Examples of common types of sexual harassment are unwelcome comments, and messages and pictures with sexual content. Other examples are physical touching (groping) and leering (Universitets- och Högskolerådet [UHR], 2019). Sexual harassment is not permitted in Swedish workplaces; yet if an employee reports an incidence of sexual harassment, the employer is obligated to investigate the matter and take appropriate measures (Arbetsmiljöverket, 2019).

In the hospitality industry sexual harassment is so common and normalised that it is considered to be part of the job and vocational culture (Bråten, 2019; Svensson, 2020; Zampoukos et al., 2020). In the two Swedish upper secondary school vocational programmes for students preparing to work in the hospitality industry, namely, the Hotel and Tourism programme and the Restaurant Management and Food programme, a large part of the training is devoted to customer interaction and hospitality. Despite this, the issue of sexual harassment is not always addressed in the education. Nonetheless, studies have highlighted the opportunity teachers in schools have to address and counteract sexual harassment (Conroy, 2013; Gillander Gådin & Stein, 2019; Wood & Moyland, 2017).

Vocational education teachers can have a significant role and important function in terms of preparing students for work in occupational areas where sexual harassment commonly occurs (Wood & Moylan, 2017). If the issue of sexual harassment from customers and guests is not dealt with in vocational education, it means that the students risk being socialised into a vocational culture where sexual harassment appears as an unavoidable part of the job and something they have to deal with on their own. In addition, this can mean that the students make use of everyday and often repeated discourses in order to understand incidents such as how it can happen that a guest subjects a practicum student or an employee to sexual harassment. Vocational teachers thus need to give their students more knowledge about the issue. In teaching however, to be aware of the students' prior knowledge is often crucial. From an educational perspective, it therefore seems important to gain more information about how students in vocational education understand and explain sexual harassment from guests and why the violations occur. In this study, we investigate how young people who are training for vocations in the hospitality industry explain why some guests subject staff to sexual harassment. Further, through a discourse-

theoretical perspective, we investigate how the young people's explanations are part of overarching discourses since the discourses entail beliefs and presumptions with significance for the possibility of dealing with sexual harassment. By making visible the explanations and discourses that emerge in students' descriptions of sexual harassment by guests, the results of this study can be used in vocational education to prevent students being socialised into a vocational culture where sexual harassment is considered part of the job.

We begin with the purpose of the study and the background below. Thereafter, we explain the method and then present the results that emerged. In the last section, we present a discussion about the results and how different explanations and discourses lead to different consequences.

Purpose

The purpose is to contribute knowledge which can be used as a basis for vocational teachers in hospitality when they discuss sexual harassment with their students. We therefore explore how students in training for vocations in the hospitality industry explain why some guests subject staff to sexual harassment. In order to understand the students' explanations and the basic assumptions they rest on we examine how the explanations can be linked to more comprehensive discourses. The questions that guide the study are:

- How do students explain why some guests subject staff to sexual harassment?
- How can these explanations be tied to more overarching discourses?

Background

Sexual harassment is a widespread and global problem (Lim et al., 2018). It mainly occurs in unequal relationships. Perpetrators usually subject someone of lower status, whose subordinate position makes it difficult to act. The harassment can thus be used as a means to strengthen a superior position (Deery et al., 2011; Good & Cooper, 2014).

In the hospitality industry, the harassment of staff by guests is a major problem (LaLopa & Gong, 2020; Ram, 2018). The restaurant sector, and particularly waiting on tables, is an area where personnel are especially vulnerable. Regardless of how demanding the work is, the employees are expected to be accommodating and attentive to the guests' needs. Studies have underlined that the service staff's subordinate position, i.e., that the staff's role is to meet the guest's wishes, contributes to the fact that service staff often have difficulty assessing whether a guest's actions should be considered as sexual harassment.

Hospitality staff is expected to work according to the motto 'The customer is always right'. This can be taken advantage of by the customer, who is far from always right (Yagil, 2008). It is not unusual for customers and guests to be disrespectful towards staff and sexual harassment is part of every day for many who work in the hospitality industry. Although all staff in the industry can be subjected to sexual harassment certain employees are at particularly high risk of being exposed. Gender, age, and type of employment are significant factors. Young women with uncertain employment terms are particularly vulnerable (Bergold & Vedin, 2015; Fisk & Neville, 2011; Good & Cooper, 2016).

