

# An educational task of teachers and trainers in German vocational education and training

A. Goncharova<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Osnabrueck, Germany

Статья  
поступила  
в редакцию  
16 марта  
2021 г.

**Anastasia Goncharova** — research assistant and a PhD student at the department of Vocational and Business Education at the University of Osnabrueck, ORCID 0000-0002-0905-3171, e-mail: anastasia.goncharova@uni-osnabrueck.de

## Abstract

Educators involved in the implementation of vocational education and training (VET) are key actors ensuring its quality. This article focuses on professional responsibility of educators in the German VET system. More specifically, it concentrates on their task to educate. The explicit and implicit embedment of the educational task of vocational school teachers and company trainers in normative and regulatory framework of dual VET is explored. Further, the article addresses the development of the educational task of VET educators over the time. It is shown that in the course of the last decades, a transformation of VET educators' roles and tasks as a result of the changing goals of VET took place. Along with these changes, the educational task of VET educators with respect to development of learners' personality and their personality-related qualities and virtues has gained importance. Furthermore, in light of the growing influence of globalization and migration processes, promotion of students' intercultural competence becomes an integral part of their responsibility. Finally, the article shows that in spite of the growing importance of the topic, the empirical research on how role-related normative demands are perceived, adopted and fulfilled by VET educators in praxis remains scarce.

**Keywords:** vocational education and training, VET, teachers at vocational schools, trainers, educational task, roles of VET educators

**For citation:** Goncharova, A. (2021). An educational task of teachers and trainers in German vocational education and training. *Vocational Education and Labour Market*, 2, 66–78. <https://doi.org/10.52944/PORT.2021.45.2.005>

## Воспитание в профессиональном образовании Германии: роль педагога

A. Гончарова<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universität Osnabrück, Osnabrück, Германия

**Анастасия Гончарова** — аспирант, научный сотрудник факультета профессионального образования Universität Osnabrück, ORCID 0000-0002-0905-3171, e-mail: anastasia.goncharova@uni-osnabrueck

## Аннотация

Статья посвящена вопросам профессиональной ответственности педагогов профессионального образования Германии за целостное развитие учащихся в условиях законодательно поддерживаемой системы дуального обучения. Повышение значимости воспитательной

компоненты в деятельности педагогов профессионального образования обусловлено растущим влиянием процессов глобализации и миграции, а формирование межкультурной компетенции становится важной частью педагогической деятельности. В статье приведены и проанализированы примеры и приемы явного и неявного воспитательного воздействия, применяемые педагогами и наставниками в процессе обучения. В заключение отмечается, что существующий на сегодняшний день уровень теоретического осмысления проблемы воспитания в системе профессионального образования не соответствует актуальности тематики.

**Ключевые слова:** профессиональное образование, педагог профессионального образования, воспитательная работа, качество образования, профессиональное развитие, дуальное образование

**Для цитирования:** Гончарова А. Воспитание в профессиональном образовании Германии: роль педагога // Профессиональное образование и рынок труда. 2021. №2. С. 66–78. <https://doi.org/10.52944/PORT.2021.45.2.005> (In Eng.)

## Introduction

The German vocational education and training (VET) system and, in particular, the dual model has gained considerable international attention worldwide (Euler, 2013; Hummelsheim & Baur, 2014). Above all, its role in economic stability, high quality of produced goods and services and the low unemployment rate are emphasized (Deissinger & Gonon, 2021). The dual system is characterized by a high practice orientation and close linkage to the labour market through companies' involvement in VET implementation. There are two main groups of educators involved in the realization of VET, which are teachers in vocational schools and company trainers. In light of its strong orientation of German VET on the labour market, the question of roles and functions of VET actors and educators arises: Do they mainly focus on training and preparation to the labour market or as well expected to educate? The goal of the article is to address the question of whether, in the context of the German VET, vocational schools and companies as learning sites have an educational task of cultivating personality and what comprises it. The raised question is especially relevant in light of the constantly increasing age of young people participating in VET. In 2018, the average age of young people at the beginning of the training in the dual system was 19.9 years old, and only 25.5% of them were younger than eighteen<sup>1</sup>. The following paper will start with an explanation of the concept of education in the German context. Further, the prescription of an educational task in the normative foundation of VET and its transformation over time will be explored. Finally, the article will present current research on how normative expectations toward roles and responsibilities are perceived by actors themselves and discuss the necessity of further research.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training. (2020). Datenreport zum Berufsbildungsbericht 2020. Informationen und Analysen zur Entwicklung der beruflichen Bildung [Data Report on the Vocational Education and Training Report 2020. Information and analyses on the development of vocational education and training].

