

Issues in VET research: current crisis and potential possibilities?

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This paper responds to some of the issues discussed in Rod McDonald's address at the 2000 AVETRA conference in the context of federal government research policies (ARC, Innovations Strategy and the New Knowledges). The paper critically analyses the future possibilities and challenges emerging for VET researchers. The paper argues that VET research community has to address four key crises.

1. Crisis of future: The future development of VET research to ensure that there is a critical mass of VET researchers, the organisational structures to support them and the production of future VET researchers.
2. Crisis of purpose and direction: The paper argues using Aronowitz and Giroux's (1993) template that the paradigm of researcher as "policy advisor" has become the dominant paradigm. A more diversified approach is VET research in terms of paradigms methodologies and political stances is proposed.
3. Crisis of sponsorship: The paper argues that funding sources for VET research is limited and needs to be expanded outside current sources. Part of the limiting dilemma is related to second crisis.
4. Crisis of politics of the state: The politics of the state have stressed an open market deregulated approach to funding VET and research has largely been influenced by this and been forced to respond to limited resources and limited possibilities.

The paper asks if VET research is sustainable within the current funding sources and proposes the need for a dialogues on the future of VET research which addresses the crisis. The papers addresses changes associated with the way VET researchers situate the purpose and ownership of their work and its social role