

The Academic Experience of Vocational Training Teachers

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Abstract : Teaching in vocational training requires an excellent mastery of the trade being taught, but also solid professional skills in pedagogy. Teachers are typically recruited on the basis of their trade expertise, and they do not necessarily have training or experience in pedagogy. In order to counter this lack, the Ministry of Education (Québec, Canada) requires them to complete a 120-credit university program to obtain their teaching certificate. They must complete this training in addition to their teaching duties. This training was rarely planned in the teacher's life course, and each teacher approaches it differently: some are enthusiastic, but many feel reluctant discouragement and even frustration at the idea of committing to a training program lasting an average of 10 years to completion. However, Quebec is experiencing an unprecedented shortage of teachers, and the perseverance of vocational teachers in their careers requires special attention because of the conditions of their specific integration conditions. Our research examines the perceptions that vocational teachers in training have of their academic experience in pre-service teaching. It differs from previous research in that it focuses on the influence of the academic experience on the teaching employment experience. The goal is that by better understanding the university experience of teachers in vocational education, we can identify support strategies to support their school experience and their teaching. To do this, the research is based on the theoretical framework of the sociology of experience, which allows us to study the way in which these "teachers-students" give meaning to their university program in articulation with their jobs according to three logics of action. The logic of integration is based on the process of socialization, where the action is preceded by the internalization of values, norms, and cultural models associated with the training context. The logic of strategy refers to the usefulness of this experience where the individual constructs a form of rationality according to his objectives, resources, social position, and situational constraints. The logic of subjectivation refers to reflexivity activities aimed at solving problems and making choices. These logics served as a framework for the development of an online questionnaire. Three hundred respondents, newly enrolled in an undergraduate teaching program (bachelor's degree in vocational education), expressed themselves about their academic experience. This paper relates qualitative data (open-ended questions) subjected to an interpretive repertory analysis approach to descriptive data (closed-ended questions) that emerged. The results shed light on how the respondents perceive themselves as teachers and students, their perceptions of university training and the support offered, and the place that training occupies in their professional path. Indeed, their professional and academic paths are inextricably linked, and it seems essential to take them into account simultaneously to better meet their needs and foster the development of their expertise in pedagogy. The discussion focuses on the strengths and limitations of university training from the perspective of the logic of action. The results also suggest support strategies that can be implemented to better support the integration and retention of student teachers in professional education.

Keywords : teacher, vocational training, pre-service training, academic experience

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