## Concept of education in the German context

In the German language, there are two central educational terms — *Bildung* and *Erziehung*. Although both words are usually translated to English as education, they have different connotations which should be clarified.

According to widely cited in Germany definition of Brezinka (1992), *Erziehung* is “actions by which people attempt to permanently improve the structure of other individuals’ psychic dispositions in some way to preserve their components that are judged to be valuable as well as to prevent the emergence of dispositions that are judged to be bad” or shorter as “actions” by which people try “to promote the personality of other individuals in some way” (p. 95). Physic dispositions include abilities, skills, knowledge, attitudes, sentiments and convictions (Brezinka, 1992). According to this understanding, educational actions are interpersonal and intentional. An educator aims to archive a particular state of personality in an individual, which is evaluated by them as positive (Brezinka, 1992). Similarly, Gudjons (2011) underlines that education is an intentional process that seeks to achieve specific goals, norms and values.

In Brezinka’s understanding, education is an asymmetrical, structured subject-object relationship (Koller, 2014). Education does not only address children and adolescents; Adults and even seniors can be the subject of educational objectives as well (Brezinka, 1992). Some conceptualizations of education (*Erziehung*) differentiate from the Brezinka’ understanding in some aspects. According to some scholars, *Erziehung* only takes place in childhood and adolescence. So, for Hurrelmann (1994), as well as for Brezinka, education is a social interaction between people and purposeful action. However, this interaction occurs between an adult and a child. An adult aims to develop a specific behaviour in a child under consideration of his or her needs and characteristics.

Furthermore, some scholars distinguish between intentional education and functional education (Raithel et al., 2009; Riedl & Schelten, 2013). The first one is carried out intentionally and consciously, while the second one is unconscious, occurs without a purpose to educate but still influences children or young people. However, this understanding contradicts the notion of *Erziehung* as Brezinka or Hurrelmann define it since it can take place without an intention.

Further, along with the above-presented concept of *Erziehung*, there is a notion of *Bildung* in the German language. The roots of the concept of *Bildung* go back to the second half of the eighteenth century and the work of German philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835). Humboldt defined *Bildung* as the highest and most proportionate development of human powers into a whole (Koller, 2014). Furthermore, balanced education in Humboldt’s sense aims not only at the development of intellect but of all human powers, including imagination and perceptiveness.

The core aspect that distinguishes the concept of *Bildung* from the one of *Erziehung* (in Brezinka’ understanding) is intentionality. In *Erziehung*, the intentions of educators play the central role. In contrast, *Bildungs* concept focuses on individuals. In the description of pedagogical matters, what learners do themselves is emphasized, namely, educating themselves through

engagement with the environment (Koller, 2014). The educator is here a part of this environment. Therefore, in comparison to *Erziehung*, *Bildung* can only take place as self-education. Another crucial distinction of *Bildung*, in contrast to some conceptions of *Erziehung*, is that it does not end with adolescence but continues through the life course (Schneider, 2012). For Danner (1994), *Erziehung* is an education in a narrow sense, while *Bildung* is an education in a broad sense. *Erziehung* is an intentional process aimed at the formation of personality and attitudes. *Bildung*, as he states, is “the free take-over of the educational intentions of another person by a child” (Danner, 1994, p. 5). In respect to the connection of both concepts, Danner (1994) argues that education (*Erziehung*) induces *Bildung*. As Sjöström et al. (2017) notice, the concept of *Bildung* has experienced many changes and has been re-interpreted through the last centuries, not only in Germany but also in other countries. Unfortunately, the scope of this paper does not allow us to look closer at these developments.

Overall, two points should be concluded regarding two concepts of *Bildung* and *Erziehung* in the German language. Through time, various and sometimes contradictory definitions of both terms have been formulated. Furthermore, the concepts are closely related to each other and often used in an educational context as a combination.

