

Competency-based portfolio assessment

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VALORIZATION

The previous chapters of this thesis covered the research focus, how this research was carried out and the discussion of the results. In this chapter on valorization the societal relevance and practical implications of the research captured in this dissertation are described.

Societal implications

An important goal of medical education is to train medical professionals of the future. This is no easy task as no one can say with certainty what this future will look like. For example, the impact of technological developments on healthcare is expected to increase. However, we do not yet know what this technology will look like and how this will impact the work of medical professionals, making it difficult to determine what we should teach our medical students right now. This uncertain future requires that we educate professionals who are agile, can guide their own learning, and have a lifelong learning attitude in which they continuously look for opportunities that promote their own development. In order to be able to do this we need to give these future professionals the tools that will empower them to develop a good understanding of their own progress and competence level. The competency-based portfolio as described in this thesis can be a suitable tool to support the students in this lifelong learning process. Furthermore, the research presented in this thesis provides input on how to improve the portfolio as an instrument to assess learning and foster development.

Practical implications

The results presented in this thesis are relevant for a number of stakeholders. Most of these stakeholders were involved in the research described in this thesis. The described results and practical implications could have a positive influence on the way these stakeholders use the portfolio as an assessment instrument.

Clinical competency committees are expected to develop high-stakes decisions based on performance information captured in the student's portfolio. The research included in this thesis provides evidence for the assumption that it is possible for assessors to develop high-stakes decisions solely based on the evidence included in the student's portfolio. The research also highlights the importance of a thoroughly structured decision-making process when developing a final assessment. It is advised that all CCC members first individually develop a motivated assessment before they gather in a group to formulate a final assessment. In this way the richness of various information included in the portfolio is also captured in the student assessment. Additional practical suggestions for the CCCs are described in chapter 4 of this thesis.

As for daily supervisors, they sometimes struggle to be up-to-date on the activities and development of the students they are guiding. The students' portfolio can and should be a resource to inform their assessment of the students' and to help them guide students' learning. As described in chapter 5, daily supervisors seem to be less inclined to use the information captured in the portfolio. It could be assumed that portfolios are currently not providing supervisors with satisfying information to inform their assessment. Based on these results chapter 5 includes specific recommendations on how to facilitate daily supervisors use of portfolio assessment instrument. Included in these recommendations is training on how to capture relevant information in the portfolio and how to use the performance information included in the portfolio to foster students' learning.

Student training should be focused on fostering awareness of what kind of evidence is valuable to capture in their portfolio and how to capture this information. Chapters two and three include various aspects that have an impact on how students develop competence and how this is captured in their portfolio. Crucial influences on how students gain ownership and feel motivated to collect and document evidence in their portfolios are described. For example, social comparison and relatedness to their team greatly influenced this process. In order for students to fully profit from the opportunities of competency-based portfolios, these insights should be implemented in student training.

Current digital competency-based portfolios already capture a great amount of valuable performance information. The challenge for portfolio developers is to provide the opportunity for portfolio users to adapt their portfolio to their personal preferences. Students, assessors, and supervisors have clear ideas of what they want to include in their portfolio or use from the portfolio in order to establish students' competence. Current portfolio systems do not always allow for these requirements. Moreover, future portfolios should facilitate the documentation of evidence other than text and numerical data. Video, audio and other sources are highly valuable to inform student development and assess student performance, but are currently often not part of the students' portfolio.

In addition, the results of this thesis are not only applicable to medical education but are also helpful when developing and implementing portfolio-based assessment in other educational settings.