

CIVIC EDUCATION IN SWEDISH VET CURRICULA

Per-Åke Rosvall



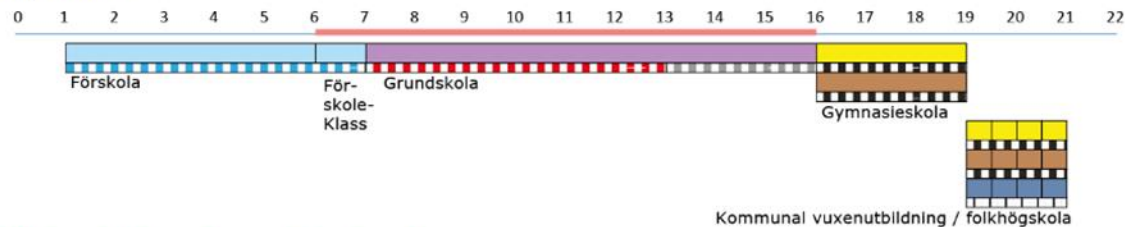
UMEA UNIVERSITY

SWEDISH IVET, A SHORT RECAP

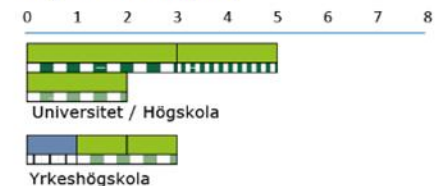
- Upper secondary education (3 years of length)
 - 6 Higher education preparatory programmes
 - 12 VET programmes (possibility select profile within programme)
- VET
 - Mainly school based
 - Including 15 weeks of workplace practice
 - Between 1994-2011 VET programmes gave merits to enter HE
 - 2011-2023 courses that includes merits to HE is optional
 - From 2023 courses that includes merits to HE is added

Sweden

Age of students



Programme duration (years)



United Kingdom – England

CRITICAL EDUCATION IN VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS? (CRIT-VET)

Sub-study with focus on workplace learning: The aim was to analyse how a sample of Swedish VET students perceived and experienced power relations during their workplace learning periods in upper secondary education.

Two research questions guided our work:

What expressions of power relations did the students perceive?

How did they experience being positioned in structures of power, as both individuals and parts of a professional collective?

Project: Crit-VET			
2016	2016-2019		
Curriculum analysis	Observation and interview studies, 6 classes - 3 programmes		
Comparison of HE-preparatory and vocational programmes	School year 1 Classroom observations in vocational subjects, interviews with students and teachers	School year 2 Observations of workplace learning supervision, school introductions and follow-ups of workplace learning.	School year 3 Interviews with students just before the end of their final year. Observations of their exam work and presentation.
Comparison of gender aspects in vocational programmes			

POWER AS SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Today I would have told him off immediately. I would never have kept my mouth shut. But I guess you need thick skin to work in this trade. I guess that many girls don't dare to raise their voices and only do what they're told. I would never do that, but rather say what I think about things. (Vehicle & Transport student)

For Vehicle and Transport harassment was most associated with colleagues and for Health and social care students and Restaurant and Management students most associated with patients and customers.



POWER AS XENOPHOBIA

Boy: Usually it's possible to adjust the schedules so no one with an immigrant background needs to visit a racist patient.

Interviewer: How do you feel about this?

Boy: I guess we react differently. Someone who works here get angry when she hears about her schedule being adjusted so she won't meet patients with racist attitudes because of her immigrant background.



FINDINGS

- It seemed as power relations were important to the students from how they talked during interviews. Remember there were no specific question on gender and ethnicity, just: What problems and challenges did you encounter during Workplace learning?
- The students expressed and we could see during field observations in school of introduction and follow up sessions of Workplace learning, that those questions seldom were discussed.



CONCLUSION

Neither the students nor the teachers can be expected to be drivers of required changes. For this, changes in the curriculum are needed. General descriptions of democratic values are included in the first 14 pages of the upper secondary curriculum in Sweden, covering overarching values that are supposed to be incorporated in all elements of schooling. Our research show that they rarely are included in Swedish VET. Thus, with the student interviews as a platform, we argue that those values must be stressed in the more specific subject plans in order to be implemented in practice.



REFERENCE

Rönnlund, M., & Rosvall, P.-Å. (2021). Vocational students' experiences of power relations during periods of workplace learning – a means for citizenship learning. *Journal of Education and Work*, 34(4), 558-571.

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