VOCEDplus HIGHLIGHTS

NCVER's international tertiary education research database

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Building digitalisation capability requires a holistic workforce development approach

Leveraging technology to support lifelong learning

Digitalisation of TVET and skills development: leveraging technology to support lifelong learning / International Labour Organization (ILO).

Geneva, Switzerland: ILO, 2021. 12 pages.

The rapid and dynamic development of digital technologies creates new opportunities and challenges for individuals, enterprises, labour markets and skills development systems alike. In terms of digitalisation, employment and skills systems have both external and internal pressures. First, they have to respond to the external demand for skills from digital societies and economies and the transition to the new world of work, and secondly, as other sectors do, they have to engage in their own digital transition. This policy brief concentrates on the digital transformation of skills systems and how technologies affect them. It is focused on how skills systems themselves become digitised, not how they respond to the demand for skills arising from digitalisation in the labour market.

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AI can improve significantly on other technology-powered training solutions, and, in some cases, it can also improve on some aspects of human-provided services

Artificial intelligence for training

Opportunities and drawbacks of using artificial intelligence for training / Annelore Verhagen.

Paris, France: OECD, 2021. 68 pages.

Technological developments are one of the major forces behind the need for retraining, but they can also be part of the solution. In particular, artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to increase training participation, including among currently underrepresented groups, by lowering some of the barriers to training that people experience and by increasing motivation to train. Moreover, certain AI solutions for training may improve the alignment of training to labour market needs, and reduce bias and discrimination in the workplace. In order to realise the benefits of AI for training and ensure that it yields benefits for all, it will be necessary to address potential drawbacks in terms of changing skills requirements, inequalities in access to data, technology and infrastructure and important ethical issues. Finally, even when these drawbacks can be addressed, the introduction and expansion of AI tools for training is constrained by the supply of AI skills in the workforce and the availability of scientific evidence regarding the benefits of AI tools for training and whether they are cost-effective.

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In 2021 people forcibly displaced from their homes had increased yet again to 82 million globally

Adult refugee skills and labour market demand in Europe

Relocation 2.0: tying adult refugee skills to labour market demand / European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022. 19 pages.

This policy brief is based on an empirical piece of work carried out in Greece and Portugal. The work tested if, and under what conditions, intra-European Union (EU) relocation of refugees based on skills and labour market needs in countries of relocation may work. The central element of a skills-based solution is matching refugees' skills and qualifications with labour market needs in a potential receiving country that offers adult refugees a clear perspective of employment and a clear route to self-reliance. Such skills-based solutions to protection would offer an additional pathway to refugees to move legally from third countries to the EU, as well as within the EU. Experience gained indicates six ways in which progress can be made to expand relocation in Europe based on refugees' skills and labour market needs.

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By means of a qualitative meta-synthesis, the authors identified 68 categories of dropout reasons in apprenticeships and structured them into a coherent dropout model

Why apprentices dropout from initial vocational training

Dropout from initial vocational training: a meta-synthesis of reasons from the apprentice's point of view / Svenja Bohn and Viola Deutscher.

Educational research review, volume 35, February 2022, pages 1-14.

Internationally, vocational education and training faces some major challenges, one of them certainly constituting the number of premature terminations of contract. A large part of former research within this context has concentrated on the identification and analysis of dropout reasons from the apprentice's point of view. Due to differing foci within previous studies, gaining a comprehensive overview of reasons for premature termination of contract has been impeded. Hence, it was the aim of this article to summarise central cross-study and cross-sector findings within this context. Therefore, the present state of research was systematically reviewed and meta-synthesised: 70 studies were extracted, including 666 potential dropout variables that were aggregated based on 68 categories. As a result, a collection of empirically retrieved factors was developed and integrated within a framework model of premature termination of contract. Results indicate that former research has mainly focused on dropout drivers within the individual. Simultaneously, there has been far less focus on the learning environment in the workplaces. In addition, only for a small number of dropout categories are the findings consistent. Results of quantitative studies indicate that the dropout probability increases with a low training wage, a training occupation not representing the apprentice's dream job, an apprentice's low educational level, a poor performance level within training, a learning disability, increasing age and a migration background. Finally, studies find significant differences concerning the respective training occupation.

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Myriad policy initiatives exist at the European Union level to strengthen work-based learning

Monitoring and evaluating work-based learning in Europe

Monitoring and evaluating work-based learning in vocational education and training: a handbook for policy makers and social partners / Philipp Grollmann, Frederik Hugo, Stefan Thomas and Wolfgang Wittig.

Turin, Italy: European Training Foundation, 2021. 90 pages.

This handbook is aimed at those interested in managing existing work-based learning schemes by incorporating monitoring and evaluation methods. Following a brief discussion of the concept of work-based learning, the handbook presents the rationale for monitoring and evaluation as part of good governance. The functioning of work-based learning schemes is represented by a process model comprising four stages: input, process, output and outcome. For each of these four stages, examples of relevant indicators and tools from several countries around the globe are presented. These tools cover the following topics: support from companies and learners, financial resources, costs and benefits, curriculum design, quality of training staff, organisation of the learning process, use of digital technologies, assessment of learners, learning achievements, and labour-market outcomes.

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The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the trend of declining enrolments in community colleges and put the academic and career plans of many students on hold

COVID-19's impact on community colleges in the US

Catastrophe or catalyst?: reflections on COVID's impact on community colleges / Thomas Brock and Cameron Diwa.

Journal of postsecondary student success, volume 1, number 2, December 2021, pages 2-17.

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a steep decline in enrolments at community colleges, especially among Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous populations, males, and part-time students. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act provided funds for emergency aid and engaging disconnected students, and community colleges moved swiftly to shift services and instruction online. In this article, the authors discuss how students and community colleges responded to the pandemic and what their experiences reveal about inequities in higher education. The authors argue that the crisis was worsened by years of underinvestment in these institutions and by entrenched structures and practices that do not address the needs and aspirations of many students. The authors review evidence on reforms that aim to remake community colleges in ways that improve student outcomes. While COVID-19 can rightly be viewed as a catastrophe, it may also serve as a catalyst for fundamental and lasting improvements in how community colleges are funded, organised, and operated to help more students achieve their goals.

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