## Educational task of VET educators in the normative foundation of VET

In the dual system, theoretical learning primarily takes place in a vocational school, while practical training is mainly carried out in a company. Therefore, there are two main groups of educators responsible for the realization of VET, namely vocational teachers and company trainers. The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (Die Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland [KMK]) determines in one of its resolutions that the vocational school and the training companies fulfil their educational mandate (*Bildungs- und Erziehung*) in a joint effort<sup>1</sup>. Various normative documents of federal and regional level define tasks and functions of vocational schools and companies as well as requirements toward educators' qualifications.

### *Teachers at vocational schools*

The scope of responsibilities of KMK includes ensuring and further developing the quality of school education, including the VET sector. One of the central means of KMK for reaching their goals lies in developing the standards for teacher professionalization based on the commonly defined profile of a teaching profession.

In the KMK resolution from 2000<sup>2</sup>, a distinction between instructional tasks and educational tasks of teachers can be identified. First, teachers are seen as specialists in learning, whose core task lies in the purposeful and

<sup>1</sup> See KMK. (2019). Rahmenvereinbarung über die Berufsschule [Framework agreement on vocational school]. [https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen\\_beschluesse/2015/2015\\_03\\_12-RV-Berufsschule.pdf](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2015/2015_03_12-RV-Berufsschule.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See KMK. (2000). Aufgaben von Lehrerinnen und Lehrern heute — Fachleute für das Lernen [Tasks of teachers today — professionals for learning]. [http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen\\_beschluesse/2000/2000\\_10\\_05-Bremer-Erkl-Lehrerbildung.pdf](http://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2000/2000_10_05-Bremer-Erkl-Lehrerbildung.pdf)

guided by scientific findings planning, organization and reflection of teaching and learning processes, as well as assessment and systemic evaluation. Second, along with the instructional task, they realize an educational task (*Erziehung*) in the meaning of personality development. Both tasks are closely connected. Education (*Erziehung*) is understood here as the conscious and intentional influence of the personality development of young people. It is further emphasized that teachers should act as role models for children and young people because only in that way positive world orientations and attitudes can be convincingly influenced. Besides, the educational tasks should be seen as a joint effort of teachers and parents and should be realized in close cooperation.

Another regulation of the KMK from 2019<sup>1</sup> formulates, based on the above described professional profile, standards for teacher education for educational science, professional competence areas and constitution them competencies<sup>2</sup>. The areas are: instruction, education (*Erziehung*), evaluation, innovation and school development.

Three competencies comprise the area of education and should be developed during the teacher preparation:

1. Teachers know the social, cultural and technological environments, possible disadvantages, impairments and barriers of and for learners and influence their individual development within the school framework.

2. Teachers convey values and norms, an attitude of appreciation and recognition of diversity and support self-determined and reflected students' judgments and actions.

3. Teachers find approaches to solving difficulties and conflicts in school and classroom, which are age-appropriate and corresponding to the psychological development of learners as well as contribute to appreciative interaction.

It is important to note that the standards are applied to all the teachers and, therefore, to teachers of vocational schools as well.

From various provisions, it is evident that VET teachers are indeed expected to implement an educational task (*Erziehung*), which foresees above all impartment of norm and values, facilitation of recognition and appreciation of diversity, fostering value-conscious positions, reflective thinking and action of students as well as constructive dealing with conflicts.

### ***Company trainers***

Scope of responsibilities of another group of educators in dual VET — company trainers — is described in the Vocational Training Act (Berufsbildungsgesetz [BBiG])<sup>3</sup>. Among other aspects, their educational task, according to the Section 14 of BBiG, is derived from the overreaching goal of the training, which is to ensure that trainees acquire the vocational proficiency required to achieve the training objective. Furthermore, the character development of trainees is underlined as a further responsibility of a training

<sup>1</sup> See KMK. (2019). Standards für die Lehrerbildung: Bildungswissenschaften [Standards for teacher education: educational sciences]. [https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen\\_beschluesse/2004/2004\\_12\\_16-Standards-Lehrerbildung-Bildungswissenschaften.pdf](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2004/2004_12_16-Standards-Lehrerbildung-Bildungswissenschaften.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The requirements toward teachers' preparation are defined not only by the standar

<sup>3</sup> See BBiG from March 2005, rev. May 2020. [https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bbig\\_2005/](https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bbig_2005/)

employer<sup>1</sup>. With this provision, an educational duty (*Erziehung*) of the training employer or the trainer to whom the task is delegated is determined.

