

Speech-Language Therapy students discussing Evidence- Based Practice in clinical placements

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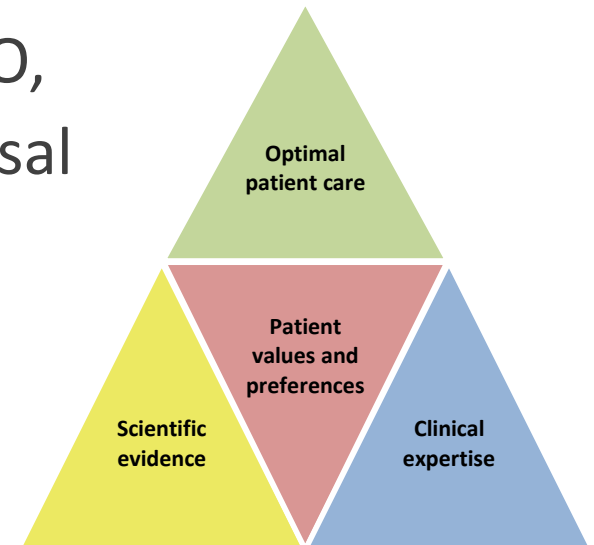
Background: Speech-Language Therapy in the Netherlands

- 4 year bachelor program
- 2 ½ year theory & workplace learning
- final phase: thesis writing (1/2 y) & two clinical placements (1 y)

