

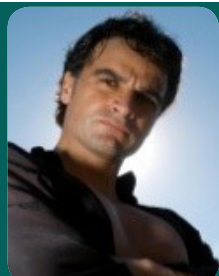
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Lecture versus self-directed methodologies in university students' learning

This study compared the effectiveness of teaching and learning methodologies based on knowledge transfer (lecture) with approaches that emphasized self-directed learning (Problem-Based Learning [PBL] and Reflective Learning [RL]), in a sample of 230 undergraduate nursing students and 8 professors. A mixed-methods study was carried out in a university school of nursing: quantitative methods were used to analyse the outcomes achieved by university students and compared the effectiveness of the various methods based on the students final examination scores; and qualitative analysis evaluated the factors that affected student learning in each of the three study arms: lecture, PBL and RL. The quantitative results show a better score for RL compared to PBL and the traditional lecture format. Qualitative findings indicate that self-directed methodologies result in higher-quality outcomes in student acquisition of content knowledge. Our results suggest two findings: methodologies focused on knowledge transfer (lecture) and those that favour self-directed learning (PBL and RL) are complementary; each approach has specific functions that cannot be replaced by the other two; and, self-directed learning methodologies, which are distinguished by their promotion of active student participation contribute most significantly to improving student learning. (Hajrulla 2014) Various studies have recommended the promotion of these methodologies in higher education considering them a necessary pathway for the preparation of competent professionals, as our findings also suggest. (Fook 2007) In this context that self-directed learning is a key strategy to promote individual abilities for learning continuum. The PBL and RL approach can help to foster professional knowledge and quality learning in higher education. Our research contributes to better understanding of self-directed (reflective) learning and professional practice development. We concluded that simultaneous use of diverse instructional techniques constitutes the best instructional approach. It could be useful in the future to design instruments to evaluate specific skills associated to each technique.

Biography

Bernat-Carles Serdà is a teacher and researcher in the Health Sciences Faculty, (University of Girona, Spain). His research focuses on Quality of Life and chronic malignancies. Nowadays is supervising several theses using mixing methods in this research field. He has achieved several pre-doctoral and post-doctoral grants for international academic stays.

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