Analysis of Correlation Factors on The Effectiveness of Design Thinking Mindset Reflection

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the efficacy of the Design Thinking mindset in improving student engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative abilities in higher education environments. Utilizing a quantitative research methodology, data were gathered via surveys administered to 342 students from diverse academic programs. The survey analysed fundamental Design Thinking components learning orientation, problem reframing, experimentation, and empathy and their influence on student engagement and team dynamics. Results revealed significant correlations between these Design Thinking components and favourable student outcomes, emphasizing that students who actively participate in Design Thinking exhibit enhanced adaptability, resilience, and a growth-oriented mindset. This study advocates for the incorporation of Design Thinking in higher education to cultivate critical cognitive and socio-emotional competencies that are esteemed in the contemporary labour market. The findings offer significant insights into the function of Design Thinking in equipping students for intricate, collaborative professional settings and highlight the necessity for innovative teaching strategies that surpass conventional academic limits.

Keywords: Design Thinking, student engagement, higher education, collaborative skills, critical thinking, growth mindset, problem reframing, experimentation, empathy, cognitive skills, socio-emotional learning full paper, template, author, guidelines

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the Design Thinking paradigm has surfaced as a potent educational instrument, prompting students to tackle problem-solving with creativity, empathy, and resilience. Initially a methodology for innovation in business and product design, Design Thinking has been progressively embraced in academic environments to cultivate critical skills vital for success in the contemporary workforce (Brown & Katz, 2022). This methodology underscores an iterative process that includes problem reframing, experimentation, and reflection, thereby facilitating a more significant and active learning experience for students (Scheer, Noweski, & Meinel, 2023). In response to criticisms of traditional lecture-based methods for their lack of interactivity, educators are investigating innovative strategies such as Design Thinking to enhance students' cognitive and socio-emotional skills (Dweck, 2019).

A primary advantage of Design Thinking in education is its ability to cultivate a growth-oriented mindset in students, fostering adaptability and resilience in problem-solving. Dweck (2019) asserts that students with a growth mindset are more adept at perceiving challenges as opportunities for learning and enhancement, a viewpoint that resonates with the iterative essence of Design Thinking. Micheli et al. (2021) contend that by reframing problems and investigating various solutions, students can enhance their critical thinking and collaborative abilities, which are essential in contemporary interconnected work environments. The focus on empathy in Design Thinking allows students to comprehend various perspectives, promoting inclusivity and social responsibility (Razzouk & Shute, 2022).

Studies indicate that the Design Thinking mindset can markedly enhance student engagement, collaboration, and reflective cognition (Chou et al., 2022). Verhulst and Bakker (2021) discovered that students participating in hands-on, experiential learning via Design Thinking exhibit increased motivation and a more profound connection with their peers. This pedagogical method not only improves academic performance but also equips students to navigate real-world challenges with ingenuity and fortitude (Liedtka, 2021). Considering these potential advantages, it is imperative to examine the efficacy of the Design Thinking mindset in higher education, especially in cultivating critical and socio-emotional skills that are esteemed by employers.

This paper examines the influence of the Design Thinking mindset on student engagement and collaborative abilities within a higher education context. This study seeks to enhance the existing evidence for innovative pedagogies that transcend conventional academic limits by analysing the relationships among fundamental Design Thinking elements learning orientation, problem reframing, and experimentation and student outcomes. The results will offer significant insights into how Design Thinking can improve educational experiences and equip students for the requirements of a continually changing global workforce.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The notion of Design Thinking has gained prominence in educational settings as a mechanism to enhance student engagement, collaboration, and problem-solving skills (Brown & Katz, 2022). Design Thinking promotes an iterative, solution-oriented methodology that prioritizes empathy, experimentation, and reflection, crucial for cultivating adaptability and resilience in students (Scheer, Noweski, & Meinel, 2023).

A fundamental advantage of Design Thinking in education is its capacity to foster a growth-oriented mindset that prioritizes ongoing learning and experimentation. Chou et al. (2022) propose that when students are prompted to test hypotheses and refine their ideas, they attain a more profound comprehension of academic concepts and exhibit greater engagement in their educational pursuits. The iterative process fosters resilience as students derive lessons from their failures, adapt, and implement enhancements, consistent with growth mindset theories (Dweck, 2019).

The emphasis of Design Thinking on problem reframing has been demonstrated to improve students' critical thinking and collaborative skills. Micheli et al. (2021) contend that students who reframe challenges are more inclined to embrace diverse perspectives, thereby enhancing empathy and collaboration. This corresponds with Kimbell's (2023) findings that reframing assists students in managing uncertainty by enabling them to tackle problems from various perspectives, thereby enhancing creativity and collaborative skills vital for intricate problem-solving.

