

JOB SATISFACTION OF OHIO AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

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Abstract

The purpose of this descriptive-correlational study was to investigate specific factors associated with job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of female ($N=81$) and male ($n=212$) teachers of agriculture in Ohio. The study also sought to determine Ohio agriculture teachers' overall level of job satisfaction. Specific job satisfier factors investigated were: achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself. Job dissatisfier factors investigated were: interpersonal relations, policy and administration, salary, supervision, and working conditions. All of the job satisfier factors, except responsibility, were significantly related to the overall level of female agriculture teacher job satisfaction. None of the job satisfier factors were significantly related to overall male teacher job satisfaction. Moreover, all of the job dissatisfier factors were significantly related to the overall level of female agriculture teacher job satisfaction. Again, none of the job satisfier factors were related to male agriculture teacher job satisfaction. Overall, female and male teachers of agriculture in Ohio are slightly satisfied with their jobs and do not differ significantly. It was recommended that particular attention be given to the discrepancies between the relationships of job satisfier/dissatisfier factors by gender.

Introduction

The most important information to have regarding an employee in an organization is a validated measure of his or her level of job satisfaction (Roznowski & Hulin, in Judge, Hanisch, & Drankoski, 1995). The foundation for job satisfaction or job motivation theory was introduced by Maslow with the five-stage hierarchy of human needs, now recognized as the deprivation/gratification proposition (Geen, Beatty, & Arkin, 1984, in Mertler, 1992). The premise of the deprivation/gratification proposition is that when an individual identifies a need which is not being met, behavior occurs which is directed toward gratifying the need (Mertler, 1992).

To describe need gratification, which includes job satisfaction, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) developed the Motivator-Hygiene Theory. The Motivator-Hygiene Theory states that jobs have factors which lead to

satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction (motivator) factors include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibilities, and advancement. Job satisfaction factors allow individuals to reach their psychological potential and are usually associated with the work itself. Job dissatisfaction (hygiene) factors are usually associated with the work environment and include pay, working conditions, supervision, company policy, and interpersonal relationships. Job dissatisfaction factors are pursued to prevent job dissatisfaction or discomfort. Hedley (1985) cautions researchers not to measure job satisfaction/dissatisfaction factors separately when assessing an individual's level of overall job satisfaction. Other discoveries have been made with regard to implications of job satisfaction.

An implication of job satisfaction research throughout the disciplines of social psychology, organizational behavior, and human resource management is the everlasting assumption that job

satisfaction and performance should be related. The relationship has not been found to be strong between degree of satisfaction and level of productivity (Bullock, 1984). Vroom (1964) reviewed 20 studies and discovered the median correlation between job satisfaction and performance in each of the studies to be non-significant. More recently, Iaffaldano and Muchinsky (1985) conducted a meta-analysis study to obtain a conclusive report regarding the correlation between satisfaction and performance. In light of statistical advances, larger sample sizes, and improved measurement techniques, Iaffaldano and Muchinsky revealed a non-significant correlation very similar to the correlation between satisfaction and performance discovered by Vroom (1964).

Justification for the need to investigate job satisfaction is exemplified in the seemingly observed relationship between the levels of job dissatisfaction and turnover, absenteeism, and tardiness. The rate of turnover has been reported as the most consistent measure related to job satisfaction (Padilla-Vellez, 1993). According to Padilla-Vellez, the greatest concern with regard to turnover is associated with the unfavorable conditions which are placed upon an organization. Turnover impacts an organization by: 1) increasing costs related to recruiting, selecting, and training new employees; 2) reducing the morale of employees who remain with the organization; 3) reducing relationships among employees; 4) projecting an unfavorable image to those who remain informed about the organization; 5) interrupting daily activities; and, 6) by diminishing the opportunity for the organization to grow (Mowday, 1984).

The motivation to investigate job satisfaction among public school teachers is similar to the interest of previous and current research concerning job satisfaction in industrial settings. The level of motivation is not surprising in light of the general assumption that a significant number of teachers were dissatisfied with factors associated

with their work (Heller, Clay, & Perkins, 1992; Mertler, 1992).