Sexual harassment can be of different kinds, both verbal and physical. Examples of sexual harassment can be someone groping or sending unwelcome text messages and images with sexual content. It can also involve unwelcome comments, sexual allusions, or gestures of a sexual nature. In the hospitality industry sexual invitations and offensive comments are not uncommon. Guests also subject employees to groping and other close physical contact (Bergold & Vedin, 2015; Mulinari, 2007; Svensson, 2020).

In the Nordic countries both the hospitality industry and the hotel and restaurant employees' trade union have been working on the issue for many years, but it has proven difficult to resolve the problem (Borchorst & Agustin, 2017; Bråten, 2020; Svensson, 2019). According to many employees in the industry, incidents of sexual harassment from customers and guests are part of the workplace culture and thus not something that attracts attention. The persons who are subjected are expected to be able to handle the situation skilfully on their own (Bråten, 2019; Siverbo et al., 2018; Svensson, 2020).

In summary, research shows that sexual harassment from customers and guests commonly occurs in the hospitality industry. Young women in particular are subjected. Sexual harassment can even be normalised and included as part of the job, meaning that the young people who are in training or who work there are socialised into a vocational culture where sexual harassment is accepted. However, researchers have highlighted the role that vocational training can and should play in preparing future personnel in occupational fields where sexual harassment is common (Wood & Moylan, 2017). In all teaching, it is important to have knowledge of the students' prior knowledge and how they understand the teaching content. For vocational teachers planning teaching about sexual harassment, it can be essential to know how students understand and explain the sexual harassment that guests may subject staff to. With such knowledge, teachers and teaching can problematise these explanations and consider which of them that can be useful to counteract sexual harassment in students' future vocations. In this study we will investigate how students in training for vocations in the hospitality industry explain why some guests subject staff to sexual

harassment and through a discourse-theoretical perspective, we will explore how the young people's explanations is part of overarching discourses.

Method

The study is based on interview material from a project where we investigated how students in the Swedish upper secondary school Hotel and Tourism programme and Restaurant Management and Food programme perceive the sexual harassment that can occur by guests in the vocational areas that the students are training for. With few exceptions, the young people spoke about sexual harassment from guests as something that occurs often. After the students had stated that sexual harassment occurs, they were asked which guests subject staff to sexual harassment and which staff are subjected. According to the students' perceptions, male guests are the ones who engage in sexual harassment and female staff are the ones who are subjected. That men are the perpetrators and women are the victims is in line with the research in the field (Conroy, 2013; Latcheva, 2017; Tolman et al., 2016; Witkowska & Menckel, 2005). Later on, however, we saw in the material that the students have different explanations for why the guests engage in sexual harassment, and the students' explanations were something we wanted to investigate more closely.

The empirical material consists of focus group interviews with male and female students in the Hotel and Tourism programme and the Restaurant Management and Food programme. Focus group interviews were deemed to be a particularly appropriate method, because richer data is provided when the participants get to listen to each other's discussions (Wibeck, 2010). In total, there were 22 focus group interviews with 2–8 students in each group. In addition, two individual interviews were conducted; the reason that these two interviews were held individually is that all interviews were conducted in 2021, a time affected by various pandemic restrictions.

Before the interviews began, the students received oral and written information about the purpose and implementation of the study, and they had the opportunity to ask questions. They were informed that their participation was voluntary and could be discontinued at any time. We also explained that the material would be anonymised. The study uses fictitious names, and any details that could lead to identification have been changed or removed. The students were also informed that the material would only be used for scientific purposes.

A total of 69 students were interviewed, of which 34 attended the Restaurant Management and Food programme and 35 attended the Hotel and Tourism programme. Since most of the students, even those who attended the programme for the hotel industry, had experience working in food service, there is no distinction made in the analysis according to which programme the students

attended. The students were 18–20 years old and were in their third and final year. Fifty-two of the interviewed students identified themselves as girls, and 17 identified themselves as boys. No one identified oneself in any other way. The interviews took place in ten different municipalities in southern Sweden. They were conducted on the school premises or in a café near the school. The interviews were conducted in Swedish and took 1–2 hours. The interviews were recorded on a dictaphone, and they were transcribed within a week. The excerpts in this article were translated into English.

Before the topic of sexual harassment was raised in the interviews, general questions were asked about the students' career choices, their occupations, and customer service. Since we did not presuppose that the young people considered sexual harassment to be a problem in the hospitality industry, the subject of sexual harassment began with open questions about the informants' spontaneous thoughts and reflections regarding sexual harassment in the hospitality industry.

