

Using Problem-Based Learning on Teaching Early Intervention for College Students

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Abstract : In recent years, the increasing number of children with special needs has brought a lot of attention by many scholars and experts in education, which enforced the preschool teachers face the harsh challenge in the classroom. To protect the right of equal education for all children, enhance the quality of children learning, and take care of the needs of children with special needs, the special education paraprofessional becomes one of the future employment trends for students of the department of the early childhood care and education. Problem-based learning is a problem-oriented instruction, which is different from traditional instruction. The instructor first designed an ambiguous problem direction, following the basic knowledge of early intervention, students had to find clues to solve the problem defined by themselves. In the class, the total instruction included 20 hours, two hours per week. The primary purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship of student academic scores, self-awareness, learning motivation, learning attitudes, and early intervention knowledge. A total of 105 college students participated in this study and 97 questionnaires were effective. The effective response rate was 90%. The student participants included 95 females and two males. The average age of the participants was 19 years old. The questionnaires included 125 questions divided into four major dimensions: (1) Self-awareness, (2) learning motivation, (3) learning attitudes, and (4) early intervention knowledge. The results indicated (1) the scores of self-awareness were 58%; the scores of the learning motivations was 64.9%; the scores of the learning attitudes was 55.3%. (2) After the instruction, the early intervention knowledge has been increased to 64.2% from 38.4%. (3) Student's academic performance has positive relationship with self-awareness ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.506$), learning motivation ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.487$), learning attitudes ($p < 0.05$; $R = 0.527$). The results implied that although students had gained early intervention knowledge by using PBL instruction, students had medium scores on self-awareness and learning attitudes, medium high in learning motivations.

Keywords : college students, children with special needs, problem-based learning, learning motivation

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