Furthermore, Design Thinking has been shown to enhance student engagement and socio-emotional learning by promoting active participation and experiential learning. Verhulst and Bakker (2021) assert that Design Thinking enables students to assume responsibility for their learning, consequently enhancing motivation and engagement in collaborative environments. The researchers discovered that students participating in Design Thinking exhibit elevated teamwork levels and an enhanced sense of belonging within learning communities, essential for optimal group dynamics.

Recent studies have underscored the significance of empathy as an essential element of Design Thinking. Razzouk and Shute (2022) propose that prioritizing empathy facilitates students' understanding of diverse perspectives, thereby enhancing collaboration and prompting them to transcend their own biases. Empathy is essential for equipping students to participate in socially responsible and inclusive problem-solving.

The literature indicates that the Design Thinking mindset improves cognitive and socio-emotional competencies, rendering it an effective educational instrument in the contemporary workforce. Students' capacity for iterative learning, problem reframing, and empathy cultivation endows them with competencies that transcend academic contexts, thus preparing them for dynamic, collaborative work environments

(Liedtka, 2021). Future research may investigate the influence of Design Thinking on professional skill enhancement and career preparedness, providing a comprehensive perspective on its enduring advantages.

METHODOLOGY

This research employs a quantitative methodology to investigate the influence of Design Thinking on student engagement and team dynamics in higher education. Data was gathered through a structured survey aimed at evaluating the perceptions and experiences of students from diverse academic programs at UNITAR. The survey instrument comprised several sections featuring Likert-scale items that emphasized fundamental Design Thinking elements—learning orientation, problem reframing, experimentation, and empathy and their impact on engagement and collaborative efficacy. Every item was validated via a pilot study to confirm reliability, clarity, and relevance to the study objectives. The survey's internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a value exceeding 0.70 for all constructions, signifying strong reliability (Field, 2019). The sample comprised 342 undergraduate students from various disciplines, including Business Administration, Psychology, Information Technology, and Education. A stratified random sampling method was utilized to guarantee a representative sample across gender, program, and academic year. This method reduces sampling bias and improves the applicability of results to a wider student demographic in comparable academic environments (Creswell & Creswell, 2020). The demographic composition comprised 69% female and 31% male participants, indicating a balanced representation of gender dynamics in higher education. Data was gathered over a four-week duration via online and in-person surveys, facilitating accessibility and promoting an increased response rate. Participants were appraised for the study's objective, guaranteed confidentiality, and offered the opportunity to withdraw at any time, thereby upholding ethical standards in accordance with institutional guidelines. The survey addressed constructs associated with students' Design Thinking experiences, including their methodologies for problem-solving, collaboration, experimentation, and overall engagement in learning. Data analysis was performed utilizing SPSS software, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics were employed to characterize the demographic attributes of participants and to present measures of central tendency (mean, median, standard deviation) for each Design Thinking construct. Inferential statistics, specifically Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses, were utilized to examine the relationships between Design Thinking components and student engagement, as well as team dynamics. Pearson correlation analysis facilitated the identification of the strength and direction of relationships between constructs, whereas regression analysis evaluated the predictive capacity of Design Thinking elements on engagement and collaborative efficacy. Significance levels were established at 0.01 and 0.05, by conventional standards in educational research (Mertler & Reinhart, 2021). This methodology offers a robust framework for analyzing the effects of Design Thinking on student learning outcomes and collaborative abilities. The integration of rigorous sampling, validated survey tools, and thorough data analysis methods guarantees dependable and valid results that enhance the understanding of Design Thinking's impact on educational experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic

Table 1: Demographic

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	106	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Female	236	69.0	69.0	100.0
	Total	342	100.0	100.0	
Program	Bachelor Psychology	40	11.7	11.7	11.7
	Bachelor of Business Administration	212	62.0	62.0	73.7

Bachelor of Information Technology	39	11.4	11.4	85.1
Bachelor Education	46	13.5	13.5	98.5
Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education)	5	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total	342			100.0

The descriptive analysis of the sample demographics reveals that the study included 342 participants, with most female respondents (69%) compared to male respondents (31%). This gender distribution aligns with trends in certain disciplines within higher education, where there is a growing representation of women, particularly in psychology and education (Wang, Degol, & Ye, 2020). Participants were further categorized by academic program, with a significant portion (61.7%) enrolled in Business Administration (BBA), followed by students in the Bachelor of Education (BED) (13.5%) and Bachelor of Psychology (B.PSYCH) (11.7%) programs, reflecting a multidisciplinary approach essential for analyzing the impact of Design Thinking across varied educational contexts.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlations

