

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of a One Day Leadership Workshop On Increasing
Participants' Self-Efficacy In Targeted Skills**

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Introduction/Need for the Study

Research Priority Three of the American Association for Agricultural Education Research Agenda 2016-2020 calls for a “Sufficient Scientific and Professional Workforce That Addresses the Challenges of the 21st Century” (Roberts, Harder, & Brashears, 2016, p. 29). Employers are seeking workers with soft skills (National Research Council, 2012) which includes leadership skills (Crawford, Lang, Fink, Dalton, & Fielitz, 2011). Students enrolled in secondary agriculture courses can become FFA members and participate in activities designed to develop their leadership skills. Texas FFA conducts leadership workshops designed to accomplish this task (Texas FFA Association, 2017). However, the effectiveness of these workshops has not been researched. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of one of the Texas FFA’s leadership workshops by comparing the participants’ self-efficacy in 16 objectives before and after the workshop.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura’s (1977) Self-Efficacy Theory was used for this study. Bandura states that one’s self-efficacy is their belief to accomplish a task or behavior. Self-efficacy influences a person’s actions and outcomes of their actions. Self-efficacy can be learned or modified through 1) performance accomplishments, 2) various learning and modeling, 3) verbal persuasion, and 4) emotional arousal. All four of these techniques were used as strategies in this workshop and therefore ground this study in the Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1977).

Methodology

This study used a single-group, pretest-posttest design. During November and January Texas FFA hosted four leadership workshops in different regions of the state. These workshops utilized the same curriculum and were presented by trained facilitators. The facilitators planned activities which utilized all four of the techniques Bandura (1977) claims to modify self-efficacy. The curriculum sought to teach 16 objectives. The facilitators provided the researchers with the objectives and the researchers created statements to gauge the students’ self-efficacy for each of the 16 objectives (one statement per objective). For example the statement created for the objective “Define self-image” was “I know what self-image is and can define it.” A questionnaire was developed which included a Likert-type scale for each statement (0 = Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Three of the statements were reverse coded. A panel of experts reviewed the instrument for validity. All 82 workshop participants took the pre-assessment just prior to the workshop starting and took the post-test at the conclusion of the workshop. Since this study used convenience sampling, caution should be used in generalizing these findings beyond this study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Since the means being compared were from the same group of students, a dependent *t-test*, also called a paired-samples *t-test*, was calculated ($p < .05$) (Field, 2009).

Results/Findings

A statistically significant difference in the means of the pre-test and post-test self-efficacy scores were found in all 16 objectives. The most significant difference was seen in “I can show someone how to identify personal barriers to attaining their goals” and the least significant difference was in “I do not know how to describe my personality” (See Table 1).

Table 1.
A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post Test Students Self-Efficacy (N = 82)

Variable	Pre-Test		Post-Test		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
I can show someone how to identify personal barriers to attaining their goals.	2.59	1.08	4.32	0.84	-13.213	.000
I can show someone ways to overcome peer pressure.	3.09	1.09	4.61	0.62	-12.783	.000
I can describe the steps to be taken to change the way I view my personal self-image.	2.58	1.28	4.48	0.68	-12.544	.000
I know what self-image is and can define it.	3.00	1.22	4.60	0.59	-11.851	.000
I can explain how to build positive relationships.	3.50	.87	4.59	0.59	-11.125	.000
I can describe the steps to creating effective goals.	3.33	1.01	3.37	1.10	-10.967	.000
I am able to describe how I perceive myself.	2.86	1.07	4.27	0.81	-10.762	.000
I can describe how to confront a bully effectively.	3.37	1.10	4.65	0.50	-10.416	.000
I can explain how peer pressure can affect personal actions.	3.85	.87	4.80	0.40	-9.433	.000
I can identify the benefits of setting goals.	3.95	.83	4.80	0.46	-9.217	.000
I know what a strong and healthy relationship looks like.	3.81	.94	4.60	0.63	-8.115	.000
I know how to identify positive traits in people around me.	3.93	.78	4.68	0.52	-7.882	.000
I can explain why goals are important and necessary to success.	4.22	.86	4.83	0.41	-7.062	.000
*I cannot identify the characteristics of effective goals.	1.84	1.15	0.77	1.47	5.387	.000
*I cannot differentiate between dreams and goals.	1.91	1.26	1.01	1.72	4.192	.000
*I do not know how to describe my personality.	2.11	1.41	1.63	1.66	2.439	.017

Note: 0 = Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree; * indicates reverse coding

Conclusions/Implications/Recommendations

It can be concluded that this workshop was effective in increasing students' self-efficacy in all 16 objectives as statistically significant differences in means from the pre-test to the post-test were calculated. One must notice the three statements with the lowest difference in means were the three statements which were reverse coded. This could be due to students not reading the statement correctly. Still, significant differences in the means of these three statements were seen and an increase of knowledge (decrease in means) resulted from participating in the workshop. This implies that the curriculum for the workshop and the strategies used by the facilitators were effective in teaching the target objectives and resulted in higher student self-efficacy. This study did have several threats to internal validity so it cannot be assumed that all gains in self-efficacy were due to participation in the workshop alone (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

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