Furthermore, BBiG determines in Section 28 that only those who are personally and professionally qualified may train. Professional qualification, as stated in the Section 30, includes not only occupation-related but also vocational pedagogical skills, knowledge and abilities. The Ordinance on Trainer Aptitude (*Ausbilder-Eignungsverordnung [AEVO]*)<sup>2</sup> describes what comprises vocational and occupational pedagogical competencies according to the four fields of professional actions of trainers. These are the evaluation of the training requirements and planning of training, training preparation and assistance in the recruitment of trainees, training implementation as well as completion of training. The third field foresees the occupational pedagogical aptitude to promote independent learning in typical occupational and business processes in an action-oriented manner. In the scope of this field of action, trainers are expected to be able, among others, to “promote a social and personal development of trainees, identify problems and conflicts early enough and work towards their solution”<sup>3</sup> as well as to promote intercultural competencies of trainees (AEVO, Section 3). Therefore, educational task (*Erziehung*) is not manifested explicitly but rather implicitly embedded in specific normative provisions determining duties of trainers and requirements toward their qualifications.

### Development of educational task within VET over the time

Until the end of the 19th century, a polarity between general education (*Bildung*), oriented on personality development, and purposeful vocational training existed in Germany (Brater, 2020). According to Brater (2020), the work of the German pedagogue Georg Kerschensteiner, a founder of the so-called *Arbeitschule* (forerunner of modern vocational school in Germany), became a turning point of this view. He emphasized the educational value of work and argued that character and personality development, earlier seen as a goal of general education (*Bildung*), can also be archived through vocational education. In his view, through practical work, learners develop not only craft and technical skills but also their social and personal qualities. As Deissinger and Gonon (2021) point out, the *Bildung* for Kerschensteiner “is an experience of (cultural) values through vocationally based education, work and elaboration” (p. 12). The idea of double purpose and impact of work-based learning represented a shift of long-standing paradigm of incompatibility of goals of general (*Bildung*) and vocational education (Brater, 2020). Moreover, Kerschensteiner saw vocation (*Beruf*) as a foundation of *Bildung* (Deissinger & Gonon, 2021). The educational ideas of Kerschensteiner and, in particular, a new perspective on the relationship between a vocation and *Bildung* had a strong influence on the further development of the German debate on goals

<sup>1</sup> In the context of the dual system, trainees sign the contract with a party called “training employer”. The training itself can be either implemented by owners of the companies themselves or delegated to an employer qualified for this task — a trainer.

<sup>2</sup> See AEVO from January 2009. [https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/ausbeignv\\_2009/BJNR008800009.html](https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/ausbeignv_2009/BJNR008800009.html)

<sup>3</sup> Translated from German by the author of the article



of vocational training. However, they faced significant criticism as well. Therefore, he and his supporters were criticized for ignoring the real conditions of the world of work (Brater, 2020). Kerschensteiner concentrated on vocational school education and did not engage in the discussion of industrial vocational training.

Since 1960s, a new generation of pedagogues started investigating the reality of industrial vocational training and observed that usually no attention was paid to the personality development of apprentices (Brater, 2020). They called for a change to promote vocational training, which stronger concentrates on the personality development of trainees. Soon after, in light of the rapid technological change, the industry also called for new training concepts and forms that would allow workers to adapt to the increasing dynamism of work. At this point in time, a new construct of key qualifications (*Schlüsselqualifikationen*) emerged as an answer to the changing demands toward the workforce, which until today, influences the VET discourse and praxis. The term of key qualifications was introduced in the 1970s by Dieter Mertens. He argued that the current labour market required that individuals possess not only vocational but as well generic personal capabilities. These are knowledge, skills and abilities which are not directly related to specific practical activities but can be applied in a large number of functions at the same time and allow individuals to cope with different unpredictable changes throughout life (Mertens, 1974). The term key qualifications reflect these elements' core goal, namely their key role in "the unlocking of understanding, processing and behavioral patterns"<sup>1</sup> (Mertens, 1974, p. 40).

