



A Brief Study of Soft Skills to Assess Leadership Effectiveness and Self-Perception of Students Pursuing their Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Soft skills are abilities which relate to how one works and how he interacts with other people. Employers search for soft skills in the candidates because these are hard to teach but are important for long term success. Soft skills differ from hard skills because hard skills are technical and job specific skills.

KEY WORDS

Skills, Leadership, Responsibility, Honesty, Time Management, Flexibility.

Higher Education

There is no doubt that skills are developed at initial level of formal education, but the Higher Education has more responsibility in current scenario. It is the duty of the higher education to advance the soft skills in the students. Soft skills are important for future life of the students in performing job and career advancement. Without these skills there is no use of formal education.

For the reason of getting the job, satisfying the employer and career advancement, two important life skills were detected and they were Leadership Effectiveness and Self Perception. These two life skills are necessary for performance in the job.

Leadership Effectiveness

It is the ability of the leader to influence the followers and other organisations stakeholders effectively in reaching the goals of the organisation as stated by Yuki, 2005. It works as a catalyst for success or failure of an organisation.

Improving Leadership Performance and Effectiveness

- Showing flexibility when giving motivation and working with staff members - As Zaccaro, Foti and Kenny, 1991 has quoted that flexible leaders are effective because they respond well in a variety of situations and what their team needs from them.
- The leaders should engage in a wide range of behaviour that are contradictory – As Quoted by Zaccaro, 2001 that successful manager should engage in a variety of behaviours that are contradictory.
- The leader should demonstrate high intra personal and interpersonal social skills. These type of leaders should have high self efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience. These qualities are necessary when leaders seek to have successful team functioning as quoted by Rego et al, 2019.

An Effective Leaders Trait in Education

- **Vision:** Having the quality to look into the future.
- **Passion:** A strong liking for a subject or activity.
- **Respect:** Attitude or feeling of admiration towards somebody.
- **Honesty:** Truthfulness, high morality, sincerity is needed.
- **Dedication:** Commitment to an idea, cause or someone.
- **Influence:** The power to affect other peoples thinking or actions by means of argument or force of personality.
- **Compassion:** A desire to help other for the betterment.

Self Perception theory

Regarding Self Perception theory, it's an account of attitude formation. Developed by Psychologist Daryl Bem which asserts that people develop their attitudes by observing own's behaviour and concludes what attitudes must have caused it. The Self Perception in it's simplest form explains how we view ourselves. Self Perception also referred to as self concept. It influences our judgement, mood and behaviours. Developing a positive perception of ourself leads to have more positive thoughts and belief of the world over all, which leads to more frequent behaviours.

Mehrad, 2016 conducted study to focus on individuals self concept. The idea of self concept was supported by him. It shows that for the advancement of the individual, it plays an essential role.

Self Perception can be thought of as the lens through which we view ourselves and the world. It is the fluid basis through which we navigate through life.

Importance of Positive Self Perception

- Having positive Self Perception, we can cope with the inevitable workplace situations like rejection and failure in a healthy way.
- Engaging in positive self talk increases internal positivity which helps in coping with negative feelings.

A study was done by Bornstein, Leal Louise, 2002 on self concept, motivation and academic achievement on community college students. It states that student with higher positive self concept would exhibit higher motivation. It would promote a higher academic achievement.

A student with lower / negative self concept shows lower motivation which will be from moderate to low academic achievements.

Some specific steps for developing a positive self image:

- Making a list of positive qualities of oneself.
- Developing own strengths.

- Remembering that I am unique.
- Avoid comparing oneself to others.
- Giving positive affirmations.

Different ways to Improve the Self Perception

- Focussing on the Positivity - Better to feel good with what we have.
- Give priority to do the things that makes you happy. Maintaining good health is also very important.
- Not to beat yourself up- Sometimes we have to do things in which we don't excel, but not giving up and trying our best is positivity.
- Surrounding oneself with Positive People. We should be with positive people who love and support us.
- Taking care of one self- It is necessary to understand that along with mental health, physical health is also important.

