

## Job Satisfaction of Agricultural Education Teachers in Yazd Province of Iran

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to measure the level of job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers in Yazd Province of Iran. Agricultural education teachers from Yazd Province with a minimum of one year experience were included in the study. As a result so, the sample consisted of 60 agricultural education teachers. To study the job satisfaction level among respondents, the Brayfield and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index was used. A data form was used to collect information about demographic (independent) variables and effective constraints reducing job satisfaction. The findings revealed that the majority of agricultural education teachers (56.7%) had a median level of job satisfaction, followed by 33.3 and 10 percent belonging to a low and high level of job satisfaction, respectively. According to regression analysis, "level of education", "number of students taught each year" and "class time (per day)" were found to have contributed to the increase in job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers. The effective constraints that had the most important impact on decreasing job satisfaction included an "absence of realistic expectations of teachers by society", "inadequate time for learning-by-doing programs" and an "inappropriate student-teacher ratio in class".

**Key words:** Agricultural education teachers, Job satisfaction, Yazd Province.

### INTRODUCTION

The role of agricultural education teachers is crucial for the transfer of agricultural knowledge in schools. At the same time, a teacher's remuneration is the biggest cost factor in educational financing. In most countries, both developing and industrialized alike, teachers' salaries account for between half and three quarters of current educational expenditure (Michealova, 2001). Given the magnitude of the financial investment involved, it is extremely important to increase the efficiency of these funds. Higher agricultural education centers play an important role as knowledge diffusion agents to help and boost the agricultural sector. However, the ability of an educational department to achieve its goals depends heavily on the commitment of its employees.

The most important information regarding an employee in an organization is a validated

measure of his or her level of job satisfaction (Judge *et al.*, 1995). Job satisfaction is broadly considered as an attitude of a person reflecting the degree to which his/her important needs are satisfied by their job. Why is there the strong interest in job satisfaction? Robbins (1998) concluded that impressive evidence exists concerning the significance of job satisfaction. A satisfied workforce leads to higher productivity because of fewer disruptions such as absenteeism, and departure of good employees. Job satisfaction also indicates less destructive behavior. The presence of satisfied employees also translates into lower medical and life insurance costs. The foundation for job satisfaction or job motivation theory was introduced by Maslow with the five-stage hierarchy of human needs, now understood as the deprivation/gratification proposition (Mertler, 1992). The premise of the deprivation/gratification proposition is that when an

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individual identifies a need which is not being met, behavior occurs which is directed toward gratifying the need (Mertler, 1992).

In order to describe need gratification, which includes job satisfaction, Herzberg *et al.* (1959) developed the Motivator-Hygiene Theory. The Motivator-Hygiene Theory states that jobs have factors which lead to satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Motivating factors include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibilities, and advancement; these factors allow individuals to reach their psychological potential and are usually associated with the work itself. Hygiene factors are usually associated with the work environment and include pay, working conditions, supervision, company policy, and interpersonal relationships. 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 the implications of job satisfaction.

On the other hand, behavioral and social science research suggests that job satisfaction and job performance are positively correlated (Bowran and Todd, 1999). A better understanding of job satisfaction and the factors associated with it helps managers to guide employees' activities in a desired direction. The morale of employees is a deciding factor in the organization's efficiency (Chaudhary and Banerjee, 2004). Thus, it is appropriate to say that managers, supervisors, human resource specialists, employees, and citizens in general are concerned with ways of improving job satisfaction and, in a later step, we can improve employee job performance and organizational efficiency (Cranny *et al.*, 1992).

The foundation of job satisfaction theory by Maslow is viewed as the deprivation/gratification proposition (Mertler, 1992). Much job satisfaction research has been focused on finding out how to improve job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers (Bennett *et al.*, 2001; Berns, 1990; Bruening, 1991; Camp, 1984), and several studies have also been conducted in different parts of the world to measure job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers (Mertler, 1992; Padilla, 1993; Cano and Miller, 1992; Cole, 1984; Dillon, 1978).

In a study conducted by Heller *et al.* (1993), a modified version of the Job Satisfaction Survey and the Leader Effectiveness and Adaptability Description instrument (Hersey and Blanchard, 1983) were used to determine the relationship between 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) showed that nearly 50% of the public school teachers sampled in the study were not satisfied with their jobs. Teachers were least satisfied with the remuneration related to teaching and most satisfied with their co-workers. They also discovered that job satisfaction was not significantly related to school type, years of experience, teacher or the principal's gender. In addition to levels of job satisfaction and correlates of job satisfaction, Mertler (1992) reported a more student-centered approach with regard to the implications of job satisfaction.

