

More students are enrolling in agricultural education classes today than ever before. Gone are the days where students only completed a traditional production-oriented curriculum. Students enrolling in agricultural education classes today take classes in aquaculture, biotechnology, leadership development, and other specialized areas. These specialized courses have attracted students from non-agricultural backgrounds into agricultural education programs. Such students may take one course their senior year because of a variety of reasons. Such efforts have saved some agricultural education programs from being eliminated.

This study sought to determine and compare the reasons why traditional and non-traditional students enroll in agricultural education classes. The researchers did an excellent job in introducing the study and defining the theoretical framework for the study. The purpose and objectives of the study were clearly defined. I would have liked to have seen a little more discussion on the instrument and the questions used in the instrument to ascertain the reasons why students enrolled in agricultural education classes.

I found the results of the study to be interesting. On demographic characteristics, there were either no difference between groups or else there were no unusual occurrences. There were a number of differences on the reasons for enrolling in an agricultural education course, many of which favored traditional students. There were very few significant reasons why non-traditional students enrolled in agricultural education classes. It would have also been helpful to know the scale of measurement used to assess the statements in Table 4.

I am curious about the results presented in Table 5 and the interpretation offered by the researchers. While I do not dispute what the researchers state in the paper concerning the reasons between the two groups, what do the results really say about students within a particular group? Do traditional student enroll in agricultural education classes because they are fun and hand-on? Is the same not also true for non-traditional students?

Many other states are facing the same situation with more non-traditional students enrolling in agricultural education classes. It would be curious to learn what the reasons are for enrolling in agricultural education classes in other states. The researchers have provided a foundation for the profession to look at and I encourage them to continue their inquiry in this area.