Objectives

Following Objectives were stated:

- To study the significant difference between the groups i.e. (Under graduate students v/s Post graduate students, Under graduate v/s Professionals, Post graduate students v/s Professionals) on Leadership Effectiveness Scale.
- To study the significant difference between the groups i.e. (Under graduate students v/s Post graduate students, Under graduate students v/s Professionals, Post graduate students v/s Professionals) on Level of Self Perception Scale.

Hypothesis

H₀₁ There is no significant difference between the groups i.e. (Under graduate students v/s Post graduate students, Under graduate students v/s Professionals, Post graduate students v/s Professionals) on Leadership Effectiveness Scale

H₀₂ There is no significant difference between the groups i.e. (Under graduate v/s Post graduate students, Under graduate students v/s Professionals, Post graduate students v/s Professionals) on Level of Self Perception Scale.

Methodology

For the present investigation "Survey Method" was used in order to collect data for both Leadership Effectiveness and Self Perception Scale.

The Sample

Random Sampling technique was employed for the sampling. The sample consisted of 195 students and Professionals of Under graduate, Post graduate students and Professionals for Leadership Effectiveness Scale.

Similarly 195 students and professionals of Under graduate students, Post graduate students and Professionals were selected for the study of Self Perception. The students were higher education students of Ranchi University, Ranchi.

Tools Used

Two tools were used for data collection:

1. Leadership Effectiveness Scale by Dr. Haseen Taj (Banglore). It consisted of 79 questions which were all about leaders effectiveness in all fields of his activities.
2. Self Perception measuring scale by Dr K.G. Agarwal (New Delhi). It consisted of 40 questions all related to the Self Perception. The questionnaire were distributed to different colleges and department of Ranchi University, Ranchi.

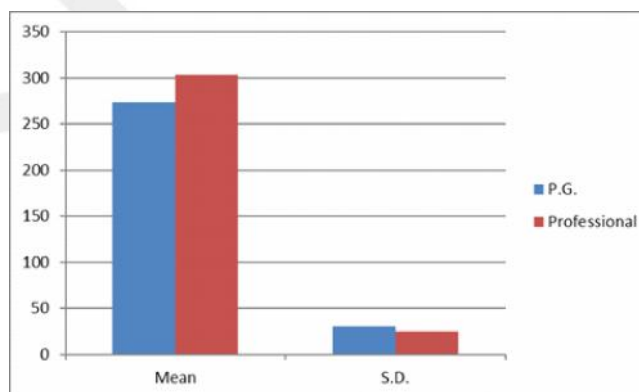
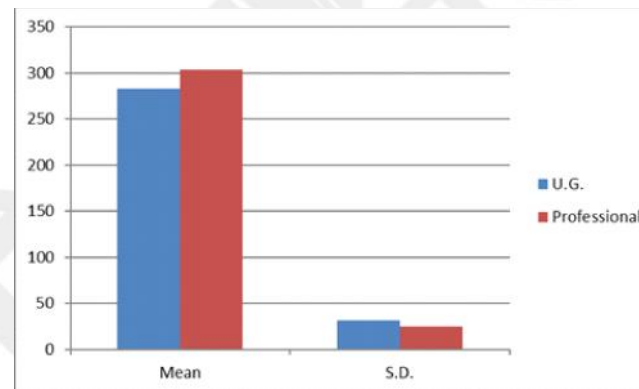
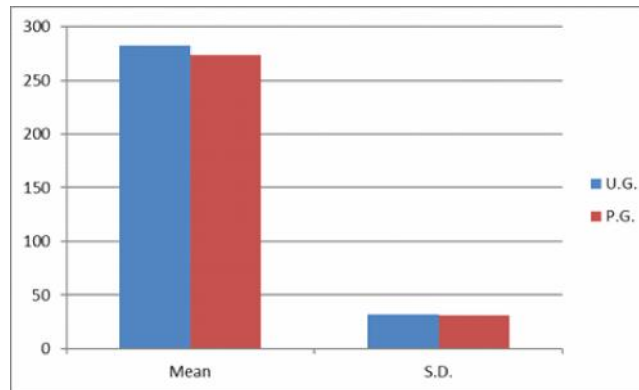
Statistical Techniques Used