Researchers in agricultural education have discovered that agricultural education teachers were fairly or moderately satisfied with their job (Beavers *et al.*, 1987; Flowers and Pebble, 1988; Grady, 1985; Newcomb *et al.*, 1987; Cano and Miller, 1992). Cano and Miller (1992) in a survey of agricultural teachers studied the relationship between the level of job satisfaction according to gender and other demographic variables. They also studied the relationship between factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction and overall job satisfaction by gender. The satisfaction factors investigated were achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself; dissatisfaction factors investigated were interpersonal relations, policy and administration, salary, supervision, and working conditions.

However, the future progress of any country depends to a large extent upon the type of education given to its citizens. To achieve these objectives teachers are required to put their maximum efforts with in turn, will be possible if they are provided with an appropriate working environment; a satisfied and motivated teacher is an asset to educational institution (Sharma and Kaur, 2003). The present study

was carried out with the following specific objectives:

1. To study the demographic characteristics of agricultural education teachers;
2. To study the level of job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers;
3. To study factors affecting the level of job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers;
4. To identify the effective constraints that have the most significant impact on decreasing the job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used a survey design for data collection. All the agricultural education teachers of Yazd Province with minimum of one year work experience were included in the study. A specific questionnaire was developed to measure the level of job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers. The questionnaire contained three parts. Part I pertained to the general demographic (independent) variables of the respondents such as age, gender, level of education, years of teaching agriculture, class time (per day), years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching.

Part II contained a scale to measure their level of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was assessed using the scale developed as the Brayfield and Rothe Job Satisfaction Index (1967). This scale consists of 18 items with five alternative responses-strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree, which are scored from 1 to 5. The scale contains 9 positive and 9 negative statements. The maximum possible score for a respondent was 90 and the minimum was 18. The higher scores on the scale indicate higher job satisfaction, while lower scores indicate lower job satisfaction. The scale has high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.75$ ).

Part III contained the effective constraints on job satisfaction of agricultural education teachers. These constraints were identified through discussion with agricultural education teachers and administrators of schools. The severity of the constraints was measured by subjecting each constraint to a five point con-

tinuum from: most felt, felt, undecided, less felt and unfelt with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively. By applying an analysis of variance and coefficient of variation, constraint rank was obtained. The scale has high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.92$ ).

The questionnaire was given to the Department of Agricultural Extension and Education, University of Tehran to test for face validity.

The questionnaire was distributed to all agricultural education teachers with minimum of one year of service experience in Yazd Province. A total of 60 agricultural education teachers responded and the data was analyzed using descriptive and interference statistics such as: percentage, mean score, analysis of variance, coefficient of correlation and regression analysis.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics (independent variables) of agricultural education teachers have been presented in Table 1.

The majority of teachers (85%) were male. Less than half of the teachers (45%) had obtained an M Sc. degree, followed by 36.6 and 18.4 percent who had a Diploma and B. Sc. degree, respectively. The teachers were relatively young with the average age of 36.12 years. Consequently, the average year for teaching an agricultural was 9.83 years. Years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching were 4.23 years. The average of number of students taught each year was 90 people and the average of time in class (per day) was 4.42 hours.

### Level of Job Satisfaction

The Job Satisfaction Index provided a mean score of  $59.38 \pm 1.44$  (Mean  $\pm$  SE) on the job satisfaction scale. The score is indicative of a moderate level of job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers. For a more detailed understanding of the results, the respondents were classified into three categories based on mean (Table 2). The three categories

**Table 1.** Frequency distribution of respondents according to their demographic characteristics (n= 60).

Variables	f	%	M	SD
Age	60	100	36.12	7.98
Gender	60	100	–	–
Male	51	85		
Female	9	15		
Level of education	60	100	–	–
M. Sc. degree				
B. Sc. degree	27	45		
High Diploma degree	11	18.4		
	22	36.6		
Years of teaching agriculture	–	–	9.83	7.63
Years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching	–	–	4.23	1.77
Number of students taught each year	–	–	90	22.38
Time class (per day)	–	–	4.42	1.28

thus formed were low (up to 55), medium (56-70) and high (above 70).

#### Respondents with a Low Level of Job Satisfaction

From the Table 2, it is revealed that 33.3 percent of the respondents constituted this category with an average score of  $46.6 \pm 1.66$  (Mean $\pm$ SE) on the job satisfaction scale. Ninety percent of teachers were male. More than half of the teachers (55%) had obtained a Diploma degree, followed by 40 and 5 per cent who had obtained a B. Sc. degree and M. Sc. degree, respectively. Their average age was found to be 37.9 years. The averages of the other variables were 11.15, 3.8, 4.1, 108 for years teaching agriculture, class hours (per day), years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching and number of stu-

dents taught each year, respectively.

