

Interpersonal violence in the professional practice of therapists and midwives in Lower Austria: A feasibility survey into the development of two digital learning interventions

Claudia Oblasser, Andreas Lichtenwörther, Barbara Prinz-Buchberger, Gerhard Tucek

Alle: IMC Fachhochschule Krems

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1 INTRODUCTION

In their professional practice, health professionals encounter clients who experience domestic violence, and they can experience client violence. Anecdotal evidence indicated that this is also true for practicing midwives as well as music, occupational, and physical therapists in Lower Austria; it also indicated that the professionals are suboptimally prepared to handle such situations. To enhance these professionals' specific knowledge, skills, and competencies, it was suggested to develop and design, in a future action research study, two online or hybrid learning tools for the topics of domestic and client violence in the professional practice of midwives and therapists in Lower Austria. However, before the start of such a study, its feasibility should be determined.

2 RESEARCH AIM

Therefore, the presented feasibility study aimed to collect information on

- Lower Austrian therapists' and midwives' experiences with clients who are victims of domestic violence and with client violence,
- their perceived knowledge about these two kinds of violence,
- whether these professionals think they need more information and training in this respect, and
- if yes, whether they would welcome digital learning tools.

The answers to these questions should inform the researchers on whether the two intended digital learning tools for domestic and client violence, respectively, in midwives' and therapists' practice would be acceptable to potential users in Lower Austria, and whether the future educational action research project to implement such tools would thus be feasible. The information gained should set the scene for the tools' development and support the envisioned funding application as it provides scientific evidence to a funder that the future research project is likely to work.

3 METHODS

Design: Descriptive feasibility survey. The feasibility criterion was the proportion of professionals who would agree to any of the questions on whether they would appreciate or accept a digital learning offer. It was deemed a priori that the future project would be feasible if at least 50% of the participants would support the idea of digital learning tools, under the condition of the participants' representativeness. The sample consisted of 205 practicing midwives, physiotherapists, music therapists and occupational therapists in Lower Austria, recruited via different pathways. A structured self-designed questionnaire via the online tool UNIPARK collected the desired information. Analysis was performed by descriptive statistics and content analysis (SPSS, MAXQDA).

4 RESULTS

Will be presented at the conference.

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