We carried out a thematic analysis of the empirical material (Bryman, 2008; Ryan & Bernard, 2003), which took place in several stages. To get an initial overview, we read through all interviews several times and took notes on the thoughts that were raised. Then the parts that were relevant in relation to the first research question were marked, i.e., what explanations could be deduced on the topic of some guests subjecting staff to sexual harassment. Then these explanations were coded in such a way that they were given a label capturing their content. The different codes and the excerpts that belonged to them were compared and brought together into preliminary themes. Finally, these preliminary themes were compared, which involved further adjustments (Rännstam & Wästerfors, 2015; Widerberg, 1997).

When the different themes or explanations were finished, we moved on to the second question, which involved linking the explanations to overall discourses. The concept of discourse is understood as a specific way of understanding and talking about the world, a way based on certain premises and thus carrying certain consequences. Discourses can also be defined as competing ways of describing reality (Bakhtin, 1999; Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). Jørgensen and Phillips (2000) define discourse as a socially constructed system of meaning that could have been different. The basic idea is that the way we see the world is always clearly dependent on the time and culture we live in. We need a certain measure of order to be able to orientate ourselves at all in our present existence, but at the same time the social aspect could have been constructed in another way. That things could have been constructed in other ways does not mean that the social aspect can be shaped in any kind of way in a given situation, because of the inertia of social constructions.

Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) discourse theory places the constitutive dimension of language at the very centre. They start from the post-structuralist assumption

that language is characterised by a fundamental instability, which means that concepts and discourses cannot be fixed once and for all. Even if there exists a physical and highly tangible reality, the question of how we should understand it is a matter of social construction. Laclau and Mouffe talk about discursive struggles where different ways of describing reality or explaining an event are opposed to each other. The discourses offer different explanations and thereby different solutions to problems. Certain descriptions and meanings gain ground, while alternatives are obscured or not even perceived as possibilities. The discourses that expand then become opposed to other discourses, which constitute reality in other ways, and which threaten to undermine the established discourses. Laclau and Mouffe speak of a quest for discursive hegemony. This means that discourses based on incorrect assumptions and explanations, for example about sexual harassment, risk gaining ground if they are not challenged (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001). We are thus not analysing the 'truthfulness' of students' talk about sexual harassment, but the explanations the students give in their talk and the discourses that these explanations are constituted within.

The different explanations that emerged from the empirical material and the talk surrounding them could each in turn be linked to overarching discourses. Several of these are historical discourses that have been repeated for a long time. Below we present the various student explanations and the discourse in which the explanation is constituted.

Results and analysis

Six different explanations for the sexual harassment crystallised, namely, that the sexual harassment is an issue linked to the generation, an issue of information, an issue of personality, an issue related to alcohol, an issue to do with male nature, and an issue of guests taking advantage of their status. The explanations will be discussed below.

An issue linked to the generation - discourse of modernity

An explanation that frequently arises when students discuss why some customers and guests subject staff to sexual harassment, is that older men still hold onto the outdated views of previous generations. The older men who subject staff to this type of harassment are described as old-fashioned and still living in past gender patterns. The younger males, on the other hand, are first and foremost portrayed as modern men who know that the behaviour is wrong. In the excerpt below, such description appears.

David: It is disrespectful toward those who work; you should be able to feel safe and secure in the workplace and not have to be subjected to such things. You get quite angry, even if the guys are younger, but it's not so often that you see that.

Lina: There should be zero tolerance, no matter how old you are. You should not behave like that.

David: We have seen when an older [man] has sat with some younger [men] and they have told the older one who has been doing it. 'Now shape up, stop'.

Interviewer: So you mean that it was guys who told the older man? They have said that? 'Now you have to shape up.'

David: Yes.

(David and Lina, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

In the excerpt above, Lina says that there should be zero tolerance; the age of the perpetrator should not matter. With this remark, she implies that the sexual harassment of older men is allowed or overlooked. David says that the men who engage in sexual harassment are mainly older male guests. The difference between different generations of men is thus emphasised here. Men who are younger rarely behave this way, according to David, rather the younger men's role is to keep after the older men and tell them when they misbehave. In contrast to what is usually expected, that older men look after and socialise younger men into different contexts, David describes the reverse situation. Thus based on this description, there is a big difference between the behaviour of younger men and that of older men when it comes to sexual harassment. David positions himself and his peers as modern, responsible, and mindful of gender equality, in contrast to the older men who behave in accordance with outdated norms of masculinity.