Statistical Techniques like Mean, Standard Deviation and Critical Ratio were employed.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 : Showing over all significant difference between the groups i.e. (Under graduate students and Post graduate students, Undergraduate students v/s Professionals, Post Graduate students v/s Professionals) on Leadership Effectiveness Scale.

S.N.	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	CR Value	Level of Significance
1	U.G.	65	282.73	31.90	1.62	No Significant difference
	P.G.	65	273.83	30.88		
2	U.G.	65	282.73	31.90	4.15	Significant difference
	Professional	65	303.64	25.18		
3	P.G.	65	273.83	30.88	6.03	Significant difference
	Professional	65	303.64	25.18		



The result reveals that of all the three comparisons one turned to be not significant at 0.05 level. The table depicts that the mean value of Undergraduate students is higher as compared to the Post graduate students. This means Under graduate students show higher Leadership Effectiveness in comparison to Post graduate students.

The comparison between Undergraduate students and Professionals show significant difference. The next is between Post graduate students and Professionals which also shows significant difference. Thus the first Hypothesis was partially accepted.

Table 2: Showing significant difference between the groups i.e.(Undergraduate students v/s Post graduate students, Undergraduate students v/s Professionals and Post graduate students v/s Professionals) on Level of self Perception Scale.

S.N.	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	CR Value	Level of Significance
1	U.G.	65	22.74	3.20	0.98	No Significant difference
	P.G.	65	23.32	3.58		
2	P.G.	65	23.32	3.58	3.30	Significant difference
	Professional	65	25.52	4.89		
3	UG	65	22.74	3.20	4.22	Significant difference
	Professional	65	25.82	4.89		

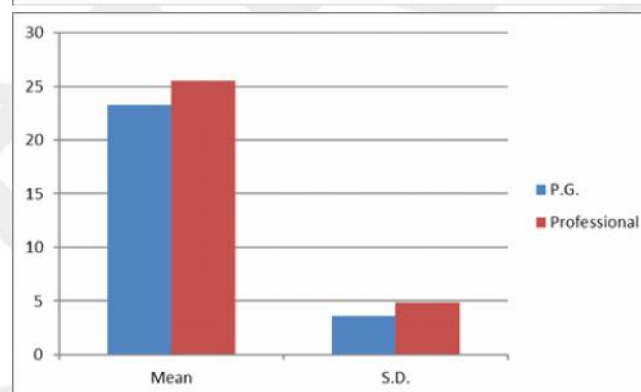
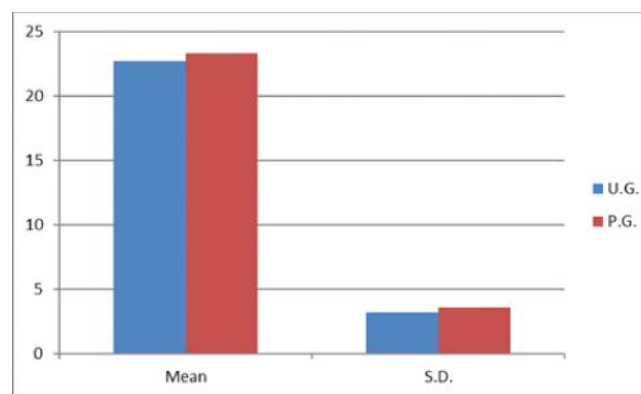


Table - 2 shows that there is no significant difference between Undergraduate and Post graduate students on level of Self Perception Scale.

