

# **A Gender Analysis of Job Satisfaction, Job Satisfier Factors, and Job Dissatisfier Factors of Agricultural Education Teachers**

**Jamie Cano**, Assistant Professor  
**Greg Miller**, Graduate Research Associate  
The Ohio State University

According to Lawler (1977), work experiences have profound effects on both the individual employee and society as a whole. Furthermore, "the research evidence clearly shows that employees' decisions about whether they will go to work on any given day and whether they will quit are affected by their feelings of job satisfaction" (Lawler, 1977, p. 361).

Between 1970 and 1975, Knight (1978) found that 263 Ohio agriculture teachers left the profession for reasons other than retirement or death. Similarly, Morgan (1988) concluded that approximately 11 percent of all secondary agriculture teachers left the profession annually for reasons other than death or retirement. Is there a causal link between leaving the profession and job satisfaction? If one can hypothesize that there is a causal link, then it becomes important that agricultural educators assess the level of job satisfaction among agriculture teachers.

What have researchers learned about job satisfaction among teachers of agricultural education? Several researchers (Beavers, Jewell, Malpiedi, 1987; Flowers & Pebble, 1988; Grady, 1985; Newcomb, Betts, & Cano, 1987) concluded that agriculture teachers are fairly or moderately satisfied with their jobs. Knowing whether or not employees are satisfied, however, does not provide sufficient information for dealing with the consequences of job dissatisfaction (Davis & Newstrom, 1989; Lawler, 1977; Mowday, 1984; Porter & Steers, 1977). Instead, a thorough understanding of factors which lead to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction is required (Davis & Newstrom, 1989; Mowday, 1984; Berns, 1989).

## **Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to investigate specific factors associated with job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of male and female teachers of agriculture. In addition, this study sought to determine the overall job satisfaction of male and female secondary agriculture teachers. To guide this study the following research objectives were formulated. To:

Describe selected demographic characteristics of secondary agriculture teachers by gender.

Describe relationships between secondary agriculture teachers' level of job satisfaction and selected demographic variables by gender.

Describe relationships between selected job satisfier factors (achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself) and the overall job satisfaction of secondary agriculture teachers by gender.

Describe the relationship between selected job dissatisfier factors (interpersonal relations, policy and administration, salary, supervision, and working

conditions) and the overall job satisfaction of secondary agriculture teachers by gender.

## Procedures

### Population and Sample

The population for this descriptive-correlational study was all secondary teachers of agricultural education in Ohio (N=558). The sample consisted of a census of female secondary agriculture teachers (N=45) and male secondary agriculture teachers in the taxonomies of Agricultural Business (N=29), Farm Business Planning and Analysis (FBPA) (N=27), and Natural Resources (N=13). A random sample of male secondary teachers of agriculture was drawn from Agricultural Mechanics (N=81, n=70), Horticulture (N=71, n=60), and Production Agriculture (N=292, n=170). Cochran's (1977) formula for a five percent chance of error was used to determine the sample sizes. The total sample consisted of 414 secondary agricultural education teachers.

### Instrumentation

Wood's (1973) instrument was used to assess the level of job satisfaction among secondary agricultural education teachers. Wood's instrument constituted Part I of the questionnaire and provided the basis for describing teacher perceptions regarding the following factors: achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, the work itself, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, policy and administration, and working conditions.

The Brayfield-Rothe "Job Satisfaction Index", as modified by Warner (1973). was used to measure job satisfaction when all facets of the job were considered. The "Job Satisfaction Index" constituted Part II of the Questionnaire. Part III of the questionnaire consisted of demographic variables.

Content and face validity were established by a panel of experts consisting of teacher educators, teachers of agriculture, and graduate students. The instrument was pilot tested with a group of agricultural education teachers not included in the sample. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. The reliability coefficient for Part I of the questionnaire was .89, while the coefficients for the ten subscales of Part I were: achievement, .86; advancement, .89; recognition, .93; responsibility, .88; the work itself, .68; supervision, .96; salary, .94; interpersonal relations, .91; policy and administration, .95; and working conditions, .90. The reliability coefficient for Part II of the questionnaire was .94.

### Data Collection

Prior to mailing the complete questionnaire package which contained a cover letter, questionnaire, and stamped return envelope, a postcard was sent to those in the sample to announce the forthcoming package. After three follow-up contacts with the nonrespondents, an 81 percent response rate was realized. Nonresponse error was controlled by comparing early to late respondents (Miller & Smith, 1983). No significant differences were found between the early and late respondents.

### Analysis of Data

All data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, Personal Computer version (SPSS/PC+). Appropriate statistical procedures for description and

inference were used. The alpha level was set a priori at .05. All correlation coefficients were interpreted utilizing Davis' (1971) descriptors.

