

SYMPAB - (16112) - THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Dana Vedder-Weiss (Israel)¹

1 - Ben-Gurion University

Short Abstract

Research on identity formation in the field of science education is gaining increasing traction. This body of research primarily focuses on youth development of a "science identity", the ways it is shaped in and out of schools and the ways it shapes science career aspirations and pathways. This research is predominantly concerned with unequal access to science, focusing on underrepresented groups, mostly women and minority ethnic groups. While many elements in the educational landscape have been shown to shape youth identity development, their science teachers remain a central influence, more often portrayed as impeding the development of students' positive science identity than as supporting it. Different perspectives have been taken to explicate the impact of science teachers on their students' identity development. In this chapter, by reviewing key literature in the field of science teacher identity, I argue that a better understanding of the development of science teacher identity is key to understanding the obstacles science teachers face in implementing quality teaching hence in nurturing their students' science identity. Better understanding the development of science teachers' identity is further crucial to mitigate the high rates of science teachers that leave the profession early in their careers, as well as to advance a more equitable distribution of qualified and experienced teachers among students from all communities.