

Measuring the Effectiveness of Student Teams Achievement Divisions as a Teaching Strategy on Grade 10 Learners' Economic Knowledge

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ABSTRACT Economics education focuses on the teaching and learning of Economics as a subject. It encompasses the content to be taught (what), the methods of teaching (how), the evaluation of those methods (why), and information of general interest to teachers of Economics from elementary through to graduate school level. This paper investigates the effectiveness of the pedagogic method of the student teams' achievement divisions (STAD) as a cooperative learning and teaching strategy as compared to the direct-instructional method in building the economic knowledge of grade 10 learners at secondary schools in the Free State. Data was collected from 229 grade 10 Economics learners and eight teachers at secondary schools in the Free State. Teachers used both STAD and direct instruction by teaching the topic, 'Contemporary Economics Issues', from the Economics curriculum of the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). Learners completed a forty-response-item multiple-choice questionnaire on Economics as a pre-test and post-test. The statistical findings of this study reveal that STAD significantly increased learners' knowledge of the 'Contemporary Economics Issues' module as a teaching strategy, as compared to the direct-instruction method. The results further indicated that STAD as a teaching method improved learners' learning, when teachers who were well trained in both the cooperative learning teaching strategy and in the subject of Economics were involved.