## Results

Of those responding to the questionnaire, it was found that 89 percent (299) were male while 11 percent (37) were female (Table 1). The majority of both male and female agriculture teachers had attained a bachelors or higher degree. Table 1 further shows that the mean age for female agriculture teachers was 32.35 years while the mean age for male teachers was 40.28. Male teachers were significantly older than female teachers. Male teachers, on the average, had 13.47 years of teaching experience while females averaged 7.94 years (Table 1). Males had significantly more years of teaching experience than females. With regard to the number of years the respondents had been in their current position, males provided a mean response of 10.35 years while females averaged 5.95 years (Table 1). Males had been in their current position significantly longer than females. Approximately 54 percent (160) of the males had tenure, and 54.1 percent (20) of the female agriculture teachers were tenured.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and t-tests for Selected Demographic Variables

Variable	Males (n=299)		Females (n=37)		t-value	Prob.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Age	40.28	9.28	32.35	6.31	-5.05	.001
Total years teaching	13.47	7.39	7.94	4.27	-4.39	.001
Years in current teaching position	10.35	6.74	5.95	4.06	-3.88	.001

Based on a five point Likert type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), males provided a mean score of 2.80, while females provided a mean score of 2.82 on the overall job satisfaction scale (Table 2). The mean scores for male and female secondary agriculture teachers on the overall job satisfaction scale were not significantly different.

Table 2. Means, Standard Deviations, and t-test for Overall Job Satisfaction

Variable	Males (n=288)		Females (n=36)		t-test	Prob.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Overall job satisfaction	2.80	.20	2.82	.16	.61	.543

Note: Based on scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=undecided; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree.

Based on a six point Likert type scale with responses ranging from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (6), males provided the following mean scores on the job satisfier and dissatisfier factors: achievement, 4.50; advancement, 4.20; recognition, 4.35; responsibility, 4.70; the work itself, 4.65; interpersonal relationships, 4.91; policy and administration, 4.12; salary, 4.10; supervision/technical, 4.11; working conditions, 4.08 (Table 3). The same Likert type scale yielded the following mean scores for female agriculture teachers: achievement, 4.34; advancement, 4.04; recognition, 4.08; responsibility, 4.59; the work itself, 4.61; interpersonal relationships, 4.78; policy and administration, 3.85; salary, 4.24; supervision/technical, 3.76; working conditions, 4.21. Male and female agriculture teachers did not differ significantly on any of the job satisfier or job dissatisfier factors (Table 3).

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and t-tests for Job Satisfier and Job Dissatisfier Factors.

Variable	Males (n=299)		Females (n=37)		t-value	Prob.
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
<b>Job Satisfiers</b>						
Achievement	4.50	.73	4.34	.74	-1.26	.213
Advancement	4.20	.88	4.04	.93	-.99	.325
Recognition	4.35	1.02	4.08	1.04	-1.46	.151
Responsibility	4.70	.85	4.59	.76	-.73	.467
The Work Itself	4.65	.87	4.61	.89	-.23	.816
<b>Job Dissatisfier</b>						
Interpersonal Relationship	4.91	.67	4.78	.56	-1.17	.245
Policy and Administration	4.12	1.06	3.85	1.01	-1.37	.172
Salary	4.10	1.23	4.24	1.21	.68	.494
Supervision/Technical	4.11	1.25	3.76	1.34	-1.48	.147
Working Conditions	4.08	.90	4.21	.81	.83	.407

Note: Based on scale: 1=very dissatisfied; 2=somewhat dissatisfied; 3= slightly dissatisfied; 4=slightly satisfied; 5=somewhat satisfied; 6=very satisfied.

Correlations were calculated to describe the relationships between agriculture teachers' level of job satisfaction and selected demographic variables. The coefficients ranged in magnitude from negligible to moderate. The coefficients for males were (Table 4): age, .01; years in current position, -.03; total years teaching, -.03; degree status, .07; and tenure status, .01. Coefficients for females were (Table 4): age, -.19; years in current position, -.30; total years teaching, -.27; degree status, .38; and tenure status, .43. The correlation between overall job satisfaction and tenure status was significant for females.

Table 4. Relationship Between Overall Job Satisfaction and Selected Demographic Variables.

Variable	Males (n=273)	Females (n=33)
Age	.01	-.19
Years in current position	-.03	-.30
Total years teaching	-.03	-.27
Degree status	.07	.38
Tenure status	.01	.43*

\*p<.05

Correlations were calculated to describe the relationships between agriculture teachers' overall level of job satisfaction and job satisfier factors. The coefficients for males were (Table 5): achievement, .07; advancement, .05; recognition, .03; responsibility, .05; and work itself .07. The coefficients for females were (Table 5): achievement, .05; advancement, .25; recognition, .22; responsibility, .05; and the work itself, .26. None of the job satisfier factors were significantly correlated with overall job satisfaction.

