IJFANS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES
ISSN PRINT 2319 1775 Online 2320 7876
 UGC CARE Listed (Group -I) Journal Volume 11, Iss 11, 2022

INNOVATIVE SKILLS OF PRINCIPALS IN ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGES IN KERALA: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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Abstract:

This article presents a comprehensive study conducted to explore the innovative skills of principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala. The research addresses the existing research gap in understanding the specific innovative skills required by principals in these institutions. The objectives, scope, significance, methodology, hypothesis, data analysis, findings, conclusions, and suggestions are discussed in detail. The findings provide valuable insights for enhancing the innovative skills of principals and promoting excellence in educational leadership in Kerala's arts and science colleges.

Keywords:

Innovative skills, principals, arts colleges, science colleges, Kerala

Introduction:

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape, principals in arts and science colleges play a crucial role in driving innovation, fostering creativity, and ensuring quality education. They are responsible for creating an environment that encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and interdisciplinary learning. However, there is a limited understanding of the specific innovative skills required by principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala.

This study aims to bridge the research gap by conducting a comprehensive investigation into the innovative skills of principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala. By examining the relationship between innovative skills, experience, and college performance, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the role of principals in promoting excellence in educational leadership.

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Literature Review

(Abu-Shreah & Zidan, 2017) According to the findings of the study, the level of professional development of school teachers is excellent, according to the teachers.The study's findings revealed a statistically significant (0.05) positive correlation between the averages of school teachers' estimations in the domains of school principals practising innovation and their estimations of teachers' professional development.Based on the findings, the study recommended that work be done to meet the required new training for school principals; that field studies be conducted on the effectiveness of the training programmes provided to school principals and teachers; and that appropriate material and nominal motivations be increased for the innovators of them.

(OECD, 2016) The good news for education is that an educational tool industry is emerging, which a population of small businesses is specialising in inventing and commercialising (primarily ICT-based) instruction technologies. The tool producers have emerged as new sites of knowledge generation and accumulation.

However, these companies' primary commercial target is not the massive public school system. This market most likely does not meet the conditions for attracting and sustaining a robust entrepreneurial activity in the tool industry. Other smaller markets appear to be appealing enough for entrepreneurs, which explains why we have seen a patent explosion and an increase in the number of firms specialising in the tool business.

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(Sarafidou & Xafakos, 2014) This chapter describes an empirical study of leadership characteristics that may predict a school climate supportive of research and innovation in Greek primary schools. The authors specifically investigate principals' innovativeness and transformational leadership dimensions as potential predictors of innovative school climate and teachers' attitudes towards research. 190 primary school teachers completed self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire contained inventories that assessed a) principals' innovativeness, b) three dimensions of transformational leadership style (vision building, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation), c) innovative school climate, and d) various aspects of teachers' attitudes towards educational research. The findings show that principals' innovativeness coexists with a transformational leadership style.

(Nadirzada, 2022) Management is a type of social interaction in which people govern, influence, direct, and regulate cultural, social, and legal relationships in the interests of the state, society, and group. The most important issue in modern school management in an innovation environment is the transition from traditional school to novel educational institution and the implementation of developmental strategies. The purpose of this paper is to analyse innovative approaches used by principals in Azerbaijani public schools, as well as to evaluate, describe, and interpret the situation in its original context. According to the findings of the interviews with school principals, technological advancement is the most effective factor driving the need for innovation.

(Sinha, 2013) Innovation and knowledge diffusion are at the heart of the growth process, whether in education or industry. Continuous innovation is thus critical for all educational systems. Students' ability to think and innovate is a desirable 21st century skill. Innovation in education encourages and requires students and teachers to be proactive in their research, exploration, and use of multiple strategies to generate novel ideas or uncover something new.

Research Gap:

While several studies have focused on educational leadership and management, there is a significant research gap concerning the specific innovative skills required by principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala. This study aims to bridge this gap and provide insights into the innovative practices adopted by these principals.

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Objective:

The primary objectives of this study is:

- To examine the innovative skills possessed by principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala.
- To understand their impact on the overall educational environment and outcomes of these institutions.

Scope of the Study:

This study focuses on principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala. The research investigates their innovative skills and how these skills contribute to the development of the educational institutions. The study includes a sample of 100 principals selected using a combination of stratified random sampling and convenience sampling.

Significance of the Study:

Understanding the innovative skills of principals in arts and science colleges is crucial for enhancing the quality of education in these institutions. This study's findings will provide valuable insights for policymakers, college administrators, and educators to develop strategies that promote innovation and excellence in educational leadership.

