



► **1.2.302 – Promoting social and emotional competences in vocational education and training: a study of trainee medical assistants**

Research Project: Abstract

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Promoting social and emotional competences in vocational education and training: a study of trainee medical assistants

Topic cluster

By addressing conditions, diagnostics and the promotion of social and emotional competences among medical assistants, this project covers all three areas of the “Vocational learning” topic cluster and is primarily assigned to this cluster. In addition, it also includes references to the “Digital transformations” topic cluster, which amongst other things investigates what new methodological design options and tasks are emerging for vocational education and training as a result of digitalisation. The project picks up this question by exploring the possibilities for diagnosing and promoting social and emotional competences using digital methods.

Summary of the most important points

Social and emotional competences are extremely important for all professional activities that involve customer or patient contact as well as for working in teams. For example, they influence customer or patient satisfaction, the quality of the relationships between employees, job satisfaction and also team productivity (FAIX/LAIER 1991; KANNING 2015; KANNING/BERGMANN/EBLE/GÄRTNER 2009; WALTER/KANNING 2003). Conversely, a lack of social and emotional competences has a detrimental effect on productivity, leads to dissatisfaction and affects the health of employees (GIARDINI/FRESE 2006; PARKER/ATKINS/AXTELL 2008; PARKER/AXTELL 2001). Despite their great significance, social and emotional competences currently are not being taught and promoted sufficiently in vocational education and training.

One profession in which interactions with patients and colleagues form a central part of the job is the training occupation of the medical assistant. The planned project “ProSECoM” (**P**romotion of **S**ocial and **E**motional **C**ompetences of **M**edical **A**ssistants) therefore intends to develop and evaluate a training concept for the social and emotional competences of trainee medical assistants. The aim is to develop teaching and learning methods that can be used to effectively promote occupation-specific social and emotional competences of the target group. At the same time, a long-term integration of these methods into the teaching and training routine of schools and/or training companies (surgeries, clinics and health care facilities) should be possible.

To achieve these goals, the project will be structured in three phases. The first project phase will entail determining the framework conditions for integrating learning phases and methods for social and emotional competences into the training provided at vocational schools and companies. Based on this, the second project phase aims to develop training methods and test instruments including e-learning modules for the transfer of knowledge, video sequences showing forms of social interaction that are typical of the profession concerned and interactive methods. The final choice of methods will depend on the results of the first project phase. A particular emphasis will be placed on the question as to what extent digital teaching and learning methods can contribute towards promoting social and emotional competences, from which starting points for promoting these competences in other vocational training occupations could be derived as well.

In the third project phase, the teaching and learning methods developed will be tested by means of a three-step design with pre-test, post-test- and follow-up to establish how effective they are for developing the competences. Accompanying this, institutional and individual framework conditions with regard to competence development will be assessed in order to provide recommendations for practical implementation of the methods developed.

The work builds on the results of the “Competence Measurement based on Simulations and adaptive Testing in Medical Settings (CoSMed)” project (sub-project on the measurement of social-

communicative competences among medical assistants (funding code DB1102)) conducted by the ASCOT research initiative of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).