

Research Article

Exploring School Leaders' Perceptions of the MySkillScan Self-Assessment Tool: Implications for Transformational Leadership Development

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Abstract: Self-assessment is a valuable tool for educational leaders to identify areas of strength and areas that need improvement. This process involves examining various aspects of educational management, such as planning, understanding the psychology of students and teachers, self-organization and time management, coordination of organisational activities, impact on student experience and learning outcomes, motivation and professional development of teachers, team building, and leadership skills. This innovation self-assessment presents a scale for evaluating an educational leader's level of competency, which includes five levels of proficiency, from no experience to exceptional expertise. An interactive spider web visualisation will be created based on leaders' responses that allows them to assess their skills and competencies in various aspects of educational management. It was developed and tested quantitatively with a select group of leaders. The results showed that it was effective in helping them gain valuable insights into their skills and competencies, and identify areas for further development. In line with that, it provides a starting point for educational leaders to identify their strengths and weaknesses in this area and to develop strategies for enhancing their educational management skills and help leaders become more effective in their role and improve overall educational outcomes. Based on the positive feedback received from the testing group, this self-assessment tool is now being considered for wider implementation in educational management practices.

Keywords: MySkillScan, Educational Management, Innovative Self-Assessment

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1. INTRODUCTION

"MySkillScan" is an innovative self-assessment tool designed for individuals seeking to enhance their management capabilities. With its intuitive user interface and interactive features, this Innovative self-assessment has been identified as a powerful tool for educational managers and leaders to improve their effectiveness and the performance of their institutions. Self-assessment can help leaders to gain a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, identify areas for improvement, and develop effective strategies to achieve their goals (Cuseo, 2015). Furthermore, self-assessment can help to identify key competencies that leaders need to develop in order to be successful (Herrity, 2022).

Innovative self-assessment can provide a valuable means of gathering feedback and insights from stakeholders such as students, teachers, and parents. This feedback can help leaders to better understand the needs of their stakeholders and make more informed decisions. The process of self-assessment can also promote ongoing learning and development by encouraging individuals to reflect

on their experiences, successes, and failures. This reflective process can help individuals to identify opportunities for growth and develop strategies for continuous improvement [3].

In conclusion, innovative self-assessment is a valuable tool for educational managers and leaders to improve their effectiveness and the performance of their institutions. Self-assessment can help to identify areas for improvement, develop effective strategies, and promote ongoing learning and development. Gathering feedback and insights from stakeholders through self-assessment can also help leaders to make more informed decisions and better understand the needs of their stakeholders. The benefits of innovative self-assessment for educational management and leadership should be explored and promoted to support its use in educational institutions.

2. METHOD & MATERIAL

This study aimed to evaluate the perception of school leaders towards the MySkillScan self-assessment tool, as there is a lack of research on leader self-assessment in schools (Van Thao et al., 2013). The research question of this study was: "What are leaders' perceptions about the MySkillScan in terms of its value, relevance, and content?". The study collected data from ten purposively selected school leaders with extensive experience, who were surveyed using a questionnaire adapted from the teacher self-assessment tool for English language teaching study conducted by Borg and Edmett in 2019. The participation of the school leaders in this study was voluntary, and ethical considerations were communicated to them. The collected data was analysed using descriptive statistics (Van Thao et al., 2013).

The self-assessment tool developed using coding software and based on the Leithwood Transformational Leadership theory (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006) is a unique and innovative approach to evaluating one's leadership skills. This tool allows individuals to evaluate their leadership abilities based on the principles of transformational leadership, as proposed by Leithwood. By using coding software, the tool can provide personalized feedback and recommendations for improvement to the individual. This approach to self-assessment can be valuable for leaders at all levels, from novice to expert, who are looking to develop their leadership skills and become more effective in their roles. The Leithwood Transformational Leadership theory emphasizes the importance of developing a vision, inspiring others, and empowering others to achieve their goals, which are essential components of effective leadership (Leithwood, 2022). Using this tool, leaders can gain a better understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in these areas, and work to improve their leadership abilities.

3. FINDINGS

This study's findings stem from a study of ten veteran school administrators. Among the ten respondents who revealed their gender, 80% were women, while 20% were men. Table 1 illustrates that the participants worked in both primary and secondary schools. Table 2 highlights the participants' diversity in terms of education management expertise, with the largest cohort (60% of the sample) having between 5-10 years of experience.

3.1 Participants' Profiles

This study's findings stem from a study of ten veteran school administrators. Among the ten respondents who revealed their gender, 80% were women, while 20% were men. Table 1 illustrates that the participants worked in both primary and secondary schools. Table 2 highlights the participants' diversity in terms of education management expertise, with the largest cohort (60% of the sample) having between 5-10 years of experience.