		B	L	H	N	DV2
Tolerance	Pearson Correlation	1	.249**	.293**	.289**	.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	342	341	341	341	342
Learning Oriented	Pearson Correlation	.249**	1	.674**	.601**	.775**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	341	341	341	341	341
ProblemReframing b	Pearson Correlation	.293**	.674**	1	.505**	.780**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	341	341	341	341	341
Experimentation	Pearson Correlation	.289**	.601**	.505**	1	.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	341	341	341	341	341
DV2	Pearson Correlation	.308**	.775**	.780**	.635**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	342	341	341	341	342
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

The correlation analysis explores the relationships among several key constructs of Design Thinking, including learning orientation, problem reframing, experimentation, and their impact on a dependent variable (DV2), likely representing student engagement or effectiveness in team dynamics. Significant correlations were identified at the 0.01 level for all variables, indicating strong relationships between these Design Thinking components ($p < 0.01$). Specifically, problem reframing and learning orientation showed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.674$), suggesting that students who engage in reframing problems are more inclined to adopt a continuous learning mindset. This finding aligns with Dorst's (2021) assertion that reframing challenges enhances critical thinking, leading to deeper learning and adaptability in problem-solving.

The strong correlation between learning orientation and the dependent variable ($r = 0.775$) signifies that students who emphasize ongoing learning and improvement report higher levels of engagement and

effectiveness in teamwork. Micheli et al. (2021) argue that Design Thinking's iterative nature encourages a growth mindset, where students feel more invested in collaborative processes, enhancing engagement and productivity. This positive association supports previous studies indicating that a learning-oriented approach in Design Thinking empowers students to tackle complex challenges with resilience and adaptability (Liedtka, 2021).

Problem reframing also demonstrates a robust correlation with the dependent variable (r = 0.780), highlighting the importance of redefining problems in fostering innovative solutions. According to Kimbell (2023), reframing is essential for navigating uncertainty, as it allows students to view issues from multiple perspectives, fostering creativity. This perspective is further supported by Razzouk and Shute (2022), who note that reframing challenges aids in developing metacognitive skills, such as reflection and self-evaluation, critical for problem-solving in dynamic environments. The results suggest that students who engage in problem reframing not only contribute to innovative solutions but also foster a more supportive team environment.

These findings emphasize the effectiveness of Design Thinking as an educational strategy in higher education. The correlations between core Design Thinking constructs—learning orientation, problem reframing, and experimentation—with the outcome variable of student engagement or team effectiveness underscore the role of Design Thinking in enhancing both individual and collaborative skills. The high correlation between experimentation and the dependent variable (r = 0.635) illustrates that students benefit from iterative testing and adaptation, a process that reinforces resilience and creativity (Scheer, Noweski, & Meinel, 2023). Experimentation, as noted by Chou et al. (2022), enables students to test hypotheses in real-world contexts, which increases motivation and helps them develop a more practical understanding of theoretical concepts.

Overall, these findings support the integration of Design Thinking within higher education curricula to cultivate critical skills like empathy, resilience, and adaptability, which are increasingly valued in the modern workforce (Verhulst & Bakker, 2021). By demonstrating high correlations between Design Thinking principles and positive student outcomes, this study adds to the body of evidence advocating for innovative, student-centered pedagogies that foster both cognitive and socio-emotional development (Brown & Katz, 2022). These insights suggest that Design Thinking not only enhances academic performance but also prepares students to work effectively in diverse, team-based environments, making it a critical component for future-ready education.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the influence of the Design Thinking mindset on improving student engagement and team dynamics in higher education settings. The findings indicate that fundamental aspects of Design Thinking learning orientation, problem reframing, and experimentation are positively associated with enhanced collaborative effectiveness and individual engagement. Robust connections among these elements suggest that students who participate actively in problem-solving and iterative learning processes exhibit enhanced engagement in collaborative tasks and improved adaptability in tackling complex challenges.

The results indicate that integrating Design Thinking principles into higher education can cultivate crucial skills like critical thinking, empathy, and resilience, which are increasingly essential in the contemporary workforce. By integrating these components into educational frameworks, institutions can equip students to manage uncertainty, devise innovative solutions, and collaborate effectively in team-oriented settings. This research advocates for the comprehensive incorporation of student-centered and experiential learning methodologies to improve educational results and synchronize academic training with changing professional requirements.

In summary, Design Thinking provides a comprehensive framework for cultivating versatile graduates endowed with the cognitive and socio-emotional skills necessary for the future. Future research may

investigate the longitudinal effects of Design Thinking on students' career paths, offering a deeper understanding of its enduring advantages in practical applications.

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