In a study conducted by Heller, Clay, and Perkins (1993), Speed's (1979) modified version of the Job Satisfaction Survey and the Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description instrument (Hersey & Blanchard, 1983) were used to determine the relationship of leadership behavior and teacher satisfaction. A stratified random sample of teachers from elementary, middle, junior high, and high schools from a large school system in North Carolina with four or more years of experience were selected for the study. Heller et al. (1993) discovered that nearly 50% of the public school teachers sampled in the study were not satisfied with their jobs. Teachers were least satisfied with finances related to teaching and most satisfied with their co-workers. Heller et al. also discovered that job satisfaction was not significantly related to school type, years of experience, teacher or principal gender. In addition to levels of job satisfaction and correlates of job satisfaction, Mertler (1992) reported a more student-centered approach with regard to implications of job satisfaction.

Mertler (1992) reported that "higher levels of motivation are directly associated with greater job satisfaction". Mertler wrote that satisfied teachers were more productive, ultimately producing motivated students and increased student achievement. Based upon Mertler's (1992) premise, and the findings of previous research in education (Heller, Clay, & Perkins, 1993; Padilla-Vellez, 1993), the ultimate effect for agriculture teachers becomes critically important, given their responsibility to provide effective teaching to youth and adults in agricultural education programs.

Researchers in agricultural education have discovered that agriculture teachers were fairly or moderately satisfied with their job (Beavers, Jewell, & Malpiedi, 1987; Flowers & Pebble, 1988; Grady, 1985; Newcomb, Betts, & Cano,

1987; Cano & Miller, 1992). Cano and Miller (1992) wrote that knowledge of the level of satisfaction was not enough. Cano and Miller proposed that determining the factors which lead to satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction was required. Cano and Miller (1992) in a survey of agriculture teachers studied the relationship between the level of job satisfaction by gender and other demographic variables. Cano and Miller also studied the relationship between factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and overall job satisfaction by gender. Satisfier factors investigated were achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself. Dissatisfier factors investigated were interpersonal relations, policy and administration, salary, supervision, and working conditions.

Cano and Miller (1992) concluded that male and female teachers in Ohio were satisfied with their jobs. When considering job satisfaction based upon gender, there was no significant difference. There was also no significant relationship between overall job satisfaction and the demographic characteristics of teacher's age, years in current position, number of years teaching, and level of education. According to Cano and Miller (1992), their findings contradicted those of Berns (1989) and Grady (1985) who discovered that as age, total years of teaching, and level of education increased, so did the teacher's level of job satisfaction. Due to inconsistent results regarding job satisfaction of agriculture teachers and implications which job satisfaction has on student achievement, an assessment of the current level of job satisfaction among Ohio agriculture teachers was warranted.

Methodology

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.

1. Describe selected demographic characteristics of secondary agriculture teachers.
2. Describe differences among female and male teachers of agriculture with regard to demographic characteristics, overall job satisfaction, and job satisfier/dissatisfier factors.
3. Describe relationships between secondary agriculture teachers' level of job satisfaction and selected demographic variables by gender.
4. 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.
5. Describe the relationships 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

The population for this descriptive-correlational study was all secondary teachers of agriculture education in Ohio ($N=534$). The sample consisted of a random sample of male agriculture teachers ($N=453$, $n=212$) and a census of female agriculture teachers ($N=81$). The Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula for determining sample size was used.

Instrumentation

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 I of the questionnaire.

Wood's (1973) instrument was used to assess the level of job satisfaction among secondary agricultural education teachers. Wood's instrument constituted Part II of the questionnaire and provided the basis for describing teacher perceptions of the following factors: achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, the work itself, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, policy and administration, and working conditions. 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 instrument reliability. The reliability coefficient for Part I of the questionnaire was .88. The reliability coefficient for Part II of the questionnaire was .92, while the coefficients for the ten subscales of Part II were: achievement, .81; advancement, .66; interpersonal relations, .55; policy and administration, .84; recognition, .84; responsibility, .62; salary, .83; supervision, .90; work itself, .54; and, conditions, .92.

