

## Studies on the Job Attitudes and Job Performance of Agricultural Extension Officers

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The influence of psychological characteristics on job performance of Agricultural Extension Officers was studied. Correlation of intelligence of the Agricultural Extension Officers was positive and significant with knowledge. Intelligence showed negative and significant correlation with age and also with experience. The age showed positive and significant correlation with experience but negative and significant correlation with knowledge. Knowledge, intelligence and communication behaviour had positive and significant correlation with job performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers.

Steps are taken by Government to weed out persons of less efficiency, less devotion to duty, and of doubtful integrity from Government services. This is indicative of Government's determination to move with greater speed towards a more dynamic and more efficient administration in all spheres of the country's developmental programme.

Among all the functionaries working in the developmental organisations, the Agricultural extension officers have a 'key role' to play. The success or failure of agricultural developmental programmes for effecting the desired change lies in the hands of the personnel manning them and will be determined by their ability (Leagans, 1961). Levine *et al.* (1962) emphasized that job performance of a worker depends on the fullest utilization of his abilities and also on the social expectation of the environment in which he works. Lynch (1971) stated that

any performance of an individual is basically a function of both his abilities and his motivation.

Though some researchers in the country have conducted study on the efficiency of job performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers, studies on the effect of psychological characteristics on job performance still remain unexplored. With this aspect in view, the present study was undertaken in Tamil Nadu

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Coimbatore, Madurai and Tirunelveli districts of Tamil Nadu State. The sample of the study consisted of 127 Agricultural Extension Officers and their 104 superior officers, including 92 Block Development Officers and 12 District Agricultural Officers. The job performance (dependent variable) of the Agricultural Extension Officers in the present study

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meant carrying out the job in the six job areas, namely, education, administration and organization, supply and service, planning, supervision, and evaluation on the basis of the assignment given by the State Department of Agriculture, Tamil Nadu. Firstly, the assessment of the job performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers in the relevant areas of the job was done by their superior officers (Block Development Officers and District Agricultural Officers) through a job performance chart prepared for this study.

Secondly, the Agricultural Extension Officers were asked to respond to a few tests and tools (independent variables), namely, objective type achievement test in agriculture (self-prepared), Cantril's job satisfaction ladder (modified form), Cattell's culture fair intelligence test, Cattell's contact personality factor test, communication behaviour (self-prepared schedule), training need (self-prepared ranking scale), age and experience.

The said dependent variable and the six independent variables include the raw scores obtained by the Agricultural Extension Officers out of the maximum scores on each of the tests and tools. Since the number of items in each of the above tests and tools were different the maximum raw scores in each of the tests and tools were also different. Therefore to bring the scores obtained by the Agricultural Extension Officers in different tests and tools to a common level, the scores were converted into percentage scores. These converted scores were the basis of the analysis of the study. Regarding the other two independent variables, namely, age and experience data were analysed in terms of scores in years.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Inter-relationships between the independent variables:** It is evident from a perusal of 28 correlation coefficient values in Table I that only six of the values were significant.

TABLE I. Intercorrelation Matrix based on the scores obtained by the Agricultural Extension Officers in the independent variables

|                         | Know-<br>ledge | Job satis-<br>faction | Intelli-<br>gence | Contact<br>perso-<br>nality | Communi-<br>cation<br>behaviour | Train-<br>ing<br>need | Age    | Exper-<br>ience |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Knowledge               | —              | 0.09                  | 0.22              | -0.08                       | -0.11                           | -0.04                 | -0.20  | -0.16           |
| Job satisfaction        |                |                       | 0.00              | 0.16                        | 0.15                            | 0.19*                 | 0.05   | 0.08            |
| Intelligence            |                |                       |                   | 0.08                        | 0.00                            | 0.00                  | -0.26* | -0.23*          |
| Contact personality     |                |                       |                   |                             | -0.04                           | 0.09                  | 0.06   | 0.00            |
| Communication behaviour |                |                       |                   |                             |                                 | -0.02                 | 0.13   | 0.15            |
| Training need           |                |                       |                   |                             |                                 |                       | 0.00   | -0.01           |
| Experience              |                |                       |                   |                             |                                 |                       |        | 0.94*           |

\* Significant at 0.05 level

Positive relationship was found between training need of the Agricultural Extension Officers who had more training need or less training need were correspondingly more satisfied or less satisfied in their job. As regards intelligence and knowledge it was positive which indicated that the Extension Officers who were more intelligent were also correspondingly more knowledgeable in the subject matter. On the other hand, intelligence was found to show negative correlation with age. Similar was pattern of correlation between experience and intelligence. Further, it is to be noted that correlation between age and experience was positive. But age showed negative and significant correlation with knowledge. The less aged Agricultural Extension Officers being young graduates have posted themselves with the new knowledge of advancing agricultural technology.