A similar way of looking at the matter is expressed when Erik, Per, and Ida discuss who are the ones that subject staff to sexual harassment. The problem is thought to be that the older men have not understood that such behaviour is no longer acceptable.

Erik: What I have heard is that it is mainly older men.

Per: It is often those who think they have the right to do that. In our age group, there are probably not many who do that at a restaurant. One knows that it's wrong, so it's more the older men.

Erik: But, so, we also grow up in a society where it's not okay, but I think they grew up in a society where it was okay to slap the waitress on the rump. It was more okay then.

Ida: Yes, it was a narrower worldview then and some still live in those old patterns.

(Erik, Per, and Ida, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

In the excerpt above, the students say that most young people know that these kinds of acts are not acceptable, while older men are accustomed to how it was before and then it was considered more normal 'to slap the waitress on the rump', as Erik puts it. In the past, because of his superior position, a male guest could act disrespectfully towards the waitress. At that time, it was considered acceptable that he, as a man and a guest, could take advantage of his superior position over a woman in a low-status service occupation. The customers and guests who subject staff to sexual harassment are first and foremost portrayed as

older men who are not keeping up with the times. Thus, sexual harassment appears to be much of an issue of the generation. The explanation that sexual harassment is an issue of the generation, also means that sexual harassment will decrease over time. According to this explanation, the issue does not really require any action taken. The older generation is thought to be incapable of changing their thinking, and the problem of sexual harassment seems to be solved eventually. Harassment will diminish in step with the older men, who continue to live in old behaviour patterns, but are becoming fewer and fewer.

The way of thinking described above is linked to what can be called *a discourse of modernity*. Modernity refers to the social order that replaced the pre-modern society, when people placed their trust in religion and folklore with regard to solving problems. The idea of progress is central within the concept of modernity. This concept contains a strong sense of development; modernity is associated with the positive advance of human beings and existence. Within the discourse of modernity, such things as positive renewal are often posed against the primitive way of thinking and habits of earlier times. A fundamental idea is that humans are rational, meaning that the future appears bright. According to this way of viewing, things develop for the better. The younger generation will behave better than the older generation (Lyon, 1998; Mouzakitis, 2017). Öhlund (1994) talks about a discourse of modernity, where young people are contrasted with the older generations who are associated with being backward. Young people are portrayed as representatives of progress, modern thinking, and positive development based solely upon their youth. This way of understanding sexual harassment is prominent in the above excerpt. Ida says that 'it was a narrower worldview then and some still live in those old patterns'. Per also emphasises that 'in our age group, there are probably not many who do that at a restaurant'. In doing so, they position themselves and peers of their generation as representatives of a modern and gender-equal mind-set that has left old gender patterns behind.

An issue of information – communication discourse

Another explanation for the occurrence of sexual harassment is that the person who subjects others does not know that the action is wrong. This explanatory model also links sexual harassment mainly with bygone times; however, there is a very big difference compared to the explanation above where the students express that sexual harassment is an issue linked to the generation. The difference is that according to this way of explaining sexual harassment, the solution to the problem does not come by itself. Instead, basically, the problems that arise can be solved through knowledge and communication. With this way of explaining, the harassment has stopped, because the right information has now reached the former perpetrators. Since the problem received a lot of attention, the fact spread

that sexual harassment is not allowed, reaching those who previously lacked the information.

Kalle, who is in training for work in hotels, does not believe that sexual harassment occurs in the hotel industry, nor in the city where he lives. He also assumes that sexual harassment is something that happens in other countries, but everyone is informed and enlightened in Sweden.

I can imagine that it happened before, but not within hotels directly, and not in Sweden. It certainly happened outside of Sweden. But it probably happens in films and maybe it happened a lot in the past, but as I said, now it has received attention and you know that of course it's wrong. Maybe there were some who didn't know before, but now they do. (Kalle, Hotel and Tourism programme)

In the excerpt, Kalle says that sexual harassment can happen in films, which further underscores how far sexual harassment is from Kalle's own reality. He also says that 'maybe it happened a lot in the past', a past when people were ignorant and did not understand that sexual harassment was wrong, in contrast with today's situation with informed and enlightened people. With this explanation, he positions himself as a representative of the idea of Swedes as equal and egalitarian and very far from the occurrence of this type of harassment (Brunila & Edström, 2013). A discourse of modernity can be perceived with this way of speaking, but at the same time, knowledge and information emerge as the key components of the explanation. Kalle explains that if sexual harassment happened in the past, it was because of a lack of information and knowledge. Those who subjected others to sexual harassment did not know that their actions were wrong. According to the logic of Kalle's description, those who know that a certain action is wrong will not do it. According to this way of looking at the situation, almost any problem can be solved with information. Even older people can therefore change as long as they receive information about right and wrong. In Kalle's explanation, power structures are completely absent.

