

Agricultural communications courses continue to be in popular demand both in secondary and postsecondary education. Such courses are valuable in assisting individuals acquire important skills that will help them succeed in the workplace. More states are developing high school curricula in agricultural communications, with Texas being a leader in this endeavor.

This study sought to evaluate the agricultural communication curriculum being used in Texas by determining what competencies high school students should master upon completion of the course. Furthermore, the perceived teaching ability of Texas agriscience teachers for teaching the agricultural communications curriculum was also assessed.

The researchers did a good job of introducing the study and developing the theoretical framework. I would encourage the researchers to consider going beyond the traditional agricultural education literature in developing their theoretical framework. The purpose of the study and research questions were clearly defined.

I have some questions for the researchers regarding the methods and procedures used in the study. Using Cochran's formula, a sample size of 180 was calculated. Yet the researchers over sampled in this study. Is there any support from the literature to warrant the need to over sample the population in this study? Furthermore, what problems can arise from over sampling a population?

Another question I have regarding the methods and procedures concerns the instrument used to collect data. One part of the instrument was to determine which competencies were most adequate and useful in instruction. Was a scale used to assess this? If so, what scale of measurement was utilized? From reading this paper, it was difficult to ascertain what type scale of measurement was used to assess this part of the instrument. I believe that some sort of scale would have proven more valuable in assessing this data.

I found the results and conclusions of the study to be difficult to read. Does just a percentage of agreement really indicate that a competency should be included in the curriculum? I really think some sort of a Likert-type scale might have been better suited for assessing this part of the study. I would also encourage the researchers to incorporate tables into future presentations and publications to make the interpretation of results easier for the audience to understand.

It is evident in the study that the agricultural communications curriculum has a place in agricultural education programs in Texas, even though teachers lack the background and training to teach the curriculum. The main question I see is how do we make sure that teachers are adequately prepared to teach this important curriculum. I thank the researchers for inquiring in an area and wish them well in future studies in agricultural communications.