#### Respondents with a Medium Level of Job Satisfaction

From Table 2, it is revealed that 56.7 per cent of the respondents belonged to this category with an average score of  $63.82 \pm 0.62$  (Mean $\pm$ SE) on the job satisfaction scale. Eighty-five percent of teachers were male. About 32.4 percent of the respondents had obtained a Diploma degree, followed by 50 and 17.6 percent with a B. Sc. or M. Sc. degree, respectively. Their average age was found to be 35.5 years. The averages of other variables were 9.18, 4.8, 4.2, 92 for years teaching agriculture, class hours (per day), years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching and number of students taught each year, respectively.

**Table 2.** Frequency distribution of respondents by their different level of job satisfaction (n= 60).

Category	f	%	Average age years	Average years taught	Average time class (per day)	Average years employed in agriculture	Average number of student	Average job satisfaction scores
High (above70)	6	10	33.8	9.17	6.5	5.8	78	$76.83 \pm 1.87$
Low (upto55)	20	33.3	37.9	11.15	3.8	4.1	108	$46.6 \pm 1.66$
Medium (56-70)	34	56.7	35.5	9.18	4.8	4.2	92	$63.82 \pm 0.62$
Mean = 59.38			SD = 11.16			SE = 1.44		

### Respondents with a High Level of Job Satisfaction

From the Table2, it is revealed that the, 10 percent of the respondents constituted this category with an average score of  $76.83 \pm 1.87$  (Mean $\pm$ SE) on the job satisfaction scale. Eighty-five percent of teachers were male. More than half of the respondents (66.7%) had obtained a M. Sc. degree, followed by 33.3 percent who had obtained a B. Sc. degree. Their average age was found to be 33.8 years. The averages of other variables were 9.17, 6.5, 5.8, 78 for years taught agriculture, class hours (per day), years employed in an agriculture occupation prior to teaching and number of students taught each year, respectively.

### Correlation of Independent Variables with Job Satisfaction

From the Table 3, it is revealed that the independent variable "number of students taught each year" had a negative and significant relationship ( $P \leq 0.01$ ) with job satisfaction. This shows that when the number of students taught each year by agricultural education teachers is higher, the job satisfaction is relatively lower. Bennett *et al.* (2001) showed a similar finding for agricultural teachers in North Carolina. Other independent variables like "level of education" and "class time (per day)" are positively correlated ( $P \leq 0.01$ ) with job satisfaction. Several researchers (Edwards and Briers, 2001; Beavers *et al.*, 1987; Bowen, 1980) have shown similar findings.

### Relative Contribution of Independent Variables to Job Satisfaction

In order to see the contribution of these independent variables to job satisfaction, linear multiple regression analysis was used. The independent variables, "age", "gender", "years teaching agriculture" and "Years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching" were deleted from the function. The results are presented in Table 4. The findings indicate that "level of education", "number of student taught each year" and "class time (per day)" had significant regression coefficients. It is concluded that these variables are strong predictors of job satisfaction. The findings show that these three independent variables together could explain 37.5 percent of the variation in job satisfaction. The remaining variation could thus be attributed to other factors.

### Ranking of Effective Constraints Reducing Job Satisfaction

Analyzing the items of effective constraints reducing job satisfaction shows that the "absence of realistic expectations of teachers by society" is felt to be the most important. The mean, standard deviation, coefficient variation and the ranking position are given in Table 5. The ranking of the constraints shows the importance of the 18 constraints listed out in the study. Some of the other constraints identified according to their importance (ranking, to attention least to most coefficient variation) are the existence of "inadequate time for learning-by-doing program", "inappropriate student-teacher ratio in class", "non availability of

**Table 3.** Correlation coefficients of independent variables with job satisfaction.

Independent variables	"r"
Age	-0.12
Gender	0.10
Level of education	0.44**
Years taught agriculture	-0.17
Years employed in an agricultural occupation prior to teaching	0.13
Number of students taught each year	-0.42**
Class time (per day)	0.42**

\*\*  $P \leq 0.01$



vehicles to travel in the interior of educational places", "inadequate opportunities for promotion". The constraints of least importance identified in the study are "absence of strong education leaders among administrators", "lack of interest and response on the part of students to your courses", "inadequate financial assistance to conduct an educational program" and "inadequate administrative support and backing".

## CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were derived on the basis of the findings:

1. Agricultural education teachers in Yazd Province, as a group, generally had a medium level of satisfaction with their current teaching position.
2. According to regression analysis, "level of education", "number of students taught each year", and "class time (per day)" have contributed to the increase of job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers.