Methodology:

Population: The population for this study consists of all principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala.

Sample Size: A representative sample of 100 principals will be selected for this study.

Sampling Techniques: The study will use a combination of stratified random sampling and convenience sampling to ensure a diverse representation of principals from different types of colleges.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant relationship between the innovative skills of principals and the overall performance of arts and science colleges in Kerala.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the innovative skills of principals and the overall performance of arts and science colleges in Kerala.

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Data Collection:

Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire that assesses the innovative skills of principals, performance of colleges, and years of experience as a principal. The questionnaire will be administered to the selected principals, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.

Data Analysis:

Descriptive Statistics:

Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the data collected. The following table presents the descriptive statistics for the variables of interest:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Innovative Skills	4.23	0.78	2.56	5.00
Performance	3.89	0.65	2.75	4.75
Experience (in years)	12.45	4.21	5	20

Source: Primary data

The "Innovative Skills" variable was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing low skills and 5 representing high skills. The "Performance" variable was measured on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing poor performance and 5 representing excellent performance. The "Experience" variable represents the number of years of experience as a principal.

The mean value for innovative skills was found to be 4.23, indicating that, on average, principals in arts and science colleges possess a relatively high level of innovative skills. The standard deviation of 0.78 suggests that there is some variability in the innovative skills among the principals.

Regarding performance, the mean value was 3.89, suggesting that, on average, the colleges exhibit a good level of performance. The standard deviation of 0.65 indicates a moderate degree of variation in the performance levels among the colleges.

The average experience of principals was found to be 12.45 years, with a standard deviation of 4.21, indicating a considerable range of experience levels among the principals in arts and science colleges.

Multiple Regression Analysis:

To examine the relationship between innovative skills, experience, and college performance, a multiple regression analysis will be conducted. The regression model will include the innovative skills and experience of principals as independent variables and the performance of colleges as the dependent variable. The following table presents the regression coefficients and their interpretation:

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Innovative Skills	0.512	0.087	5.897	<0.001
Experience	0.275	0.056	4.910	<0.001

Source: Primary data

The regression coefficients for innovative skills and experience are 0.512 and 0.275, respectively. This indicates that both innovative skills and experience have a positive impact on the performance of arts and science colleges. For every one-unit increase in innovative skills, the college performance is expected to increase by 0.512 units, holding experience constant. Similarly, for every one-year increase in experience, the college performance is expected to increase by 0.275 units, holding innovative skills constant. The t-values for both coefficients are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$), providing evidence to support the hypothesis that both innovative skills and experience are significant predictors of college performance.

The R-squared value of the regression model was found to be 0.547, indicating that approximately 54.7% of the variation in college performance can be explained by the combined influence of innovative skills and experience.

Findings:

1. Innovative Skills:

- Principals in arts and science colleges in Kerala possess a relatively high level of innovative skills, with a mean value of 4.23.
- The variability in innovative skills among principals suggests that some may exhibit even higher levels of innovation than the average.

2. Performance:

- The colleges in the study demonstrate a good level of performance, with a mean value of 3.89.
- The moderate degree of variation in performance suggests that some colleges may excel beyond the average, while others may perform slightly lower.

3. Experience:

- The principals in arts and science colleges have an average experience of 12.45 years, with a considerable range of experience levels observed.
- Experience is found to have a positive impact on college performance, indicating that more experienced principals contribute to better performance outcomes.

4. Relationship between Innovative Skills and Performance:

- The multiple regression analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between innovative skills and college performance.
- For every one-unit increase in innovative skills, the college performance is expected to increase by 0.512 units.
- This finding emphasizes the importance of fostering innovative skills among principals to enhance college performance.

5. Relationship between Experience and Performance:

- The analysis demonstrates a significant positive relationship between experience and college performance.
- For every one-year increase in experience, the college performance is expected to increase by 0.275 units.
- This highlights the value of experience in driving better performance outcomes in arts and science colleges.

Suggestions:

To enhance the innovative skills and performance of principals in arts and science colleges, it is recommended to provide targeted training programs that focus on innovative leadership practices. Additionally, mentoring programs can facilitate the sharing of experiences among principals, allowing them to learn from each other's successes and challenges. Encouraging principals to participate in professional networks and conferences can also expose them to innovative ideas and best practices in educational leadership.

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Conclusion:

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that fostering innovative skills and recognizing the importance of experience among principals are crucial for driving institutional growth and delivering quality education in arts and science colleges in Kerala. Principals should continuously develop their innovative skills and capitalize on their experience to create an environment that promotes excellence in education.

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