According to Mertens (1974), every kind of training should have three dimensions:

1. Training for developing one's personality,
2. Training for the foundation of professional existence,
3. Training for social behaviour.

There was an intensive debate about the utility of the concept of key qualifications for vocational education in the vocational pedagogy community. One of the supporters of applying the concept was Reetz (1999), who argued that it opened up the opportunity to design vocational learning processes in companies and schools to promote personal development.

Although the idea of key qualifications was not directly adopted in the VET sector, it gave an impulse to develop the concept of vocational action competence (*Handlungskompetenz*) of German VET. Deissinger and Gonon (2021) argue that Kerschensteiner's ideas still lie in the foundation of the German VET today; However, the concepts he used have been replaced by more contemporary approaches, including vocational action competence.

### ***Promotion of vocational competence***

The development of vocational competence was introduced as a central goal of VET. Its promotion is embedded in framework curricula<sup>2</sup>, training regulations of dual VET programs and other normative regulation of VET, as the

<sup>1</sup> Translated from German by the author of the article.

<sup>2</sup> Framework curricula are developed for the vocation-related part of the VET programme at vocational school within the framework of the dual system by the KMK and are coordinated with the corresponding training regulations for the in-company part of the training.

previous section revealed. The KMK defines vocational action competence as “the readiness and ability of the individual to behave in a properly thought-out, individually and socially responsible manner in professional, social and private situations”<sup>1</sup>. It is divided into the dimensions of professional, personal and social competence.

The introduction of vocational action competence as a guiding principle of VET led to the alignment of VET educators’ roles and tasks and a shift toward a stronger focus on the educational task (*Erziehung*). The role of trainers became more complex and diverse. Reetz (2002) explains that trainers were now expected not only to impart professional knowledge and skills but also to facilitate independent thinking and action and other transferable competencies. The shift of the emphasis from impartment of skills toward the promotion of personality-related qualities leads to the redefinition of the roles of trainers. As well in vocational schools, as Schelten (2008) states, the educational task (*Erziehung*) is primarily realized in the course of promoting vocational competence. In that respect, the focus of the educational task (*Erziehung*) lies in fostering students’ personal and social competencies. Personal competence refers to an aptitude for work virtues, such as accuracy, reliability, conscientiousness, a sense of responsibility and duty. Independence and self-confidence are essential pillars on which personal competence is built. Above it, students’ ability to act according to the moral guidelines and standards and ecologically responsible should be developed (Schelten, 2008).

### ***Intercultural education***

Promotion of intercultural competencies of children and young people has become an important goal of education and a further educational task of VET educators. Two key developments have driven an intensive engagement with intercultural education in the last decades in Germany: international migration and globalization, expressed among others in a growing amount of internationally active businesses and diversity of workforce (Riedl & Schelten, 2013). Consequently, a significant amount of research has been done on intercultural education, as well guidelines and political recommendations have been developed and measures implemented and for its promotion on different spheres of education, including VET. Intercultural competence is understood by the KMK as “a core competence for responsible action in a diverse, globally-connected society, which does not only involves dealing with other languages and cultures but above all the ability to self-reflect on one’s images of others and to relate to them, as well as to know and reflect on the social framework conditions for the creation of such images”<sup>2</sup>.

A formulation of *Recommendations on Intercultural Education in Schools* by the KMK back in 1996 and their revision in 2013 is one of the significant countywide political initiatives in this direction. In 2017 the KMK published an official report about the implementation of the recommendations in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Translated from German by the author of the article. See Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training. (n.d.). Ziele und Leitbilder in der beruflichen Ausbildung [Goals and guiding principles in Vocational Education and Training]. URL: [https://www.prueferportal.org/de/prueferportal\\_74664.php/kmk](https://www.prueferportal.org/de/prueferportal_74664.php/kmk)