The explanation above connects to what can be called a *communication discourse*. There is a particular kind of communication model that was prevalent some time ago. At the beginning of the 1900s, it was assumed that people exposed to advertising campaigns and informational messages simply absorbed the messages in a similar way as medicine is absorbed by the body. It was assumed to be easy to influence and change people's attitudes in intended ways. Researchers who describe this way of looking at communication call it an injection model. Communication was presented as a simple linear process, and people were assumed to react all in a similar way. Those reached by a message were supposed to be passive recipients; the effect was thus assumed to be immediate and direct (Fiske, 1990; Gripsrud, 2011).

An issue of personality - psychology discourse

A third explanation appearing in the material takes its point of departure in the one individual who subjects someone to sexual harassment. Central to this explanation is the individual's personality. When the young people explain sexual harassment with reference to the perpetrator's personality, it appears regrettable but unavoidable that women have to put up with sexual harassment if they choose to learn to work in the hospitality industry. When Henry and Lisa are asked about the role of their education programme in terms of teaching the students how to deal with the sexual harassment of guests, their response is pessimistic.

Interviewer: Can the education programme do something about preparing the future employees?

Henry: I think we talked about it during the first year actually. But it is more difficult for girls and that may mean that many do not choose this education programme, precisely because they know that they will have to put up with sexual harassment. It's too bad; of course it's supposed to be equal.

Interviewer: What did you think, Lisa?

Lisa: It's hard to say anything about the education and what they could do, even about the industry. I think it's a lot about the personality. Some people think that it's okay to grope and all.

(Henry and Lisa, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

Lisa is hesitant about whether the education and the industry could do anything about the sexual harassment towards female personnel from certain guests. She states that she believes it is a matter of the perpetrator's personality. 'Some people think that it's okay to grope.' This makes it appear that people who carry out sexual harassment cannot be influenced, and they are unchangeable in their nature. This is also similar to Henry's explanation. He says that the women who are learning to work in the restaurant industry 'will have to put up with' sexual harassment. The guests who harass female staff are thought to confront the women with a choice of only two options, either not to train for vocations in the industry or to put up with the guests' sexual harassment. This means that the guests' behaviour, which is perceived as fixed and unchangeable, requires that the female staff, on the contrary, is flexible and adaptable.

This explanation and its consequences are opposed to the belief in knowledge and information that the communication discourse in the section above contains. Understanding personality as innate and static is in line with how personality is commonly understood. The talk about personality is clearly linked to a *psychology discourse*. Within psychological research, however, there is a discussion about whether not only heredity but also the environment affects the individual's personality. At the same time, personality is more about character traits than specific behaviours. A certain character trait, such as having an extroverted disposition, does not mean that the person has to subject other people to sexual

harassment. In everyday talk, however, references to personality usually mean that the person referring to someone's personality to explain a behaviour also claims that both the personality and the behaviour are fixed and unchangeable due to biological and genetic roots (Dåderman & Kajonius, 2022; Edvardsson, 2002).

An issue related to alcohol – disclaimer discourse

The fourth explanation that the participants bring up is about the alcohol that is often served in the hospitality industry. The idea that sexual harassment is an issue related to alcohol means, just like the reference to the perpetrator's personality, that it is difficult to influence the perpetrator's behaviour. Alcohol can be used as an explanation for why sexual harassment occurs. Alexandra and some other girls discuss how a male guest who sexually harasses a woman can be perceived in different ways depending on his age. The conversation then turns to how even alcohol can affect how the male guest is perceived. In this context, Alexandra says that the serving of alcohol can explain the incidents of sexual harassment in the industry. Alexandra says that those who have drunk a lot of alcohol do not always mean to offend the staff.

