

Exploring Noncognitive Skills in Regional Leadership Development Event (LDE) Participants

INTRODUCTION

- Dweck et al. (2015) found success improves when individuals overcome obstacles, highlighting personal growth as key to improvement.
- Noncognitive skills are associated with a growth mindset (Duckworth et al., 2007; Usher & Pajares, 2008)
- This study examined noncognitive skills in students competing in district-level FFA LDEs

METHODS

- The population was a consensus $N = 131$ attending the North Idaho District (NID) LDEs
- Instrument included:
 - Demographic questions: name, age, gender, and chapter
 - 53 Likert-type items, with rating options from 1-5

FINDINGS

- Top-ranked* and remaining participants both self-scored highest in Self-Efficacy ($M = 3.72, SD = 0.58$)* ($M = 3.64, SD = 0.53$) and lowest in Optimism ($M = 3.32, SD = 0.58$)* ($M = 3.18, SD = 0.57$)
- Greatest spread between means was in Communication

Noncognitive scores for top-ranked participants at a regional LDE event were above scores for remaining participants

Means Across Constructs Between Top Ranked LDE Competitors ($n = 19$) and Means of Remaining Participants ($n = 112$)

Construct	Top Ranked		Remaining Participants		ΔM
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Communication	3.62	0.69	3.26	0.89	0.36
Optimism	3.32	0.63	3.18	0.57	0.14
Motivation	3.58	0.43	3.45	0.39	0.13
Interpersonal	3.40	0.66	3.31	0.62	0.09
Self-Efficacy	3.72	0.58	3.64	0.53	0.08

Note: Scales 1=Not at All Like Me and 5=Very Much Like Me



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CONCLUSIONS

- Interested in how noncognitive skill levels impact students' performance in LDEs
- Findings are similar to those found at state level (Smith & Thapa, 2022).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Future research should expand on this inquiry by examining LDEs and CDEs at the state and national levels
- Investigating factors found in agricultural education programs which support student development
- Explore demographic characteristics and involvement in agricultural education programs relation to noncognitive skills
- Deeper understanding of noncognitive skills role in social skill development among agricultural education students

QUESTION TO CONSIDER

Are there possible ways that agricultural educators can develop these noncognitive skills in students?

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