Table 1. Type of institution

| Type of Institution | n | Percentage |
|---------------------|----|------------|
| Primary | 6 | 60% |
| Secondary | 4 | 40% |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

Table 2. Experience of Education Management as School Leader

| Experience | n | Percentage |
|--------------------|----|------------|
| 0-5 years | 2 | 20% |
| 6-10 years | 6 | 60% |
| 11-15 years | 2 | 20% |
| More than 15 years | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 10 | 100% |

3.2. *The Perspectives of Leaders Regarding MySkillScan*

In Table 3, the results of the leaders' opinions were presented and the overall impression was positive. The majority of the leaders, amounting to 90%, found the MySkillScan relevant to their specific context, clear, and a valuable activity (although a small percentage of 10% disagreed). Moreover, the same number of leaders agreed that the MySkillScan motivated them to seek out professional development opportunities and that they would recommend the SAT to a colleague. However, 10% of the participants disagreed with this statement. Lastly, a significant number of participants, comprising 90%, agreed or strongly agreed that the MySkillScan covered most of the skills, knowledge, and behaviours that are essential for school leaders to possess.

Table 3. Leaders' Views about the Self-Assessment Tool (MySkillScan)

| Item | n | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|----|----------------|------------|------------|-------------------|
| The self-assessment was relevant to my context. | 10 | 3 (30%) | 6 (60%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |
| The self-assessment was clear and easy to understand. | 10 | 4 (40%) | 5 (50%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |
| Completing the self-assessment is a worthwhile activity. | 10 | 3 (30%) | 6 (60%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |
| The self-assessment has encouraged me to look for further professional development opportunities. | 10 | 4 (40%) | 5 (50%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |
| I would recommend the self-assessment to a friend. | 10 | 3 (30%) | 6 (60%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |
| The self-assessment includes most of the skills, knowledge and behaviours that a school leader needs. | 10 | 4 (40%) | 5 (50%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) |

4. DISCUSSION

This self-assessment tool, such as the MySkillScan, is found relevant to the current context of the participants as it provides a structured approach to evaluate their skills and knowledge as a leader in their school settings. By completing the assessment, leaders can identify areas where they may need to develop their skills and knowledge to better meet the needs of their schools and communities. This relates to Leithwood's Transformational Leadership theory, which emphasizes the importance of leaders continually developing their skills and knowledge to meet the ever-changing needs of their organizations (Leithwood, 2022). By regularly assessing leaders' leadership skills and identifying areas where leaders can improve, they can better lead their school through the ongoing process of transformation and change. Furthermore, the MySkillScan encourages leaders to seek out professional

development opportunities to further enhance their skills and knowledge. This also aligns with Leithwood's Transformational Leadership theory, which highlights the importance of continuous learning and development for effective leadership. By seeking out professional development opportunities, leaders can further develop their skills and knowledge and better meet the needs of their school and community.

Furthermore, Leithwood's transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of school leaders possessing certain skills, knowledge, and behaviors to effectively lead school reform efforts [1]. The MySkillScan self-assessment tool includes a wide range of competencies that are essential for effective school leadership, including skills related to instructional leadership, change management, collaboration, and communication. These competencies are closely aligned with the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that Leithwood identified as crucial for transformational school leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). Thus, by using the MySkillScan self-assessment tool, school leaders can evaluate their proficiency in the essential competencies required for transformational leadership, as identified by Leithwood. The tool's comprehensive nature ensures that school leaders are provided with a detailed and in-depth analysis of their strengths and areas for improvement, allowing them to focus on specific areas that need development. This approach aligns with Leithwood's emphasis on the importance of continuous learning and development for school leaders to become transformational leaders (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006).

Based on the findings of this study, there are several suggestions for further research related to school leadership and self-assessment tools. Firstly, it would be beneficial to conduct a larger-scale study with a more diverse group of school leaders to confirm the findings and identify any additional insights or trends. Secondly, further research could explore the effectiveness of the MySkillScan self-assessment tool in improving leadership practices and outcomes, such as teacher retention rates, student achievement, and school culture. Thirdly, comparative studies could be conducted between different self-assessment tools and their effectiveness in enhancing leadership practices. Finally, it could be worthwhile to investigate the impact of transformational leadership theory on the development and implementation of self-assessment tools for school leaders. These areas of research could contribute to the improvement of school leadership practices and the development of more effective self-assessment tools for school leaders.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study findings suggest that the MySkillScan self-assessment tool is a useful and relevant instrument for school leaders, with the majority of participants in the pilot study agreeing that it covers most of the essential skills, knowledge, and behaviors required for leadership. The tool was also found to encourage leaders to pursue professional development activities, which is an essential aspect of enhancing leadership effectiveness. Moreover, the study revealed that female school leaders were overrepresented, indicating a need for more gender diversity in leadership roles. Further research can explore how the MySkillScan tool can be used to develop more diverse and inclusive leadership teams. In addition, future studies can investigate the long-term impact of the MySkillScan tool on leadership development and how it relates to transformational leadership theory, such as Leithwood's Transformational School Leadership model. Overall, the study provides insights into the usefulness of the MySkillScan tool and highlights areas for further exploration to enhance leadership development in education.

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