Yes, but at the same time, you also understand that we serve alcohol, and when people drink a lot of alcohol, then they can't handle what they are doing. So sometimes maybe that was not the meaning or something. It is the alcohol that is affecting them. So we also knew what we were going to work with. Sometimes you have to... well, you can't tolerate it, but I mean ... that's the kind of thing that happens. (Alexandra, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

Alexandra says that she and other staff were aware of what it would be like when they chose occupations where alcohol is served. In this description, the responsibility is shifted from the perpetrators to those who are subjected. Even when Lars and Olof talk about who subjects staff to sexual harassment, alcohol comes up as an explanation. Lars believes that sexual harassment is unusual in the hotel industry, but that it can occur if a hotel guest has stayed several nights and gets drunk on the last night.

Lars: Yes, and then I can imagine, if it's a late evening, maybe the last day if you're away for several days, then maybe someone drinks a little extra and gets drunk. Then maybe that person would behave that way. You become someone else when you are drunk; you are not yourself.

Olof: Not really yourself.

Lars: No, not really yourself.

(Lars and Olof, Hotel and Tourism programme)

Just as in Alexandra's explanation, the responsibility disappears from the drunk person. Lars and Olof however do not place the responsibility on the person who is subjected. Instead, the responsibility seems to dissolve, because the drunken

perpetrator is not himself, but as expressed by Lars, 'becomes someone else'. Research has shown how alcohol can be used to let go of control and break norms, though not infrequently in a certain way. Alcohol makes it permissible to behave in a manner that in other situations would be considered unacceptable (Banister & Piacentini, 2008; Hayward & Dick Hobbs, 2007). Even in legal contexts, it happens that an offender who was drunk is considered less responsible for the sexual crime he has committed (Finch & Munro, 2007).

The explanation above can be linked to a *disclaimer discourse*. It is no coincidence that it is men who are relieved of responsibility and the responsibility instead is placed on women (Jeffner, 1998). The explanation is in line with the 'double standard' that characterises many judgments about sexual situations, meaning that the behaviour of men and that of women are judged according to completely different standards. A typical example is that a man and a woman who boast about their sexual escapades in a similar way will not be perceived in the same way. Similarly, it is also common for a man's sexual abuse to be assessed in a mitigating way, while the female victim is blamed (Manne, 2020; Thomas, 1959; cf. Finch & Munro, 2007). Manne (2018) talks about 'himpathy' to denote the 'sympathy' that men can often count on, for example, when they have subjected a woman to abuse.

An issue to do with male nature - gender dichotomous discourse

The fifth explanation that appears in the young people's talk is that men subject female staff to sexual harassment, because they are stronger and more primitive than women. When the student Thomas is asked about the reason for certain male guests taking the liberty to harass women, he refers to male nature, the Stone Age, and men's brains.

Interviewer: Mm, why do they think that, do you think? That they take this liberty?

Thomas: It's probably male nature really. Back all the way to the Stone Age. We have eoraptor brains, as they say!

(Thomas, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

Thomas expresses himself jokingly, but regardless of what he 'really' believes, his explanation is about male nature. In connection with this, he refers to the Stone Age and the brain of eoraptor dinosaurs. This evokes a stereotypic image of what it was like a long time ago. The Stone Age man is a stereotype that often symbolises a hyper-masculine man (Hall, 1997). This reference to the Stone Age man suggests an image of a strong, aggressive, well-built, and animal-like masculinity. The description is linked to ideas that men are more primitive than women in regard to sexual interest in 'the opposite sex', who are perceived precisely in an opposite way in this idea.

Also when My and Zoe are asked about the typical perpetrator and who engages in sexual harassment, the answer is directly men, without describing the typical perpetrator beyond that.

Interviewer: What do you think about the typical perpetrator – if you think about the type who does this kind of thing?

My: It's men! [they laugh a little]

Zoe: I think so, from my own experience, it's men who do that. There are of course women, but they are a significantly smaller percentage of those who do that.

My: Yes! And women often have... say, in the majority, women are more defenceless.

Interviewer: Mm, exactly.

Zoe: Women are weaker, they're smaller, they can't speak up... so we don't have a say in this in any way. You are made a bit lower by the men, so that is probably a little why women are subjected.

(My and Zoe, Hotel and Tourism programme)

In the excerpt above, My and Zoe are not explicitly talking about male nature, but they talk about women as weaker, more defenseless, and not being able to speak out. With these typical signs of femininity being highlighted, these descriptions contain masculine-coded ideas as implied contrasts. Men with opposite masculine characteristics that women must defend themselves against, are implied in this description. In the description men thus appear as both stronger and more aggressive. They do as they please at the expense of women. Similarly to Thomas, this explanation relates to the idea of male nature.

