

Attitudes toward Active Participation as Predictors of Student Achievement – Exploratory Research from Serbia

Abstract

This paper examines the influence of students' active participation in classes on their achievements. The questionnaire survey method was used to seek responses from 433 undergraduate students in Serbia. The findings of this study show that the experience of active participation in classes at secondary school, students' preferences for active teaching methods, active participation and perception of the usefulness of active participation in theoretical knowledge acquisition are strong predictors of students' achievements. Our results suggest that the experience of active participation at secondary school has a greater influence on students' achievements than the same experience at university, which implies that teaching methods based on students' active participation should be an integral part of teaching and learning in secondary schools.

Key words: *higher education, active participation, students' achievements.*

Introduction

The goal of many institutions of higher education is to "create" persons "who can think effectively and act rationally" (Daud and Husin 2004). However, too often the role of teaching methods is not taken into account. Predominantly, teaching at higher education institutions in Eastern Europe was, and still is, based on traditional ex-cathedra lecturing and transmission-based teaching. Girgin and Stevens (2005) defined transmission-based teaching as a method where the instructor acts