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LEADERSHIP TRAITS AND LATERAL THINKING OF B.Ed. STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study's primary objectives were to find out the significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. To find out the significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. To find out the significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking. To find out the significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking and to find out the relationship between the leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students. A survey method was used for the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 1000 B.Ed. students in the Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts. Two self-made tools were used: the Leadership Traits Scale and the Lateral Thinking Scale. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used for analyzing the data. It was found that there is no significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. There is no significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. There is a significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking. There is no significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking, and there is a significant relationship between the leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students.

Keywords: leadership, leadership traits, thinking, lateral thinking, B.Ed. students.

Introduction

Lateral thinking is one of the most critical qualities for a modern leader. Abandoning rigid structures, looking at challenges with a new perspective and solving problems by perceiving things others do not are all traits of a successful leader. Lateral thinking is the ability to approach problems creatively and innovatively. It involves looking at issues from different angles and coming up with unique solutions that are not immediately obvious. When building a company's strategy, lateral thinking is crucial because it helps leaders identify new opportunities, anticipate

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challenges, and develop innovative solutions. Without lateral thinking, institutions may fall into the trap of following conventional wisdom and sticking to traditional approaches. This can make them less adaptable to change and less competitive. By contrast, institutions that embrace lateral thinking are more likely to be innovative, responsive, and successful. More often than not, things will get stuck at a point where the logical solution approach would fail us.

Moreover, the pressures and demands will not give us enough time to think elaborately. Keeping cool and approaching the challenge calmly is important because we will need all our creative power to solve it. Lateral thinking is the only way to survive. Moreover, It will happen with customers, team members, force majeure situations, technology, etc. Lateral thinking is synonymous with innovation, inventiveness, vision, imagination, originality, resourcefulness, etc. The role of lateral thinking in leadership today is crucial to any institution's competitiveness and survival.

Employing lateral thinking to build leadership qualities is a great way of ensuring professional success, coupled with continuous learning, fostering a creative mindset among teachers, developing thought leadership, and, most importantly, enjoying what we do. These are the secret ingredients to becoming a successful leader and running a successful work today and in the future.

Significance of the study

A lateral thinking leader will encourage teachers to brainstorm and find creative solutions from their perspective rather than rain ideas from the top. As teachers seldom have more information than the leadership, innovating ideas from inside the workforce would lead to innovative solutions. Let us take, for example, a situation where teachers have followed certain best practices and strategies established as successful practices for decades or more. Moreover, they have often found success. Suddenly, someone comes up with a whole new approach, a complete game changer. Everyone denies the initial success as a one-off, fluke, or glitch in the matrix. Only, it is not. That someone has already disrupted the institution, and their approach is now the new best practice. Moreover, other institutions have no option but to follow that approach.

The simple takeaway of the above example is that it is easy to follow already-established approaches to teaching success. However, developing new ideas and creating game-changing methods to achieve teaching results is difficult. However, following the herd and doing exactly what others are doing does not help you stand out. We can establish ourselves as a disruptor and achieve competitive advantage only through creative problem-solving and lateral thinking, and help catapult our organization onto the next level. Teachers often get caught up in the lure of tradition and fail to realize the ineffectiveness of their existing methods; thus, they cannot recognize that the methods are outdated and need a refresher course. Moreover, one of the worst

mistakes any teacher can commit is settling into the comfort zone of established practices. That is the end of innovation and progress.

With lateral thinking, leaders and teachers can pursue constant innovation, address the ineffectiveness of traditional processes, and find creative solutions to drive teaching success.

Population and Sample

The population taken for the survey was B.Ed. students. A sample of 1000 B.Ed. students were chosen randomly from the Colleges of Education in the Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi Districts.

Tools Used

1. The investigator developed the Leadership Traits Scale and
2. The investigator developed the Lateral Thinking Scale.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits.
2. To find out the significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits.
3. To find out the significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.
4. To find out the significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.
5. To find out the significant correlation between leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students.

Null Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits.
2. There is no significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.
4. There is no significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.
5. There is no significant correlation between leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students.

Analysis

Table 1

The t-test shows the mean difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits

Dimensions	Category	Number	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Democratic Leadership	Male	380	78.23	1.687	2.205	1.96	Significant
	Female	620	78.23	1.655			
Autocratic Leadership	Male	380	62.21	4.663	2.362	1.96	Significant
	Female	620	62.32	4.650			
Leadership Traits	Male	380	140.43	5.000	2.336	1.96	Significant
	Female	620	140.54	4.973			

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2

F-test showing the mean difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed., students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits

Dimensions	Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square variance	Calculated 'F' value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Self-awareness	Between	2.892	2	1.446	3.167	3.00	Significant
	Within	21626.932	997	21.692			
Self-management	Between	1.310	2	.655	3.112	3.00	Significant
	Within	5845.281	997	5.863			
Social Awareness	Between	4.161	2	2.081	3.284	3.00	Significant
	Within	24783.835	997	24.858			

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their democratic leadership, autocratic leadership and leadership traits. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 3

The t-test shows the mean difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking

Dimensions	Category	Number	Mean	SD	CR Value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Lateral Thinking	Male	380	34.68	2.408	2.266	1.96	Significant
	Female	620	44.64	4.428			

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant difference between male and female B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking. While comparing the mean scores female B.Ed. students have high mean value than male B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.

Table 4

F-test showing the mean difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed., students in their lateral thinking

Dimensions	Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square variance	Calculated 'F' value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Lateral Thinking	Between	.256	2	2.128	3.346	3.01	Significant
	Within	2774.668	997	2.783			

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant difference among Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts B.Ed. students in their lateral thinking.

Table 5

Correlation between emotional intelligence and lateral Thinking of B.Ed. students

Variables	Number	'r' Value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Leadership Traits and Lateral Thinking	1000	0.931	0.062	Significant

From the above table, it is inferred that a significant positive correlation exists between leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students.

Delimitations

1. The study is restricted to the B.Ed. students in Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli and Tenkasi districts only.
2. Though there are many data collection techniques, the investigator has proposed using a questionnaire survey to measure the leadership traits and lateral thinking of B.Ed. students.
3. The sample will be delimited to 1000 B.Ed. students studying in the college of education.

Conclusion

Leaders can develop lateral thinking skills by practising creativity and innovation. This can involve brainstorming sessions, idea-generation exercises, and other activities that encourage thinking outside the box. Leaders can also seek out diverse perspectives and opinions, which can help them see problems from a new angle.

Another way to develop lateral thinking is by embracing failure. Leaders afraid to fail may be less likely to take risks and try new approaches. However, failure can be a valuable learning experience that can help leaders develop new insights and perspectives.

Continuous learning is the fodder for lateral thinking and one of the key steps towards becoming a successful teacher. Continuous learning can help leaders gain knowledge from anywhere and anyone and apply it to their profession. B.Ed. students in leadership positions should look to other experienced leaders for lessons, as personal experience is a great resource for learning.

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