

Abstracts

Understanding the country's underachievement in international assessment: differential item and bundle functioning approach

Josip Šabić

In educational context, Differential Item Functioning (Dif) and Differential Bundle Functioning (Dbf) are usually used in assessing item bias. In present study, it is demonstrated how results of Dif and Dbf analyses can help in better understanding the reasons behind one country's underachievement in international assessments. In Timss 2011 mathematics assessment, Croatian fourth graders achieved a mean result that was below the international average, while Slovenian and Serbian students achieved mean results that were above the international average. The results of Dif and Dbf analyses indicate that large portion of items exhibiting differences in favour of Slovenian and Serbian students are related to topics that are not taught in Croatian schools during first four grades. The described methodology can be used in investigating other countries' (under)achievement in international assessments.

Keywords

International differences, differential item functioning, differential bundle functioning, mathematics, Timss.

Serbian students assessing higher education in Serbia and abroad

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The aim of this study was to investigate the characteristics of higher education systems at different universities. Students who had experience of studying abroad (N= 45) and those who did not have that experience (N= 46) assessed the extent to which education at higher education institutions embedded flexibility, teamwork, collegiality, creativity, cooperation, openness, competitiveness, critical thinking, cognitive skills, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit in the education process. In addition, the study examined to what extent education at these institutions is characterized by quality, interactivity, an objective system of grading and the professors' availability. Results have shown that students with experience of having studied abroad evaluated the features of studying abroad significantly higher than the features of studying in their home country. These differences in findings were discussed in the context of the theoretical and practical implications relating to an effective higher education system.

Keywords

Internationalization, higher education, effectiveness, students' experience, Serbia.

Teachers' perception of organizational culture in educational centres

Raquel de la Fuente-Anuncibay, Raúl De Diego-Vallejo, Juan Antonio Angulo Saiz, Valeria Caggiano

The culture throughout the years has been to refer to a product of the interaction of society, to be a key success factor in organizations activity. The importance of this concept for an organization is the transmission of values and philosophies, socialization of its members, staff motivation, cohesion and commitment to important goals. The aim of this study is to analyze aspects of organizational culture building on the perception of teachers in Spanish schools.

We performed a study on variables related to organizational culture drawing on the Icoe inventory, based on a sample of 52 schools and 661 teachers. The statistical analyses, the factor analysis and Anova are performed through SPSS 21.

The results obtained indicate that teachers perceive their center's organizational culture quite positive and homogeneous, feeling a good social environment, communication, relationships and integration, work commitment, impartiality, equity and recognition. The existence of differences in scores by type of center and episodic knowledge of severe physical or verbal violence. By contrasts, they are less significant in terms of age and experience, the size of the center, gender and type of population.

Learning a center's culture starting from participants' perceptions, gives us an approximate idea of what is ideologically shared about a center and, this analysis helps us to reflect on the strength or weakness of the existing culture in schools to address the challenges of education in today's society.

Keywords

School organization, beliefs, organizational culture, secondary education.

Overconfidence in classroom

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Current theories of educational psychology and academic motivation assert that confidence of students in their own abilities and performances is an important determinant of their academic performances. In an experimental setting, we examine whether students accurately estimate or overestimate their performances. We establish that most of students exhibit overconfidence in their abilities and performances. More importantly, we find that overconfidence of students significantly decreases their academic performances. The negative relation between overconfidence and academic performance depends on the field of study and is stronger for students studying at Department of Electronic Engineering and Department of Material Science and Engineering. Moreover, our results indicate no significant gender differences in overconfident behavior. Findings of the paper suggest that in order to form effective teaching and grading strategies, teachers and pedagogues should consider effects of student's tendency to be overconfident.

Keywords

Overconfidence, judgment accuracy, field of study, student performance, student motivation.

Writing and global citizenship education

Valeria Damiani

Global Citizenship Education (Gce) aims at developing students' awareness on global issues and engagement in actions for change at local and global level. Its introduction into classroom practice raises some questions on the knowledge and skills necessary to reach Gce goals in teaching and learning contexts.

This article aims at analyzing students' understanding of global issues, tackled during a learning unit devoted to Gce, through the analysis of three different types of written compositions.

After highlighting some critical elements in students' writing, the study stresses the difficulty in finding evidences of their learning through written tasks.

Finally, the article shows the implications in applying the general theoretical models for Gce in a teaching and learning perspective, stressing the need to enhance students' knowledge and skills for understanding of and writing about complex issues related to contemporary world.

Keywords

Global citizenship education, writing, writing assessment, learning unit.

Class attendance and perception of usefulness of practice exercises in the degree courses in science of motor and sports activities

Claudio Scotton, Giovanni Cugliari, Alizé Scotton, Marco Ivaldi

Providing an explanatory, unambiguous and definitive discussion on the role of the speculative and practices components in the teaching of a discipline is complex. It might seem obvious that scientific and technical disciplines require different learning activity, sometimes more practical, sometimes more theoretical. But these conventional approaches actually are not fully proven.

Regarding Human Movement Sciences, historically assigned to the technical-scientific branch, for long time the need to support the practical experiential with theoretical notions was discussed about, with a proper cross-cutting approach. The present study aims to investigate these characteristics, specifically trying to clarify some aspects of teaching a practical matter,

Artistic Gymnastic, in the course of study in Science of motor and sports activities. Specifically, the results show that students who attend classes getting a final vote higher than non-attending, and those who believe in the utility of active learning of this discipline have a final vote higher than those who believe that the matter has little or no utility. The study tries to provide an objective analysis in a highly subjective area, highlighting details purely related to the conduct of practical exercises in the teaching of science-technique matter.

Keywords

Active learning, traditional teaching, learning by doing, self-assessment, human movement sciences, physical education.