



IMPORTANCE OF USING THE VENN DIAGRAM METHOD IN MILITARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: The article highlights the use of a Venn diagram in military education as a tool for comparing close concepts and substantiating their general and distinctive features. Based on methodical sources related to graphic organization, a conditional training session designed to study command and leadership activities is developed. Pre-defining comparison criteria, placing features with evidence, and formulating a written conclusion based on the diagram are proposed. The importance of the method is revealed in avoiding the strict antithesis of concepts and demonstrating their mutual relationship.

Keywords: Venn diagram, military education, comparison, commanding, leadership, graphic organization.

In studying military management, the concepts of commanding and leadership are sometimes used interchangeably or as mutually exclusive phenomena. Both approaches limit deep analysis of the relationship between these concepts. The purpose of this article is to adapt the Venn diagram to a training exercise comparing these concepts. Methodological source analysis and a conditional audience scenario were applied. The article proposes the procedure for using the method rather than its empirically proven effectiveness.

A Venn diagram serves to show the general and distinctive features of two objects through intersecting circles. ReadWriteThink materials explain that common characteristics are placed in the intersection, while features specific to each object are placed in their respective separate parts [1]. This method brings the result of comparison into a visible form in education.

Before filling out the diagram, the criteria for comparison must be determined. In this exercise, commanding is operationally defined as an activity associated with position authority and established service responsibility, while leadership is defined as an influence process directed toward a common goal. These educational definitions are not claimed as universal definitions for all theoretical schools.

The pedagogical task is not to depict the commander solely as a person who gives orders and the leader solely as an encourager. One person can perform both activities. The diagram compares activity features according to the selected criteria rather than individuals. If this distinction is not explained, the visual aid may reinforce stereotypes.

When applying the method, the trainee must provide a rationale for each feature. For instance, it is not enough to write the concept of responsibility solely in the commanding circle; formal responsibility must be distinguished from moral responsibility before the team. An ambiguous feature is not placed until clarified. Thus, the diagram becomes a tool for clarifying the concept rather than memorizing a ready-made answer.

Conditional Practical Situation in Military Education

A study group must complete a group project within a specified deadline. The training leader formally distributes tasks and monitors execution. Meanwhile, one trainee in the group consolidates partners' proposals, softens disagreements, and engages less active participants. The scenario is designed for educational comparison rather than evaluating the performance of real individuals.

Trainees first select three criteria: the source of influence, the applied action, and the expected result. Then, they draw two intersecting circles. In the commanding-specific part, assigning formal tasks based on position within this definition is written; in the leadership-specific part, the opportunity to exert influence through trust without a position is written. Features such as explaining the goal, organizing cooperation, motivating, and directing toward results are introduced into the intersection with rationale.

Exemplary explanation: formally assigning a task relies on the commander's position authority; persuading partners can occur without position authority. However, a formal leader can also exert influence through persuasion and personal example. Therefore, the second feature does not mean that the commander cannot perform it; the separate part shows the basis of influence independent of position.

35-minute activity: defining concepts and criteria — 7; writing individual features — 5; creating a diagram in pairs — 10; defending placement — 8; writing an 80–100-word conclusion — 5 minutes. The instructor provides a counter-example: if a formal leader also earns the team's trust, which connection in the diagram is revealed? The trainee must explain that commanding and leadership harmonize in the activity of one person.

Evaluation and Limitations

Criteria proposed by the author: definition and comparison criteria — 2, accuracy of distinctive features — 2, validity of common features — 2, situation-appropriate examples — 2, consistency of written conclusion — 2 points. For each criterion, a scale of 0 (unfulfilled), 1 (partially), or 2 (substantively fulfilled) is applied. Converting an educational graphic into a textual conclusion makes it possible to link comparison with written narrative [2].

A diagram is insufficient to show sequence of processes, strength of influence, or causal relationships. Moreover, the boundaries of social concepts may not be as strict as in mathematical sets. Therefore, the commentary beneath the diagram is important. Evaluation considers the logic of classification rather than circle size or decoration.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Venn diagram serves in military education to differentiate similar concepts, identify commonalities, and practice comparative conclusion drawing. Using the method requires agreeing on definitions and criteria beforehand, and substantiating each feature with an example. In future testing, it is recommended to give trainees a new pair of concepts to test the transfer of independent comparison skills to another topic.

References / Foydalanilgan adabiyotlar / Литература

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