Data Collection

Data collection was accomplished through a mailing of the questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope to the 212 male and 81 female teachers of agriculture in Ohio. A second questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope was mailed approximately two weeks after the initial mailing to the non-respondents. A third mailing was made to those in the sample who did not respond to either the first or second mailing. The three mailings yielded an 80 percent response rate. There were no significant differences noted between 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

The majority of both male and female agriculture teachers had attained a bachelors degree or higher. Table 1 shows that the mean age for female agriculture teachers was 33.18, while the mean age for male teachers was 42.29. Male teachers were significantly older than female teachers. Female teachers, on the average, had 7.90 years of teaching experience while males averaged 16.01 years (Table 1). Males had significantly more years of teaching experience than females. Female teachers had been in their current teaching position an average of 6.46 years. Male teachers had been in their current teaching position an average of 13.04 years (Table 1). Males had been in their current teaching position significantly longer than females. Approximately 22 percent (13) of the females had tenure, and 44 percent (74) of the male agriculture teachers were tenured.

Based on a five point Likert type scale with responses ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) females provided a mean score of 4.03, while males provided a mean score of 3.92 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.

Based on a six point Likert type scale with responses ranging from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (6), females provided the following mean scores on the job satisfier and dissatisfier factors: achievement, 4.40; advancement, 3.88; recognition, 4.10; responsibility, 4.54; work itself, 5.05; interpersonal relationships, 4.51; policy and administration, 3.69; salary, 4.06; supervision,

3.80; working conditions, 3.79. The same Likert type scale yielded the following mean scores for male agriculture teachers: achievement, 4.45; advancement, 4.21; recognition, 4.25; responsibility, 4.60; work itself, 4.84; interpersonal relationships, 4.78; policy and administration,

3.98; salary, 4.20; supervision, 4.11; working conditions, 4.00. Significant differences were obtained between female and male agriculture teachers on advancement (job satisfier factor) and relationships (job dissatisfier factors) (Table 3).

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

Variable	Females (n=60)		Males (n=171)		t-value	Prob.
	<u>M</u>	SD	<u>M</u>	SD		
Age	33.18	9.07	42.29	9.27	-6.58	.01
Total Years Teaching	7.90	7.00	16.01	9.02	-6.31	.01
Years in current position	6.46	6.23	13.04	8.68	-5.39	.01

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

Variable	Females (n=60)		Males (n=166)		t-value	Prob.
	<u>M</u>	SD	<u>M</u>	SD		
Overall Job Satisfaction	4.03	.39	3.92	.43	1.74	.08

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

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

Variable	Females (n=60)		Males (n=171)		t-value	Prob.
	<u>M</u>	SD	<u>M</u>	SD		
Job Satisfiers						
Achievement	4.40	.65	4.45	.59	-.50	.61
Advancement	3.88	1.00	4.21	.89	-2.32	.02
Recognition	4.10	1.23	4.25	1.00	.34	.34
Responsibility	4.54	1.47	4.60	1.09	-.33	.73
Work Itself	5.05	1.84	4.84	.73	1.25	.21
Job Dissatisfiers						
Relationships	4.51	.80	4.78	.67	-2.51	.01
Policy	3.69	1.10	3.98	1.00	-1.87	.06
Salary	4.06	1.04	4.20	1.35	-.70	.48
Supervision	3.80	1.75	4.11	1.19	-1.52	.13
Working Conditions	3.79	1.06	4.00	.93	-1.43	.15

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 from negligible to substantial. Coefficients for females (Table 4) were: age, -.06; years in current position, .01; total years teaching, -.01; degree status, -.12; and

tenure, .02. The coefficients for males (Table 4) were: age, .04; years in current position, .03; total years teaching, .07; degree status, -.07; and tenure, -.01. There were no significant relationships between job satisfaction and selected demographic variables for female and male teachers of agriculture.

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

Variable	Females (n=60)		Males (n=171)	
	r	Sig.	r	Sig.
Age	-.06	.644	.04	.61
Years in current position	.01	.944	.03	.73
Total Years Teaching	.01	.971	.07	.37
Degree Status	-.12	.242	-.07	.27
Tenure Status	.02	.872	-.01	.87

Correlations were calculated to describe the relationships between agriculture teachers' overall level of job satisfaction and job satisfier factors. The coefficients for the females were (Table 5): achievement, .55; advancement, .47; recognition, .37; responsibility, .20; the work itself, .27. The coefficients for the males were (Table 5): achievement, .01; advancement, .06; recognition, .10; responsibility, .10; and the work itself, .01.

Achievement, advancement, recognition, and the work itself were significantly related to overall job satisfaction for female teachers of agriculture. There were no significant relationships between job satisfier factors and overall job satisfaction for males.

