

SPORTFABIK

Vernetzung der Studienprojekte zur Anwendung sportwissenschaftlicher, fachdidaktischer & bildungswissenschaftlicher Kompetenzen "Connecting study projects for the application of scientific, didactical and educational competences"



Study projects in sports science programs: A way to improve quality of teaching and learning?

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Introduction

Study projects have become popular with universities' bachelor and master degrees to improve the quality of teaching and learning. According to this tendency they were implemented in sports science programs too. However, there are divergent understandings of what constitutes a study project, which educational objectives and competence expectations are associated with it, and what the learning outcomes of study projects are.

This project was part of a nationwide research program, which was established to promote and evaluate the quality of the first part of German teacher training at universities (BMBF, 2017).

The main question of our research is how to promote coherence between scientific, didactical and educational parts of university studies. Related to this topic we analysed the effects of project-based learning regarding the long-term sustainability of learning outcomes and the professionalism of teaching. Our project "Sportfabik" looks into this problem with regard to PE teachers' higher education (Kleine, Fritschen & Wastl, 2017).

Methods

- ☐ Interdisciplinary qualitative approach to carve out the perspectives of academic teaching staff, current and former students as well as project partners (e.g. teachers) about study projects
- ☐ 34 focused interviews (Merton & Kendall, 1956) using a semi-structured guide
- ☐ Qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2015)
- ☐ Results of student course evaluations and project reports were reviewed to assess the findings

Discussion

Focussing on the quality of teacher education at universities from the academics' and learners' perspective, our study shows that study projects can supply a positive contribution to the quality of sport scientific courses. Especially learning that was experienced as meaningful in combination with comprehensible learning goals motivated the students and fostered the acquisition of competences. This way of arranging university courses seems to be more activity-oriented and helps students to enhance their autonomy.

During this process, diverse responsibilities for teachers and students that often require high effort for the participants of study projects, became clear. The teaching and learning culture at universities makes it difficult to establish guidelines for study projects or to create a certain form of study-project-evaluation in particular.

For the future it is therefore challenging, to make arrangements for the successful design of study projects, that preserve their open character and yet still enable discipline-specific approaches.

Results Promoting students' selfreliance (working independently and responsibly) Focussing on action-Possible standards based products (Workload, Output, student (developing a result participation, configuration of together) project work) **Guidelines?** Curriculum? **Concession of student** Subject scientific codetermination deepening (consider students) (deepened access to interests) scientific processes) **Accentuation of** practical references (exploring the practice and projecting theory onto practice)

Fig. 1 Model character of study projects – academics point of view

"The theory gets more manageable through the practical approach and you can really experience it. I've experienced that you internalize the contents you learn about much better if you connect an individual experience with it, because the learning process is so different."

"Of course there's somewhat of a practical shock at first. When you're dealing with an actual class of pupils you're exposed to other very different challenges."

"Of course you ask yourself "Is this even the right job for me?" During the time at university there's not enough feedback concerning that question so you have to rely on your instincts. Phases like this, where you actually stand in front of a class, always help. They give you the confirmation: "Yes, this is absolutely the right decision."

"If I compare it to seminars and lectures there's a difference in how much I remember from it. I think the reason for that is that we got to try everything ourselves here. Of course we faced theory sessions about what we did, why we did it and why it is important. This however only amplified the practical experiences. Since we tried everything in the practical part once it was possible to additionally make a connection to the theoretical input."

Fig. 2 Model character of study projects – students point of view

References

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