<sup>2</sup> Translated from German by the author of the article. See KMK. (2013). Interkulturelle Bildung und Erziehung in der Schule [Intercultural education at school]. [https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen\\_beschluesse/1996/1996\\_10\\_25-Interkulturelle-Bildung.pdf](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/1996/1996_10_25-Interkulturelle-Bildung.pdf)



different federal states of Germany<sup>1</sup>. Since school education, including vocational schools, lies in the responsibility of federal states, the concrete measures for implementing the recommendations developed at the regional and school level varied. According to the report, federal states actualized and further developed their curricula to incorporate intercultural competence in the didactic-curricular planning of the classroom teaching and extracurricular activities. However, the implementation of the measure in everyday school practice remained a challenge, as stated in the report. There was a particular focus on language education, which presents a continuous teaching task. Further, federal states expanded and enhanced their initial and in-service teacher training programs in the areas of language education, especially with a focus on German as a second language. Several examples from different federal states can provide an insight into the diversity of implementation modalities. In Thuringia, for instance, the development of intercultural competence was embedded in curricula of vocational schools as a binding interdisciplinary educational goal for all subjects. The implementation of the goal involved the acquisition and deepening of learners' socio-cultural knowledge and exploration of cultural differences and commonalities. In Rhineland-Palatinate young people without sufficient language skills were admitted to all educational programs in vocational schools. However, along with the courses foreseen by the standard curriculum, they visited specialized language courses. Although the recommendations address the VET sector as well, the majority of measures described in the report are oriented on general schools and preparatory measures for VET.

### **Roles and tasks of VET educators in the focus of research**

In the recent years, the topic of VET educators' roles and tasks as well as their transformation has been gaining attention not only in education policy discourse but also a research subject. Tutschner and Haasler (2012) emphasized that acknowledgment of a close connection between the role and qualification of educational actors and VET quality served as an impulse for growing research interest toward this topic.

Several trends characterizing the recent research on roles and responsibilities of VET educators can be identified. One stream of research concentrates on implications of changing conditions of work under growing importance of various themes, such as, for instance, digitalization or heterogeneity of students, on educators' tasks and roles and, consequently, on emergence of new requirements toward their competencies and qualifications. This stream of research is however not new and has been influenced the scientific discussion for a long time (Jahn et al., 2016). Another stream of research focuses on the perspective of the involved actors themselves, more precisely, on their professional self-perceptions.

An example of such research is a qualitative study conducted by Koch et al. (2009) who examined self-perception of roles by VET educators based

---

<sup>1</sup> See KMK. (2017). „Interkulturelle Bildung und Erziehung in der Schule“. Berichte der Länder über die Umsetzung des Beschlusses [“Intercultural Education in Schools“. Reports of the states on implementation of the resolution]. [https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Bildung/AllgBildung/2017-05-11-Berichte\\_Interkulturelle\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/Dateien/pdf/Bildung/AllgBildung/2017-05-11-Berichte_Interkulturelle_Bildung.pdf)

on the beforehand constructed role profiles: subject expert, helper, moderator, motivator, consultant and educator. They found out that educational and role model function (*Erziehung*) dominates in the self-perceptions of vocational school teachers. The core of their educational task teachers saw in the facilitation of mobility, intercultural awareness as well as in support of integration processes of foreigners. Company trainers perceived themselves as well as educators, however, to a much lesser degree.

A further qualitative empirical study on the topic was conducted by Tutschner and Haasler (2012). The focus of the research lied on the current roles of different groups of vocational pedagogical personnel from the perspective of the educators themselves. They identified a general trend of role shifts of VET teachers and trainers from the subject matter and instructor to learning facilitator, mentor and coach. Furthermore, from the perspective of VET educators, the importance of a socio-pedagogical educational task (*Erziehung*) in their professional practice has increased over time (Tutschner & Haasler, 2012).

More recently, a further small sample explorative study was conducted by Jahn et al. (2016), who concentrated on how VET educators perceive normatively constructed role expectation and integrate them into their own role image. The study showed that role construction is a complex and highly individualized process influenced by an interplay of such factors like function, qualification, organisational context against the biographical background of actors. Further qualitative studies on roles and roles' perceptions of vocational pedagogical personnel in the German context were recently conducted by Burchert (2012) and Maltritz (2016).

The mentioned studies represent deep qualitative research with relatively small groups of participants, different conceptual grounds and various focus in the choice of participants. In that respect, Dietrich (2017) underlines a need for a meta-research on vocational pedagogy, roles, and tasks of vocational training staff, which would allow to consolidate and provide a scientific evaluation of various findings from different specialized studies and research projects.

