Increasing Confidence in Evidence-Based Information Gathering for First Year AuD Students

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Increasing Confidence in Evidence-Based Information Gathering for First Year AuD Students

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**OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this study is to determine whether evidence-based training sessions on evidence-based practice (EBP) information gathering will increase measures on: 1) Confidence in gathering and evaluating scholarly evidence, 2) Knowledge about EBP information gathering practices, 3) Ability to gather evidence for clinical research questions, and 4) Perceived value of the training.

**RATIONAL/PURPOSE**

- Student success in graduate clinical education is critically dependent on the learner’s ability to find and evaluate scholarly information.
- For doctoral programs in the communication sciences and disorders, high quality evidence is required to support clinical practices, research and other scholarly activities.
- It is essential for AuD students to develop optimum evidence information gathering skills at an early stage in their professional education.
- By understanding the importance of EBP, the future professional will build a strong foundation in patient care, and develop lifelong learning skills.
- The purpose of this study is to measure changes in students’ confidence, knowledge and behavior in gathering evidence for EBP and research projects.
- This study’s hypothesis states that training in EBP information gathering increases confidence and improves quality of information gathering behaviors.

**METHOD**

- Twenty-three first-year Doctor of Audiology (AuD) students participated in this study.
- Pre-test and post-test assessments were given to students before and after a two-hour information literacy training on finding and evaluating resources during the EBP information gathering process.
- The test instruments contained four questions on confidence, four questions on knowledge, and an ordinal ranking of 7 items in evidence and reference usage behavior. Wilcoxon signed-rank tests were used to compare the rank ordered median of the assessment responses.

**RESULTS**

- **Shifting Confidence**
  - Figure 1: Histograms (n=18) of confidence-related questions before (black) and after (red) a 2-hour information gathering course. Wilcoxon signed ranks tests showed significant differences (p<0.05) in three out of four categories, with post course distributions shifted towards greater confidence in their abilities.

- **Increasing Knowledge**
  - Figure 2: Histograms (n=18) of knowledge-related questions before (black) and after (red) a 2-hour information gathering course. Wilcoxon signed ranks tests showed significant differences (p<0.05) in three out of four of the distributions, with post course distributions shifted towards increased knowledge.

- **Ranking Resources**
  - Figure 3: Evidence and reference usage behavior: before (left) and after (right) the training session. Median student (n=23) values (Error bars: 95% CI).

- **Valuing Instruction**
  - Figure 4: Perceived class value and satisfaction. Median student (n=23) values (Error bars: 95% CI).

**CONCLUSION**

- Results revealed that training designed to improve evidence-based information gathering skills significantly improves confidence and proficiency in this area.
- As most research method classes and research projects are planned later in the AuD curriculum, students will need to rely upon the ability to gather information that informs EBP.
- The results of this study suggest that training sessions on evidence-based information gathering can be accomplished in a short time frame and conducted early in AuD education.
- Students will build confidence with evidence-based learning strategies, resulting not only in improved awareness, but also in the rigor of scholarly output.
- The impact of future research in this area may guide education in fields that rely on evidence-based practice.

**REFERENCES**


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