



Transitions into higher vocational education in Switzerland: The role of intrinsic and extrinsic work values, expectations and rewards

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Format & Type

Oral, Scientific

Background

Vocational education plays an important role in Switzerland. Two thirds of all adolescents enter upper-secondary-level vocational training after compulsory school. Given the shortage of skilled personnel, particularly in healthcare, an increase in the number of young people continuing their education on the vocational tertiary level is highly desirable. Decision theories describe (occupational) values and cost-benefit considerations as subjective attitudes of individuals which influence (educational) decision-making. Sociological or economic decision models focus primarily on financial or status-oriented values and cost-benefit considerations, while socio-psychological models extended the research to social and intrinsic dimension. Recent research points out that a value-reward dissonance impact work satisfaction and thus is likely to influence career choices. However, little is known how these factors influence the transition after a vocational education. Against this background, and based on Eccles' (2005) model of achievement related choices, this paper examines the transition from upper-secondary training into tertiary education, with the example of healthcare apprentices.

Research Question / Aim

In particular, we ask how (1) extrinsic and intrinsic work values and cost expectations during education, and (2) work rewards which have been encountered after training, (3) affects young people's decisions to enroll in vocational tertiary healthcare education after a vocational healthcare apprenticeship.

Method / Procedure

The analyses are based on a longitudinal survey of the full cohort of healthcare assistant apprentices who finished their training in 2011. The apprentices were surveyed during training as well as one and five years after the apprenticeship. The sample consist of all healthcare assistant trainees who either did not continue into any type of tertiary studies or who entered registered nurse studies within the observation period (N=659). The respondents were asked about their values and expectations in the first survey and about their rewards as a healthcare assistant in the second wave as well as about their career decisions in the second and third wave. Multivariate methods (logistic regression) were applied to estimate the joint effect of cost expectations, work values and work rewards to enroll in tertiary healthcare education within five years after the apprenticeship training.

Results

The multivariate logistic regressions show that those with high extrinsic values during training are more likely to enter higher education, than those with lower extrinsic values. Furthermore, if individuals expect to gain from a tertiary degree both intrinsically and extrinsically, they are more likely to enroll in nursing studies. Last, those who experience their first work situation in their learned occupation to be rewarding in terms of wages, career possibilities and job opportunities are more likely to continue into further education.

Discussion

Higher valuation of income, career and further education affect the career intentions of vocationally trained healthcare assistants. Teachers and trainers should actively identify the work values and expectations of these students. Furthermore, individuals are more likely to enter higher education if they experience a rewarding work environment after training.



COMPETENCE NETWORK
HEALTH WORKFORCE

Conclusion

Thus, attractive wages and career opportunities for trained healthcare assistants should be an important way to address the nursing shortage and recruitment problems.