

Determining Increases in Self Efficacy of Participants of the Texas FFA Made for Excellence Conference

Jordan Stanford and Dr. Candis Carraway, Stephen F. Austin State University



Stephen F. Austin
State University

Introduction

- Research has shown that soft skills, including leadership skills, are the top traits employers want in their employees.
- FFA strives to develop its members leadership potential.
- Texas FFA conducts a series of “Excellence” workshops to enhance members’ leadership skills. These “Excellence workshops are “Made for Excellence” for sophomores, “Building Excellence” for juniors and “Executing with Excellence” for seniors.
- The “Made for Excellence” workshop has yet to be evaluated to determine its effectiveness.
- There were seven locations around the state where the “Made for Excellence” workshop was conducted between October 2019 and January 2020.
- The workshop leaders and presenters developed this workshop which included 11 objectives used as a guide for the workshop.
- There were three presenters trained to teach the workshop, but each workshop was taught by one or two presenters.

Theoretical Framework

This theory utilized for this study was Bandura’s (1977) Self-Efficacy Theory. An individual's self-efficacy is their belief to accomplish a task or behavior.

Methods

- Utilized a single group pre-test post-test design
- 11 objectives were taught, and researchers developed statements to gauge participants’ self-efficacy for each objective.
- A Likert-type scale for each statement was used (0 = Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree).
- 210 workshop participants took both a pre-test and post-test to gauge their self-efficacy in each objective
- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to conduct a paired-samples t-tests ($p < .05$).

Results

All 11 objectives showed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test self-efficacy means. “I am able to identify opportunities that match my interests and strengths.” was the statement with the largest significant difference from pre-test to post-test scores.

Table 1.
A Comparison of Pre-Test and Post Test Students Self-Efficacy (N = 210)

Variable	Pre-Test		Post-Test		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
I can discuss the importance of continual personal growth.	4.69	0.850	5.50	0.597	-13.125	.000
I can develop a plan of action to execute an opportunity in the next year.	4.75	0.852	5.51	0.643	-12.636	.000
I am able to define leadership.	4.77	0.840	5.66	0.558	-15.031	.000
I can recognize areas in my life to develop.	4.87	0.842	5.64	0.554	-13.256	.000
I am able to identify opportunities that match my interests and strengths.	4.86	0.867	5.62	0.616	-11.894	.000
I can discuss leadership and planning topics with others.	4.56	0.953	5.57	0.601	-15.710	.000
I can list my own strengths.	4.69	0.953	5.60	0.636	-13.326	.000
I can list characteristics of a strong leader.	4.92	0.815	5.65	0.577	-13.111	.000
I am able to explain how to implement strategies for utilizing my teammates’ strengths.	4.27	0.967	5.40	0.672	-16.738	.000
I can explain how the choices I make every day are significant to my entire life.	4.66	0.981	5.60	0.619	-12.822	.000
I can explain how to utilize goal setting techniques to capitalize on opportunities.	4.40	1.020	5.56	0.663	-15.832	.000

Note: 0 = Strongly Disagree, 1 = Disagree, 2 = Slightly Disagree, 3 = Slightly Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree;

Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded that this workshop was successful in increasing students’ self-efficacy in all 11 objectives as statistically significant differences in means from the pre-test to the post-test were calculated. This implies the curriculum for the workshop and the teaching strategies used by the facilitators were successful 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. This study should become a longitudinal study of the workshop as with more participants the study will become more rigorous.