The above explanation is formulated within a traditional *gender-dichotomous discourse*, where women and men are described as two different kinds of people with opposite dispositions and character traits. Connell (2003) speaks about the principle of character dichotomy within this discourse to denote how women and men are bound together with opposite characteristics. In this discourse, the foundation is that men and women are mainly seen as different and therefore should be described as having different natures. Men's nature is described as rational, analytical, taciturn, confident, strong, aggressive, virile, and promiscuous. Women's nature is thereby assumed to be the exact opposite, i.e., irrational, emotional, talkative, impressionable, weak, passive, nurturing, and sexually loyal. Furthermore, men are said to belong in public life, in society and the public, while the woman's place is in the home, the household and the family. This gender dichotomous discourse gained wide attention when it was put forward by Jean-Jacques Rousseau in the 18th century, and it still has strong roots in everyday thinking. It is also called the gender-complementarian discourse, because Rousseau argued that it was wrong to regard women as men's equals. According to him, the woman should instead be seen as a complement to the man (Schiebinger, 1989).

An issue of guests taking advantage of their status – discourse of power

The material contains a sixth and last explanation in that some guests take advantage of their superior status. This is about guests who based on their position as a guest, a man or an elder, take advantage of the fact that they have more space in which to act than the young women who work in the hospitality industry. When Julia and Fanny discuss sexual harassment, they talk about male guests who objectify them and treat them disrespectfully. Julia describes that the men put her down. They look down on her, because the waitressing vocation has low status. Julia says that they think they are 'higher' than she is. She tells of an episode where a man called her by snapping his fingers and whistling at her.

Julia: There was an old man who came in; usually you go up to the cash register and you are given a table. And then we come and serve. But he comes in, sits down at a table, without having been given that table, and then he snaps his fingers [makes a whistling sound], looks at me and just, 'Come here sweetie!' [...]

Fanny: Yes, that is very disrespectful.

Julia: Yes, they put you down. Just because you work in this occupation and work serving tables, they think, 'I'm higher than you are'.

(Julia and Fanny, Restaurant Management and Food programme)

It is not just that the vocations the respondents train for are service occupations with low status (Mulinari, 2007); gender also plays a role in how women are treated in the hospitality industry. Susanne, who is in training to become a waitress and attends the Restaurant Management and Food programme, explains that male guests take up space, think they are 'above' female waitresses, and treat them in a way that male waiters don't have to experience. Taking up space and prioritising one's own needs are typical masculine-coded behaviours, which means that these male guests often do not attract significant attention, but rather pass as normal (Vera-Gray, 2018). Correspondingly, the female waitresses are expected to give way to men and submit to men's needs, which goes along with the vocational role of the waitress (Mulinari, 2007).

In addition, with regard to older male guests, the subordinate position of the young women can become more pronounced, something that makes it particularly difficult to deal with unwanted behaviour. In the excerpt below, Lova initially says that she does not understand how the older male guests think, when they treat young female staff in a flirtatious manner. After a moment's thought, however, it emerges that Lova perceives that older men can exploit their superior position and subject a young woman to sexual harassment based on a certainty that she will not dare to speak up.

Mo: It's like this in hotels; it can be old men looking at young girls. There are those who think they can kind of just, 'Hey!' [in a flirtatious way]

Lova: I don't understand how they think.

Interviewer: Do you think that as a young girl you are somehow extra...

Lova: Yes!

Moa: Yes!

Interviewer: You think so?

Lova: I think it's hard to contradict someone who is older. So it can be something at work; it can be small things. But it feels like they can do more than I can, even though I can tell the difference between right and wrong. So, oh my goodness! But about sexual harassment, they think: 'She's young - she won't dare say anything!'

(Moa and Lova, Hotel and Tourism programme)

In the excerpt above, both age and gender appear as factors that contribute to older men taking advantage of their status in relation to young girls. This explanation is tied to a *discourse of power*. Unlike the gender dichotomous discourse, the men's behaviour is not explained by the fact that women are defenseless by nature or that men have an 'eoraptor brain' so that they cannot act in any other way. In the present discourse, various social categories appear as significant, such as gender, age, and the status of the vocation, with the male guests consciously judging that the girls will not dare say anything, because they have less room to act due to prevailing power structures. Within the discourse of power, change is possible because society is permeated by power structures where discursive categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, and class are culturally created power orders that are not stable but can be challenged, influenced and changed. These categories interact with each other and appear in different ways in different contexts (Korczynski & Evans, 2013; Lykke, 2003; Vera-Gray, 2018).

