

## **THE IMPACT OF GROUP FORMATION METHOD (STUDENT SELECTED VS. TEACHER-ASSIGNED) ON GROUP DYNAMICS AND OUTCOME**

**Arsela Sakti**

University of Tirana, Faculty of Economy, Albania, Email: [arsela.sakti@yahoo.com](mailto:arsela.sakti@yahoo.com)

### **Abstract**

In today's business and social world, the ability of an individual to cooperate effectively and efficiently with others is a mandatory skill, not only a necessary one. It is important for a student to acquire this ability. For this reason business schools have reacted toward this environment by increasing the number of students' teamwork experiences. In addition, the adequate group composition is considered a key factor for a successful teamwork. Therefore, it is important for instructors to be aware of the elements that can influence the students' teamwork experience. The aim of this study was to examine whether the group formation method, namely student-selected vs. teacher-assigned, affects team members expectations, group dynamics, outcomes and students' Attitudes toward the group experience. In line with its experimental comparison group design, the students of Scientific Master in Business Administration (N=39) of Faculty of Economy/University of Tirana, participated in this study over one academic semester, in one of the subjects that they study. The comparison was made between the traditional self-selected method versus the teacher-assigned method, which indeed was a non-tested before method in this context, specifically "Getting to know you" method. Half of the students (N=20) were required to self-select their working partners, while the other part (N=19) were assigned into groups by the instructor using the abovementioned method. The qualitative data gathered from the initially fulfilled form were analyzed by the author of the study in order to compose groups, as the method suggests. Meanwhile the quantitative data, obtained from students' responses of the three other questionnaires, underwent an independent t-test analysis. The results indicate that method of assigning students to groups has a moderate influence on members' expectations, attitudes and viability, but there are no statistically significant differences in terms of group dynamics. Even though these statistically significant differences favor the self-selected method, they are insufficient to conclude that this is the best method. Another important conclusion to mention is that students' initially resist to teacher-assignment method, but then the adaption phase occurs, and they show better group dynamics.

**Keywords:** *student teams, group selection methods, group dynamics, group outcome.*