Relationship between job performance and other psychological variables: The Table II reveals that

TABLE II. Correlation between job performance and other variables

| Independent variables   | Correlation coefficient values |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Knowledge               | 0.205*                         |
| Job satisfaction        | 0.068NS                        |
| Intelligence            | 0.207*                         |
| Contact personality     | 0.052NS                        |
| Communication behaviour | 0.782**                        |
| Training need           | -0.055NS                       |
| Age                     | 0.054NS                        |
| Experience              | 0.037NS                        |

\* Significant at 5% level, \*\* Significant at 1% level, N. S. - Not significant

job satisfaction, contact personality, training need, age and experience had no significant correlation with the job performance. But knowledge, intelligence and communication behaviour had positive and significant correlation with the job performance. It may, however, be pointed out that correlation between job performance of the Extension Officers was low with their knowledge and also with the intelligence, but it was high with the communication behaviour. This showed that the communication behaviour was more closely associated with their job performance than with their knowledge or intelligence. Kolte (1972) in his study on Agricultural Extension Officers found that there was positive correlation between job satisfaction and job performance but his findings were not corroborated with the present observations.

Contribution by the psychological variables towards job performance efficiency: To find out this the eight independent variables were regressed with the dependent variable. The result of the multiple regression analysis showed that the contribution of these variables (independent) in explaining the variation of job performance was 63.5 per cent as the value of  $R^2$  was found to be 0.635 which was significant at 5 per cent level. Of the eight independent variables, three, namely, knowledge, intelligence and communication behaviour significantly explained the variation in their job performance to the extent of 61.14 per cent and the remaining five independent variables explained the

variation by only 2.36 per cent Kolte (1972) concluded that the Agricultural Extension Officers who possessed better knowledge of the subject matter were better job performers also. Mayer (1956) observed that intelligence was a basic factor for the job success of an extension worker. Again, with regard to communication behavior, Kolte (1972) found that there was positive relationship between communication behaviour and job performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers.

A comparison of the mean percentage scores obtained by the Agricultural Extension Officers on the dependent and the independent variables as measured by the different tests and tools were taken.

The performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers in terms of the average percentage scores and corresponding standard deviation values are given in Table III. The mean scores for the variables were different from

TABLE III. Mean percentage scores obtained in different variables

| Variables                | Mean percentage score | Standard deviation |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Job performance          | 61.50                 | 10.02              |
| Knowledge                | 63.38                 | 11.50              |
| Job satisfaction         | 51.90                 | 12.15              |
| Intelligence             | 37.48                 | 9.27               |
| Contact Personality      | 51.81                 | 7.66               |
| Communication Behaviour- | 61.50                 | 10.2               |
| Training Need            | 74.19                 | 13.92              |

each other. The standard deviation values ranged from 7.66 to 13.92. This dispersion did not appear to be wide in view of the range of scores in each variable being 0-100. Consider-

ing this wide range of score it would not be off the way to compare the mean scores in the different variables specially when all of them have been brought to a common level, that is mean percentage score.

From the table, it may be observed that the performance of the Agricultural Extension Officers in the different variables of the study in descending order were: training need, knowledge, job performance, job satisfaction, contact personality, intelligence and communication behaviour. From this order it may be noted that average percentage score in training need was the highest, meaning thereby that the Agricultural Extension Officers are in dire need of training in relevant areas. Further, it may be observed that their mean percentage score in communication behaviour was the lowest. This gives an idea that as the communication behaviour is important variable which expressed high percentage of variation on their job performance it should be taken care of by them in order to improve their job performance. In order to identify the three categories of average, below average and above average categories of Agricultural Extension Officers, the scores of each officer was transformed into T-score. Those officers who obtained the scores between 40 and 60 (that is between -10 to +10) on a variable were considered to be average and those who obtained scores below 40, and above 60 and were considered to be below and above average respectively. On the basis of the T-scores of all the 127 officers in each of the specified vari-

TABLE IV. Percentage of Agricultural Extension Officers in Average, Below Average and Above Average categories in terms of their performance in different variables

| Variables               | Above average |       | Average |       | Below average |       |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------|---------|-------|---------------|-------|
|                         | f             | %     | f       | %     | f             | %     |
| Job performance         | 20            | 15.75 | 89      | 70.08 | 18            | 14.17 |
| Knowledge               | 19            | 14.96 | 86      | 67.72 | 22            | 17.32 |
| Job satisfaction        | 23            | 18.11 | 88      | 69.30 | 16            | 12.59 |
| Intelligence            | 21            | 16.53 | 82      | 64.58 | 24            | 18.99 |
| Contact personality     | 19            | 14.96 | 89      | 70.08 | 19            | 14.96 |
| Communication behaviour | 27            | 21.55 | 81      | 63.79 | 19            | 14.96 |
| Training need           | 16            | 12.59 | 94      | 74.03 | 17            | 13.38 |

ables, they were classified into the three categories as depicted in Table IV.

The Table IV gives the frequencies (f) as well as the percentage of the Agricultural Extension Officers in each of the three categories, in respect of each variable. It is observed that in the case of all the specified variables, maximum percentage was in average category and the rest in other two categories.

The above findings can be explained in relation to the findings of other research workers. Kolte (1972) in his study in Rajasthan found that 44 per cent of the Agricultural Extension Officers were above average in their job performance and 56 per cent below average; whereas in the present study 15.75 per cent were above average; 70.08 per cent average and 14.17 per cent below average. Chakravathy (1971) found that 53 per cent of the Agricultural Extension Officers were satisfied with their job and the rest were dissatisfied. But in the present study the job satisfaction of the Agricultural Extension

Officers was in different pattern, that is 69.30 per cent were satisfied, 18.11 per cent over satisfied and 12.59 under-satisfied.

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