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**(Sociology of Emotions Research Network)**

**Selection, emotion and exclusion.**

**The organisational relevance of emotions in the context of trainee selection**

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**Abstract**

Empirical research on the exclusion of immigrant students from vocational training in Switzerland has revealed the relevance of affective agency for trainee selection. The operational logics behind the allocation of apprenticeships by training firms have been investigated referring to 65 semi-structured interviews with organizational gatekeepers. The data was interpreted using the cognitive approach of argumentation analysis. Still this method allows for affective phenomena: one can interpret emotions mentioned or shown by interviewees as support and justification of their arguments.

A variety of organisational constraints lead to the exclusion of immigrant applicants: They are not seen to fit in an existing team or they could attract some disagreeable clientele. Other firms anticipate workplace bullying, ethnic gathering or conflicts with foreign employees. The interviewees often increased the plausibility of such arguments by underlining them emotionally. Most significant is the fear to face organisational troubles.

Such findings lead to the question how to deal with affective decision and sense making within an organisational framework of inclusion and exclusion. We assume that emotions can be functional in terms of organisational conservation and reproduction. They appear as an organisation-specific resource located in the bodies of its members, deciding about the allocation of organisational membership.

**Keywords**

organisation, emotion, selection, ethnic exclusion