

Professional Choices Among Graduate Students in Agriculture

By

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ABSTRACT

The study revealed that there was strong tendency on the part of agricultural graduates to generally prefer the employments in the nationalised banks and state department of agriculture. Employments in private firms dealing with fertilizers and pesticides, in quasi-government organizations such as Food Corporation and in private estates and plantations received low preference. The majority of agricultural graduates were not interested to work in their own farms.

INTRODUCTION

Several types of jobs are open to the agricultural graduates, but their choice seem to differ to a great extent. Sandhu and Sinha (1970) concluded that a job on research side was most preferred by agricultural graduates while they were not much inclined towards extension work or teaching. The present investigation concerns with the different types of jobs assuming that each such type consists of one or more of the three fold functions such as research, teaching and extension.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted on 204 final year B.Sc. (Ag) students of the two Agriculture Colleges at Coimbatore and Madurai in Tamil Nadu. While selecting these students, it was, pre-

sumed that they all were aware of the nature and scope of the different types of jobs open to them. The study was made during the year 1972. Six types of jobs were considered in the investigation (Table 1). Both paired comparison and rank order methods were employed to determine the professional choices among the sample respondents. As for paired comparison method, the procedure suggested by Edward (1969) was adopted. The six selected jobs required a total of fifteen comparisons. They were presented to the respondents in such a way that no job is repeated twice in succession. The respondents were individually asked to check the profession they liked in each pair. In computing the scale values of the six professions, the first step was to construct F matrix. The F matrix was then expressed as P matrix which was converted into z values. From the mean Z

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value, the rank scale value for each profession was determined. As regards to rank order method, the rank position of a particular profession was determined on the basis of mean score earned by that profession. The respondents were asked to select the first three professions out of six in the order of preference. The preferences were then converted to scores by assigning three points for the first preference, two points for the second and one point for the third. Thereafter, mean score was computed for each profession taking into consideration the frequencies of all the three preferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Z values obtained through F and then P matrixes are furnished in Table 1.

TABLE 1. The Z matrix for the six professions

Professions*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	.000	.659	.786	.856	1.185	1.265
2.	-.659	.000	.111	.098	.571	.820
3.	-.786	-.111	.000	.111	.643	1.094
4.	-.856	-.098	-.111	.000	.838	.820
5.	-.1185	-.571	-.643	-.838	.000	-.025
6.	-.1265	-.820	-1.094	-.820	.025	.000
Sums	-4.751	-.941	-.951	-.593	3.262	3.974
Means	-.792	-.157	-.159	-.099	.544	.662
Means*						
792	.000	.635	.633	.693	1.336	1.454

* Profession 1. Working in one's own farm
2. employment in private estates and plantations
3. employment in private firms dealing with fertilizers and pesticides
4. employment in quasi-government organization such as Food corporation
5. employment in the State Department of Agriculture and
6. employments in nationalised banks.

It can be noted that employment in banks was the most preferred profession by the agricultural graduates among the six professions thus earning the highest scale value of 1.454. Employment in the state department of agriculture was held in a high esteem by the respondents. Most of the respondents were not interested in working in their own farms and it was the least preferred profession. The third, fourth and fifth over all choices were credited to the employment in quasi-government organization like food corporation, and the employment in private firm dealing with fertilizers and pesticides (Table 1).

Further the students, in general, preferred the professions in government or semi-government than the private enterprises. The rank order method was also employed to find out the relative preferences for the six professions among the agricultural graduates.

Thus the trend obtained in the paired comparison method also hold good in the rank order method. Employment in bank was the most overall preferred profession by the respondents with the highest mean score of 19.46 out of a maximum of three. Almost earning the same score value of 1.931, the employment in state department of agriculture ranked close to the job in banks and working in one's own farm happened to be the last choice among the agricultural graduates. The fourth rank went to the employment in private estate and plantations. However, the ranks of the remaining two employments that occupied the third and fifth

TABLE 2. The three preferences, mean score, rank order among the professions

Professions	I Preference		II Preference		III Preference		Mean score	Rank order
	(No.)	(per cent)	(No.)	(per cent)	(No.)	(per cent)		
Employment in nationalised banks	65	31.86	82	40.20	38	18.63	1.946	I
Employment in state Dept. of agriculture	101	49.51	37	18.14	17	8.33	1.931	II
Employment in private firms (Pesticides and fertilizers)	8	3.92	30	14.17	47	23.04	0.642	III
Employment in private estates and plantations	14	6.86	22	10.78	34	16.67	0.588	IV
Employment in quasi-government organization (Food Corporation)	4	1.96	20	9.80	54	26.47	0.519	V
Working in own Farm	12	5.88	13	6.37	14	6.86	0.373	VI
Total	204	100	204	100	204	100		

places in the paired comparison method were interchanged as the fifth and the third positions. Excepting this difference, the pattern of professional choices obtained by the two methods was alike.

Quick promotion, high salary, prestige or recognition, more freedom and good treatment were reported as the principal reasons for preferring a job in banks. Those who had opted for the state department of agriculture opined that job security, interest in

extension work, and opinion for rural life and easy availability of the job were the main considerations for the choice.

REFERENCES

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