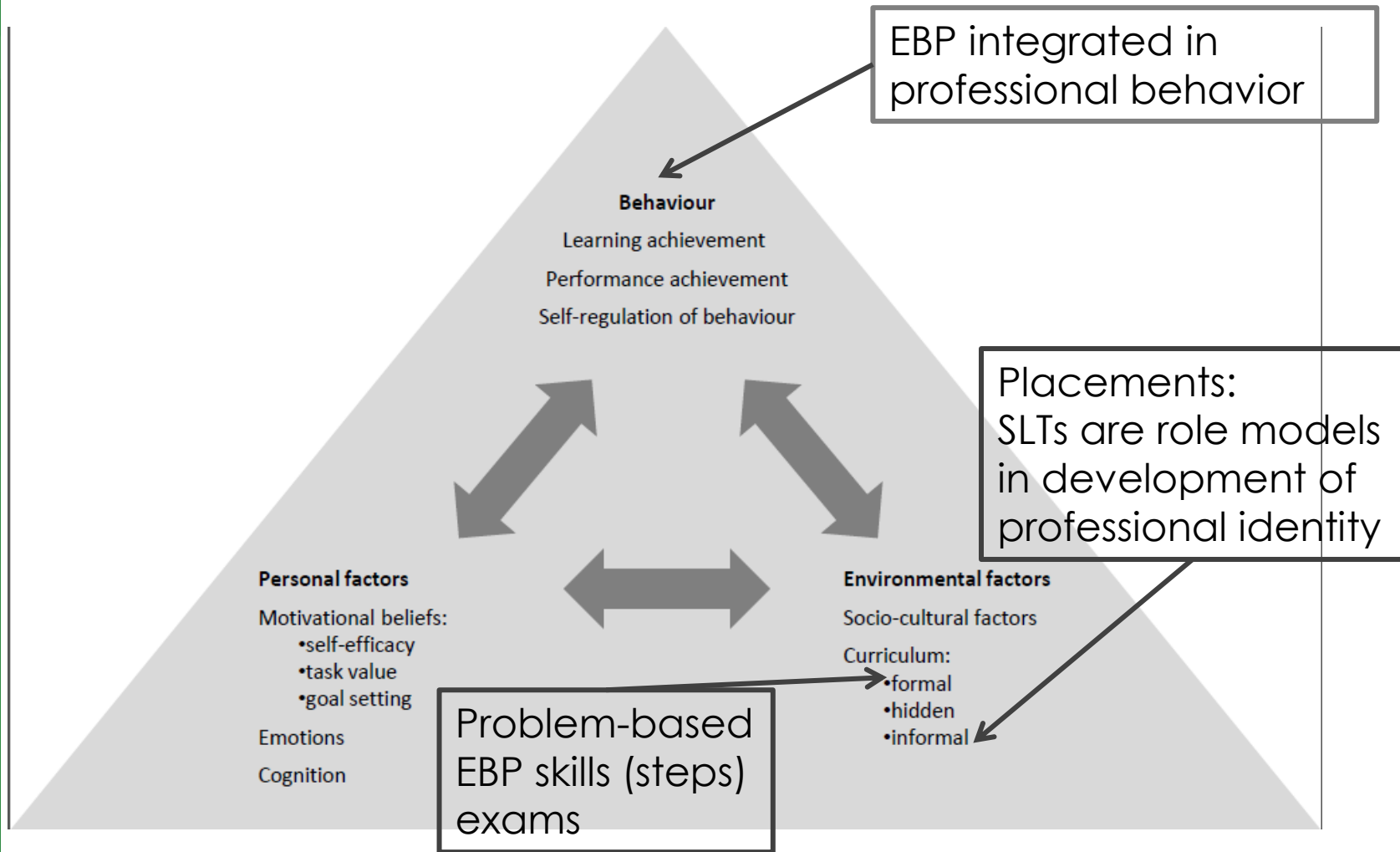


Background: EBP in the formal curriculum

- **year 1:** searching open Internet, use of sources
- **year 2:** cycle of EBP, focus on PICO, searching & critical appraisal (authentic cases)
- **year 3:** in workplace learning supervised use of full EBP cycle (real patients)
- **clinical placements:** use of full EBP cycle in real clinical practice



Social Cognitive Learning Theory (Bandura)



Objective(s)

To explore how students perceive the EBP behavior of the SLT supervisors who guide them during clinical placements and how they think this affects their own EBP competence

Methods

- qualitative, explorative study
- convenience sampling
- data obtained during final weeks of placements
- 4 focus groups with a total of 32 students
- moderator and observer unknown to students
- data analysis based on Grounded Theory principles
- emerging themes (Glaser 1992)
- 3 researchers independently analyzed the data in an iterative process

Results

Theme 1: expectations

Students act upon what they have learned in the formal curriculum

- focus on asking PICO questions and searching

..so on my first day I searched for the best evidence and when I came up with this, then it was more of: well, yes but you should start with the therapy rather than reading all the time

Students expect to see this kind of (EBP)behavior during clinical placements

I never see her [SLT supervisor] behind the computer searching in databases

Results

Theme 2: shock of practice

Students experience a gap between what they have learned regarding EBP and day-to-day clinical practice, which leads to negative emotions and feelings

But, well, I'm just a trainee, so I can't say much. But there are things of which I..., yeah, then I think why do you start this treatment and why don't you search the evidence for the best treatment for this patient instead of just beginning? Yes this annoys me sometimes

Students do not see their supervisor as a role model with regard to EBP

Yes I have the impression that I know more about it [EBP] so yeah...that is a bit annoying

Results

Theme 3: accepting | discarding

Students step into a professional culture where there seems to be no role for EBP and as a result discard EBP

It [EBP] just can't be applied in clinical practice...let's be honest ... I also don't see myself doing this in the future, searching for evidence ...

When I see how busy I already am, then I think... then I don't know if I'll do this [EBP] in the future...

Results

Theme 3: accepting | discarding

Other students discard a professional culture in which they perceive a lack of EBP

The therapy I observed was really, ... well yes...based on experience, not at all something evidence-based...at least that's what I could see...I found this odd..

I find it important that treatment takes place based on evidence and not just feelings, because feelings are not always right

Conclusions

- students actually expect to see the **five steps** of EBP at the workplace
- students do not acknowledge **the role of clinical expertise** as a part of EBP
- students perceive a **lack of time** and a **lack of expertise** regarding EBP at the workplace

**Crucial: make clear in your curriculum how evidence-based practice looks in day-to-day clinical work
(what is EBP behavior??)**

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