3. Data reveal that the constraint of "absence of realistic expectations of teachers by society" was felt to be the most important and the constraint "absence of strong education leaders between administrators" was the least important for job satisfaction.
4. Conclusively it may be stated that job satisfaction is a multidimensional phenomenon with a number of factors operating simultaneously, but there is a need to take suitable measures to remove these inadequacies so that the full potential of agricultural education teachers can be utilized.

Based on the findings from this research, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Job satisfaction depends on the level of education, number of students taught each year and class time (per day). Therefore, the administration should pay attention to promoting the level of education of teachers, reducing the number of students as well as reducing class time per day.
2. Absence of realistic expectations of teachers by society was felt to be the most important constraint on the job satisfaction of

**Table 4.** Relative contribution of independent variables to job satisfaction.

Independent variables	Beta	B	SEB	T-value
Level of education	0.33	5.05	1.71	2.94**
Class time (per day)	0.32	2.44	0.85	2.87**
Number of student taught each year	-0.24	-0.13	0.06	-2.06**

R<sup>2</sup>=0.375

Constant = 51.533

\*\* P≤0.01

**Table 5.** Ranking of effective constraints reducing of job satisfaction.

Rank	Constraints	M	SD	CV
13	Misunderstanding between state staff (superiors) and teachers	2.98	1.12	0.38
12	Misunderstanding between administrators and teachers	2.92	1.09	0.38
8	Lack of interest of students in what I teach	3.08	1.07	0.35
9	Location of school is inappropriate	3.17	1.13	0.36
6	Inadequate facilities in school	3.35	1.13	0.34
7	Inadequate supplies for my program in school	3.57	1.21	0.34
1	Absence of realistic expectations of teachers by society	3.47	0.92	0.26
11	Inadequate salary from this job	3.37	1.24	0.37
16	Inadequate financial assistance to conduct educational program	3.15	1.25	0.39
2	Inadequate time for learning-by-doing program	3.59	1.05	0.29
14	Inadequate equipment in class	3.25	1.23	0.38
10	No time for innovative educational program	3.57	1.31	0.36
4	Non availability of vehicles to travel in the interior of educational places	3.61	1.20	0.33
5	Inadequate opportunities for promotion	3.65	1.22	0.33
3	Inappropriate student-teacher ratio in class	3.35	1.10	0.32
15	Inadequate administrative support and backing	3.17	1.22	0.39
18	Absence of strong educational leaders among administrators	3.05	1.29	0.42
17	Lack of interest and response on the part of students to your courses	2.93	1.19	0.41

teachers. It is therefore, highly recommended that new perception of teaching and teachers in society be promoted.

3. In addition, to increase of job satisfaction among agricultural education teachers, greater insight should be sought about the effects of the (perceived) professional status of agriculture teachers in society, the strength of administrators in schools with agricultural programs, the level of appreciation teachers of agriculture receive from their administrators, the amount of encouragement agriculture teachers receive for their initiatives, the perceptions of agriculture teachers regarding student discipline, and the amount of administrative support and backing that agriculture teachers receive.

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## رضایت شغلی معلمان آموزش کشاورزی استان یزد

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### چکیده

مطالعه حاضر با هدف اندازه‌گیری رضایت شغلی در بین معلمان آموزش کشاورزی استان یزد صورت گرفته است. جامعه آماری مورد نظر در این تحقیق را تمامی معلمان کشاورزی استان با حداقل یک سال سابقه شغلی به تعداد ۶۰ نفر تشکیل دادند. برای مطالعه رضایت شغلی معلمان از شاخص اندازه‌گیری رضایت شغلی برایفیلد و روث استفاده شد. پرسشنامه‌ای برای گردآوری داده‌ها و اطلاعات مورد نظر تنظیم و تدوین شد. ضریب اعتبار پرسشنامه با استفاده از نرم افزار SPSSWin11.5 محاسبه شد. یافته‌ها نشان داد که ۵۶/۷ درصد از پاسخگویان در سطح متوسط از نظر رضایت شغلی قرار داشتند. همچنین نتایج حاصل از رگرسیون چند متغیره خطی نشان داد، متغیرهای سطح آموزش، تعداد دانش‌آموز هر معلم در یک سال و تعداد ساعات کلاسی هر معلم در یک روز، توانایی تبیین ۳۷/۵ درصد از تغییرات رضایت شغلی را دارا می‌باشند. سه اولویت اول موانع تأثیرگذار بر کاهش رضایت شغلی معلمان کشاورزی بترتیب شامل انتظارات غیر واقعی جامعه از معلمان کشاورزی، زمان ناکافی برای برنامه‌های یادگیری با عمل و نامناسب بودن تعداد دانش‌آموز به معلم در کلاس درس بودند.