Table 5. Relationship Between Overall Job Satisfaction and Job Satisfier Factors

Variable	Males (n=263)	Females (n=35)
Achievement	.07	.05
Advancement	.05	.25
Recognition	.03	.22
Responsibility	.05	.05
The work itself	.07	.26

Correlations were calculated to describe the relationships between agriculture teachers' overall level of job satisfaction and job dissatisfier factors. The coefficients for males were (Table 6): interpersonal relationships, -.02; policy and administration, .103; salary, .12; supervision, .01; and work conditions, .02. The coefficients for females were (Table 6): interpersonal relationships, .21; policy and administration, .25; salary, .33; supervision, .14; and work conditions, .17. None of the job dissatisfier factors were significantly correlated with overall job satisfaction.

Table 6. Relationship Between overall Job Satisfaction and Job Dissatisfier Factors

Job Dissatisfiers	Males (n=234)	Females (n=32)
Interpersonal relationships	-.02	.21
Policy and administration	.03	.25
Salary	.12	.33
Supervision	.01	.14
Work conditions	.02	.17

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Male and female agriculture teachers in Ohio are satisfied with their jobs, and they do not differ significantly in terms of their overall job satisfaction scores. It is recommended that both male and female teachers of agriculture use the questionnaire utilized in this study for making objective self evaluations and for determining which facets of their jobs are satisfying and dissatisfying. An evaluation of this sort will help agriculture teachers plan professional growth activities which are best suited to their needs.

Male agriculture teachers were significantly older, had significantly more years of teaching experience, and had been in their current position significantly longer than female teachers of agriculture. It is recommended that further research be conducted to uncover the reasons for these differences. Agricultural educators should attempt to ascertain whether the causes of these differences are related to the overall job satisfaction of agriculture teachers.

The teacher's age, years in current position, total years teaching, and degree status were not significantly related to overall job satisfaction. The findings on age, total years teaching, and degree status are contrary to those of Bems (1989) and Grady (1985). Bems (1989) found that as the age of the teacher increased so did their level of job satisfaction. Grady (1985) found a significant difference between job satisfaction scores of vocational agriculture teachers with varying amounts of teaching experience. As the number of years of teaching experience increased, job satisfaction also increased. Bems (1989) stated that "teachers with a masters degree were significantly more satisfied with their teaching positions than those **with a bachelor's degree only**" (p. 34). This contrast in findings should warn that broad generalizations about job satisfaction are not possible among agriculture teachers. The findings of this study only hold true for male and female agriculture teachers in Ohio.

The relationship between overall job satisfaction and tenure status was moderate and significant for females. Female agriculture teachers with tenure tended to be more satisfied with their jobs. It is recommended that further research be conducted to determine why female agriculture teachers with and without tenure differ in terms of their overall job satisfaction.

Correlation coefficients calculated to describe the relationship between overall job satisfaction and job satisfier and dissatisfier factors ranged from -.02 to .33, indicating

relationships of negligible to moderate magnitude. None of the relationships between job satisfaction and job satisfier factors and dissatisfier factors were statistically significant. It is recommended that the job satisfier and job dissatisfier factors as measured by Woods (1973) instrument not be used to predict the job satisfaction of male and female agriculture teachers. Wood's (1973) instrument provides an excellent assessment of how satisfied teachers are with specific aspects of their jobs, however, an instrument such as the Brayfield-Rothe "Job Satisfaction Index" is needed to assess job satisfaction when all facets of the job are considered.

With respect to the job satisfier and dissatisfier factors, both male and female agriculture teachers rated interpersonal relationships highest. Males rated working conditions lowest while females rated supervision/technical lowest. It is recommended that continued efforts be made to support the development of interpersonal relationships among teachers of agriculture. State Supervisors, public school supervisors, and teacher educators should be alerted that female agriculture teachers are least satisfied with supervision. Persons with supervisory duties should review their procedures and methods of supervision to determine if the process is biased against females.

A further recommendation and/or implication from this study regards surveying teachers who have already left the profession. Did the teachers leave the profession due to job dissatisfaction? It is not unreasonable to suggest that teachers who leave the profession are less satisfied than those who do not leave. A longitudinal study should be conducted after five years to determine if those who left the profession during the five year period were less satisfied at the time of this investigation. Teachers who have left the profession could be interviewed to determine what influenced them most in their decision to leave.

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