Discussion and conclusions

Researchers have highlighted the role that vocational education and training can and should play when it comes to counteract and prepare future employees to handle sexual harassments in occupations where sexual harassment is likely to occur (Wood & Moylan, 2017). For teachers however, it is often essential to be aware of the students' prior knowledge and how they understand the teaching content. Therefore, for vocational teachers planning teaching about sexual harassment, it is important to know how students understand and explain the sexual harassment that guests may subject staff to. Above we have presented six different explanations that emerge when students preparing for vocations in the hospitality industry explain why some guests subject staff to sexual harassment. The students' explanations are that the sexual harassment is an issue linked to the generation, an issue of information, an issue of personality, an issue related to alcohol, an issue to do with male nature, and an issue of guests taking advantage of their status. Below we discuss how teachers can address and problematise these explanations in their teaching to prevent students being socialised into a vocational culture where sexual harassment is normalised.

The explanation that sexual harassment is an issue linked to the generation is connected to a discourse of modernity and implies that the problem of sexual harassment will solve itself, more or less, because young people do not engage in such things as much as the older generations. One problem with this explanation is that it is not supported by research in the field. Studies show, on the contrary, that sexual harassment is a fairly widespread problem among young people in Sweden as well as other countries (Mellgren et al., 2018; Stefansen et al., 2014; Stein & Taylor, 2023; Valik et al., 2023). The students' explanation that sexual harassment is an issue of information can be interpreted as part of a communication discourse, but this explanation is based on the assumption that such problems can be solved with active measures; the problem can simply be informed away. Changing unwanted behaviour through information measures, however, has proven difficult, which means that also this explanatory model is not very useful as a basis for teachers who want to address the issue of sexual harassment (Gripsrud, 2011).

Also, the talk about sexual harassment being an issue of personality, alcohol, and male nature can be tied to discourses where sexual harassment is connected to behaviour that is hard to change. The violations rather seem to be something that girls and women are forced to accept as more or less unavoidable. Such a fundamental idea runs counter to the policy valid in Swedish schools and workplaces, which, on the contrary, have an obligation to work toward ensuring that sexual harassment does not occur (Discrimination Act, 2008; UHR, 2019; Utbildningsdepartementet, 2021).

The only one of the students' explanations that is grounded in a way that can be used to counteract sexual harassment is that the violations are a matter of harassers taking advantage of their status. In contrast to the explanations and discourses that are based on ideas that the persons who subject staff to sexual harassment cannot act otherwise, this assumption instead is that the harassers consciously judge that the targets will not dare to speak up. Due to the prevailing power structures, the targets of sexual harassment have less space in which to act and will often not speak up. In addition to the fact that this assumption is supported by research (Bogart & Stein, 1987; Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Good & Cooper, 2016; Hedlin & Klope, 2024; Korczynski & Evans, 2013; Yagil, 2008), it can also be met by the policy that applies to the Swedish education system.

We believe that the results of this study can serve as a useful basis for the task of vocational teachers to address the issue of sexual harassment. For teachers a pedagogical point can be to highlight all the explanations and discourses in order to together with the students examine the assumptions on which their explanations rests. Laclau and Mouffe (2001) speak of discursive struggles where different ways of describing existence and phenomena compete for space. Based on the discourse theoretical basic assumptions, each of the different ways of

explaining sexual harassment could gain ground and have an increased influence on how students in school view sexual harassment. By highlighting and discussing the explanations and discourses that have been reported in this article, teachers may have a way to increase the scope for approaches that have the possibility to contribute to positive change and counteract the occurrence of sexual harassment, while at the same time reduce the acceptance of the views that deem the violations to be inevitable.

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Notes on contributors

Maria Hedlin is Professor of Education at Linnæus University, Kalmar, Sweden. She is a teacher educator, and her research focuses on education and gender issues. Currently she is studying sexual harassment in VET together with Eva Klope.

Eva Klope is a Senior Lecturer of Education at Linnæus University, Kalmar, Sweden. She is a teacher educator, and her research interests include VET and gender issues. Currently she is studying sexual harassment in VET together with Maria Hedlin.

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