

Methodological Competence Within Problem-Based Learning in Undergraduate Education

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PURPOSE: The purpose of the present work was to analyse Problem-Based Learning (PBL) with respect to the methodological competence required. An important feature of PBL is self-directed learning. To further self-directed learning in a traditional curriculum several weekly applications of PBL were introduced. The process and the results were evaluated. This evaluation proved that students showed deficits in methodological competence concerning learning and instruction methods and social-communicative methods. **RELEVANCE:** Learning and instruction methods and social-communicative methods are needed as well as professional knowledge for a successful physiotherapy treatment. In the context of traditional curricula a profound methodological basis encourages students and teachers for increasingly self-directed learning. In this way self-directed learning becomes more and more familiar. **DESCRIPTION:** In application of PBL learners are guided from a given problem to its solution in a so-called "7-step". For the analysis of the required methodological competences the 7-step was combined with the model of competence in professional performance ("Handlungskompetenz"). Competence in professional performance consists of professional knowledge, social competence and self competence (Roth 1971). These three aspects of competence are overlapping and include methodological competence. Based on this analysis, a pool of methods (such as techniques of visualisation, presentation and moderation) useful for self-directed learning and problem-solving was devised. After that, teachers and students were informed about the intended promotion of methodological competence, and first steps of implementation into lessons were started. **OBSERVATIONS:** Teachers asked for an improvement of their own methodological competence. Learners particularly questioned the relevance of methods for learning and instruction for the practice in physiotherapy. **CONCLUSIONS:** The traditional concept of undergraduate education in physiotherapy provides only limited options to encourage the acquisition of methodological competence in an integrative way. The development of the curriculum allowing widespread options for the acquisition of methodological competence is to be aspired.