

# **Third year Physiotherapy students' perception of problem based learning in Musculoskeletal physiotherapy**

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The most commonly used teaching in schools, universities and institutes in Sri Lanka is the traditional or conventional lecture method. Problem based learning (PBL) introduced by the McMaster Medical School in the mid-1960s, has become a popular teaching learning method and is used in many educational programs of health care professionals such as in medical, dentistry, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, and Allied health curricula all over the world. The most commonly used teaching method in the Department of Physiotherapy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences is the conventional lecture. Thus this study was undertaken to assess perceptions of the students in relation to learning musculoskeletal physiotherapy.

The study population comprised of third year physiotherapy students of the Department of Physiotherapy, Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. Teaching of selected musculoskeletal conditions related to upper and lower limb was carried out in four PBL sessions. A 15 item, self-administered questionnaire with a 5 point Likertscale was used to assess students' perception on PBL. The response rate was 75%(24 out of 32). Seventy nine per cent of students agreed that it promotes critical thinking. A majority of students felt that, the PBL sessions were better at fulfilling learning objectives, gave better factual knowledge of musculoskeletal physiotherapy, was enjoyable and ensured team work. Most of the students' indicated that more such sessions should be organized in the future. The main disadvantage perceived was that, it is time-consuming. Thus it can be concluded that third year physiotherapy students' have a positive attitude towards PBL as a teaching learning strategy.