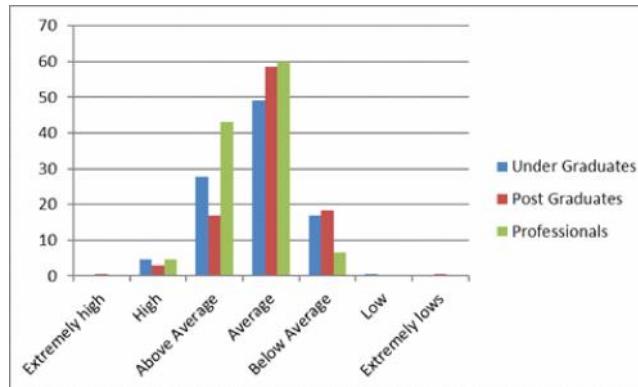
The comparison between Postgraduate students and Professionals show significant difference. The next comparison between Under graduate students and Professionals also show significant difference.

Thus the comparison between three groups shows that the hypothesis on Self Perception Scale was partially accepted.

The percentage score of Under graduate students, Post graduate students and Professionals on Leadership Effectiveness Scale.

	Under Graduates	Post Graduates	Professionals
Extremely high	0.00	0.51	0.00
High	4.61	3.07	4.61
Above Average	27.69	16.92	43.00
Average	49.23	58.46	60.00
Below Average	16.92	18.46	6.51
Low	0.51	0.00	0.00
Extremely lows	0.00	0.51	0.00

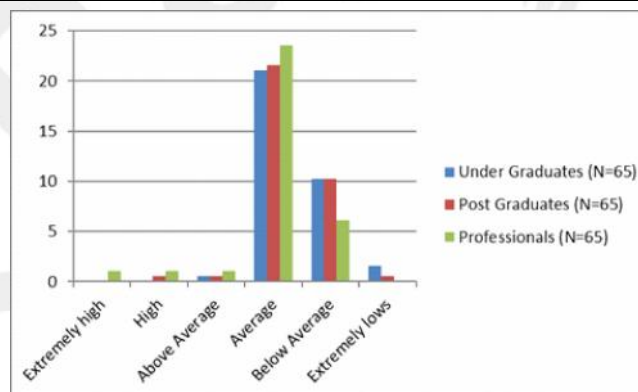
(Source: Primary Data)



The table depicts that the three groups have scored highest percentage in Average group. The professionals have scored highest 60%. This shows that the three groups have scored good percentage in Average section.

In addition the percentage score of students were also calculated and results were in Self Perception scale is :

	Under Graduates (N=65)	Post Graduates (N=65)	Professionals (N=65)
Extremely high	0	0	1.0256
High	0	.5128	1.0256
Above Average	.5128	.5128	1.0256
Average	21.02	21.58	23.58
Below Average	10.256	10.256	6.153
Extremely lows	1.538	.5128	0



The table depicts that Professionals have shown highest percentage i.e. 23.58%. Thus the result is in favour of Professionals who have shown more positive performance on this scale. It is also clear that majority of the students from Under graduate and Post graduate students have shown good performance on the level of Self Perception scale.

Discussion of Results

This study was relevant in understanding the Leadership Effectiveness and Self Perception among the students of Undergraduate, Post graduate and Professionals.

As the Leadership Effectiveness is one of the important objectives of Higher Education, which has not been shown by higher education students. Some factors may be:

- That the leaders over exercises his powers.
- May be he is adamant in taking decisions.

The lack of Self Perception may be attributed to:

- unable to accept one's weaknesses.
- Lacking the ability to self regulate.

Educational Implications

As the NEP-2020 has main focus on skill development of the students, a hobby for singing, dancing, painting should be developed from early stages of schooling. After this life earning skills should be included in the curriculum.

- Value based education has been given priority in NEP-2020. This aims to train the students to face ones world with right attitude and values. An overall personality development like character development, citizenship development, spiritual development will inculcate effective leadership qualities in the students.
- Individual student has his own capacity, potential, interest and attitude. Students should be encouraged by the teachers to have positive Self Perception about oneself. These helps them to become competent and a worthy member of the society.

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