## Conclusion

In summary, the educational task of VET educators in the meaning of personality cultivation manifests itself in the professional requirements and standards for teachers and trainers in various forms. The educational task as the development of learners' personality has gained its importance in the last decades with the introduction of vocational competence. Promotion of independent thinking and acting, different capabilities and virtues in the scope of social, personal competencies of students became crucial responsibilities of VET teachers and trainers foreseen by a normative foundation of dual VET. Also, under the influence of intensifying globalization and migration processes, the promotion of the international competencies of young people becomes a focus of the educational tasks of VET educators. Therefore, over time developed normative expectations toward VET educators of both learning sites are complex and versatile, going far beyond occupation-related instruction.

Along with the normative perspective, the paper looked at empirical research on the roles and responsibilities of VET educators. Despite the growing importance of the topic, the empirical research on whether and how the formulated normative expectations toward educators' roles are in reality perceived by actors are still very limited. However, already conducted studies bring important incitements about professional self-perceptions of vocational school teachers and trainers. Thus, studies indicate that educators do not automatically adopt the normatively imposed roles but actively integrate and shape them. Further, some of the studies showed that educational actors indeed perceive an expansion and versatility of their role. The educational task is seen by VET educators, particularly, by vocational teachers, as a crucial part of their work. Due to its valuable impulses, such research, concentrating on the perspectives of teachers and trainers, more precisely, on how these tasks- and role-related normative demands are perceived, adopted and fulfilled by VET educators in praxis should be further expanded. Therefore, the actor-centered perspective should, along with the normative-theoretical perspective, become a focus of future research.

Further exploration of actors' perspective on normative expectations toward their roles, role versatility, including the growing importance of the educational task, as well as on their professional self-perceptions, remain especially crucial in the light of the current concerns to ensure a sustainable supply of well-qualified educational personnel for VET in the future. Such research can further provide valuable incentives for the development of the professionalization strategies and development of measures to support VET education in the process of constant roles' and responsibilities' transformation.

## References

- Brater, M. (2020). Berufsbildung und Persönlichkeitsentwicklung in der historischen Dimension [Vocational education and training and personality development in the historical dimension.]. In R. Arnold, A. Lipsmeier, & M. Rohs (Eds.), *Handbuch Berufsbildung* (3rd ed.). Springer VS.
- Brezinka, W. (1992). *Philosophy of Educational Knowledge: An Introduction to the Foundations of Science of Education, Philosophy of Education and Practical Pedagogics*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-2586-4>
- Burchert, J. (2012). Coach, Organisator, Kollege oder Berufspädagoge? Skizze einer Typologie des pädagogischen Selbstverständnisses hauptamtlicher Ausbilder [Coach, organizer, colleague or professional educator? Sketch of a typology of the pedagogical self-image of full-time trainers]. In P. Ulmer, R. Weiß, A. Zöller, & P. Ulmer (Eds.), *Berufliches Bildungspersonal — Forschungsfragen und Qualifizierungskonzepte*. Bertelsmann.
- Danner, H. (1994). 'BILDUNG' A basic term of German education. [https://www.helmut-danner.info/pdfs/German\\_term\\_Bildung.pdf](https://www.helmut-danner.info/pdfs/German_term_Bildung.pdf)
- Deissinger, T., & Gonon, P. (2021). The development and cultural foundations of dual apprenticeships — a comparison of Germany and Switzerland.

*Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13636820.2020.1863451>

- Dietrich, A. (2017). Berufsbildungspersonal 2025 — Forschungs- und Entwicklungsperspektiven im Kontext gesellschaftlicher Megatrends [Vocational training personnel 2025 — research and development perspectives in the context of societal megatrends]. In M. French & A. Dietrich (Eds.), *Berufsbildungspersonal in Bildungsdienstleistern und Betrieben* [Vocational training personnel in training service providers and companies]. Rostock University.
- Euler, D. (2013). *Germany's dual vocational training system: A model for other countries?* Bertelsmann Stiftung.
- Gudjons, H. (2011). *Pädagogisches Grundwissen* [Fundamental pedagogical knowledge] (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Klinkhardt.
- Hummelsheim, S., & Baur, M. (2014). The German dual system of initial vocational education and training and its potential for transfer to Asia. *Prospects*, 44(2), 279–296. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-014-9311-4>
- Hurrelmann, K. (1994). Mut zur demokratischen Erziehung! [Courage for democratic education!]. *Pädagogik*, 46(7–8), 13–17.
- Jahn, R. W., Brünner, K., & Schunk, F. (2016). „Neue“ Rollen des beruflichen Bildungspersonals und deren Wahrnehmung durch die pädagogischen Akteure — eine interpretative Analyse dominanter Rollenbilder von Berufsschullehrern und Ausbildern [“New” roles of vocational education personnel and their perception by pedagogical actors — an interpretative analysis of dominant role models of vocational school teachers and trainers]. <https://doi.org/10.25673/4504>
- Koch, R., Jahn, R. W., Schumann, J., & Schiller, S. (2009). Aufgaben- und Rollenpluralität des beruflichen Bildungspersonals [Plurality of tasks and roles of vocational training personnel]. *Berufs- Und Wirtschaftspädagogik — Online*, (2009), H. Profil 2. [http://www.bwpat.de/profil2/koch\\_etal\\_profil2.shtml](http://www.bwpat.de/profil2/koch_etal_profil2.shtml) (Volltext)
- Koller, H.-C. (2014). *Grundbegriffe, Theorien und Methoden der Erziehungswissenschaft. Eine Einführung* [Basic concepts, theories and methods of educational science. An introduction] (7th ed.). Kohlhammer.
- Maltritz, M. (2016). *Das berufliche Selbstverständnis als Determinante des professionellen Handelns* [Professional self-image as a determinant of professional action] [Dissertation, Fakultät für Humanwissenschaften; W. Bertelsmann Verlag, Otto-von-Guericke-Universität Magdeburg]. GBV Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund.
- Mertens, D. (1974). Schlüsselqualifikationen: Thesen zur Schulung für eine moderne Gesellschaft [Key qualifications: Theses on training for a modern society]. *Mitteilungen Aus Der Arbeitsmarkt- Und Berufsforschung*, 7(1), 36–43.
- Raithel, J., Dollinger, B., & Hörmann, G. (2009). *Einführung Pädagogik: Begriffe, Strömungen, Klassiker, Fachrichtungen* [Introduction to pedagogy: terms, trends, classics, disciplines] (3rd ed.). VS Verl. für Sozialwiss. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-91828-0>

- Reetz, L. (1999). Zum Zusammenhang von Schlüsselqualifikationen — Kompetenzen — Bildung [On the connection between key qualifications — competencies — education]. In T. Tramm, D. Sembill, F. Klauser, & E. G. John (Eds.), *Professionalisierung kaufmännischer Berufsbildung. Beiträge zur Öffnung der Wirtschaftspädagogik für die Anforderungen des 21. Jahrhunderts*. Lang.
- Reetz, L. (2002). Überlegungen zu einer zukunftsgerichteten Rolle der Ausbilder in Betrieben [Reflections on a future-oriented role of trainers in companies]. *Zeitschrift Für Berufs- Und Wirtschaftspädagogik*, 98, 8–25.
- Riedl, A., & Schelten, A. (2013). *Grundbegriffe der Pädagogik und Didaktik beruflicher Bildung [Fundamental concepts of pedagogy and didactics of vocational training]*. Pädagogik. Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Schelten, A. (2008). Bildungsauftrag der Berufsschule — Traditionelle und neue Aufgaben [Educational mission of the vocational school — traditional and new tasks]. *Die Berufsbildende Schule*, 60(7/8), 207–208.
- Sjöström, J., Frerichs, N., Zuin, V. G., & Eilks, I. (2017). Use of the concept of Bildung in the international science education literature, its potential, and implications for teaching and learning. *Studies in Science Education*, 53(2), 165–192. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057267.2017.1384649>
- Schneider, K. (2012). The Subject-Object Transformations and 'Bildung'. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(3), 302–311. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00696.x>
- Tutschner, R., & Haasler, S. R. (2012). Meister der Methode — Zum Wandel des Rollenverständnisses von Lehrern und Ausbildern in der beruflichen Bildung [Master of the method - on the change in the understanding of the role of teachers and trainers in vocational education and training]. In P. Ulmer, R. Weiß, A. Zöller, & P. Ulmer (Eds.), *Berufliches Bildungspersonal — Forschungsfragen und Qualifizierungskonzepte*. Bertelsmann.