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

Variable	Females (n=60)		Males (n=171)	
	r	Sig.	r	Sig.
Achievement	.55	.01	.01	.86
Advancement	.47	.01	.06	.47
Recognition	.37	.01	.10	.19
Responsibility	.20	.13	.10	.21
The Work Itself	.27	.03	.01	.98

Correlations were calculated to describe the relationships between agriculture teachers' overall level of job satisfaction and job dissatisfier factors. The coefficients for females were (Table 6): relationships, .31; policy, .46; salary, .39; supervision, .31; working conditions, .30. The

coefficients for males were (Table 6): relationships, .03; policy, .10; salary, .14; supervision, .14; and working conditions, .12. All of the job dissatisfier factors were significantly related with overall job satisfaction for female teachers of agriculture. There were no significant

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

Variable	<u>Females (n=60)</u>		<u>Males (n=171)</u>	
	<u>r</u>	<u>Sig.</u>	<u>r</u>	<u>Sig.</u>
Relationships	.31	.01	.03	.73
Policy	.46	.01	.10	.21
Salary	.39	.01	.14	.06
Supervision	.31	.01	.14	.06
Working Conditions	.30	.02	.12	.12

relationships between job satisfier factors and overall job satisfaction for male teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Female and male teachers of agriculture in Ohio are slightly satisfied with their jobs and do not differ significantly in terms of overall job satisfaction. The findings on overall job satisfaction are similar to those of Cano & Miller (1992), who discovered that agriculture teachers in Ohio were satisfied with their jobs. In unison, the current study and the Cano and Miller (1992) study imply that over the past five years, teachers of agriculture in Ohio have remained relatively satisfied with their jobs. There are some satisfier and dissatisfier factor scores in this study near the “dissatisfaction” range. It is recommended that agriculture teachers, their respective administrators, and teacher educators convene to begin investigating current processes which are related to job satisfier and dissatisfier factors. Findings of this study would aid in this regard.

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. The results imply that the teaching of agriculture is still a male dominated profession. Although there has been a significant increase in the number of female agriculture teachers in Ohio, further investigation as to why female teachers of

agriculture tend not to remain in the teaching profession as long as their male counterparts is warranted.

The age, years in current teaching position, total years teaching, degree, and tenure of female and male agriculture teachers were not significantly related to overall job satisfaction. These findings are similar to those reported by Cano & Miller (1992), except for tenure, which they reported as being moderate and significant. Although relationships between demographic variables and job satisfaction in the current study were not significant, demographic variables should not be dismissed when attempting to explore job satisfier and dissatisfiers and their relationship to overall job dissatisfaction.

Correlation coefficients calculated to describe the relationship between overall job satisfaction and job satisfier and dissatisfier factors ranged from .01 to .55 indicating relationships of moderate to substantial magnitude. All but one of the job satisfier factors (responsibility) were significantly related to overall female agriculture teacher job satisfaction. None of the job satisfier factors were significantly related to overall male agriculture teacher job satisfaction. Similarly, all of the job dissatisfier factors for female teachers were significantly related to overall job satisfaction. Again, none of the job dissatisfier factors were significantly related to male agriculture teacher job satisfaction.

The implications from the correlation coefficients calculated to describe the relationship between overall job satisfaction and job satisfier and dissatisfier factors indicate that female and male agriculture teachers have different perceptions about the job. What females find “satisfying,” the males may not and vice-versa. Thus, attention should be given to the significant relationships of job satisfier and dissatisfier factors with the overall level of job satisfaction of female and male agriculture teachers independently. Furthermore, it is recommended that Wood’s (1973) instrument be evaluated for gender bias.

Pertaining to job satisfier factors, female agriculture teachers rated achievement highest and responsibilities lowest. Male agriculture teachers rated recognition and responsibility highest and the work itself lowest. The job dissatisfier factor rated highest by female agriculture teachers was policy. The lowest job dissatisfier factor for females was the working conditions. Male agriculture teachers rated supervision and working conditions highest and relationships lowest. The findings of job satisfier factors suggest that teachers of agriculture do not as a population, agree with any single job satisfier factor as being critical to the overall level of job satisfaction. Thus, public school administrators and teacher educators of agricultural education should be alerted as to the discrepancies among satisfier factors between female and male teachers of agriculture. Administrators and teacher educators should also be alerted that female teachers rated policy as the highest job dissatisfier factor, while male agriculture teachers rated supervision and working conditions highest.

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