

Agricultural Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT

Attitude is a feeling of like, dislike, attraction, repulsion, interest or apathy towards other persons, objects or ideas. Teachers have a huge role to play in realizing future agricultural revolutions by guiding and mentoring agricultural higher education students. Therefore, it is very much necessary to know that how the agricultural teachers feel about their profession and what the reasons are behind having such feelings. The study was undertaken in four reputed Agricultural Universities of India: ICAR- IARI, New Delhi; ICAR- NDRI, Karnal; TNAU, Coimbatore and UAS, Bangalore constituting a total sample size of 180 agricultural teachers. The study revealed that agricultural teachers in these universities had a positive attitude towards teaching.

Key words: Attitude, agriculture, teacher, teaching, profession

INTRODUCTION

The spectacular achievements in the area of food and agriculture have historically come from major investments in agricultural education, research and sound government policies (GFAR, 2013). The agricultural education institutions developed skilled human resource that was instrumental in not only generating new technologies but also in their assessment, refinement and dissemination to the farming community. The responsibility of agricultural education is shared by the ICAR at the central level and the State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) at the state level, with the states exercising considerable autonomy in the conduct of work in this area. Many general universities as well as few private state institutions are also involved in agricultural education.

Coping with emerging challenges require agricultural education to evolve in tune with fast changing national and international scenario. The educational system must develop the human capital necessary to help Indian agriculture face the broad set of challenges including issues of food security and increasing living standards of the masses. Hence, there is a need to continuously strive for excellence in agricultural education. The agricultural education system needs to be

redefined so as to equip the fresh agricultural graduates with subject competency, self-motivation, positive attitude, agri-business skills, knowledge of computer and information technology, and communication skills.

Ghadei *et al.* (2011) advocated the need to develop specialized courses in agricultural educational technology to upgrade the teaching skills. Moreover, they recommended establishing a national level Teachers Training Institute in agriculture as an urgent requirement for agriculture education and training. Thus, it seems pertinent to have a closer examination of the issues related to excellence in teaching-learning in order to provide an effective understanding of the process and related factors to enhance the effectiveness of higher education program in agriculture.

Teachers have a huge role to play in realizing future agricultural revolutions by guiding and mentoring agricultural higher education students. Therefore, it is a teacher who must understand and accept the responsibility to transform students with whom lies the future of India. For which, it is of prime importance to know that whether our teachers are ready. Various studies suggest that training of teachers can develop a positive attitude in them about teaching profession (Mishra, 1977; Bhandarkar, 1980); contrarily, Gupta *et al.*, (2011) found

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to have negative attitude towards profession among many teachers. Moreover, Magd *et al.*, (2007) reported that an employee's attitude is one of the most important factors for organizational success. Similarly, Robbins (1994) said that the attitude towards a profession is one component of both job satisfaction and attachment to the profession. Thus, it is very much necessary to know that how the agricultural teachers feel about their profession and what the reasons are behind having such feelings.

Therefore, the present investigation was formulated to study the attitude of the agricultural teachers about teaching profession and their feelings for the profession.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in well recognized and reputed Agricultural Universities of India. Following the composite ranking of Indian Agricultural Universities by Career 360 (2014), two Deemed Universities and two State Agricultural Universities were purposively selected. The selected universities were: ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi (Rating: AAAA+); ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal (Rating: AAAA); Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore (Rating: AAAA) and University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bangalore (Rating: AAA+).

The respondent agricultural teachers were selected randomly with a condition that at least 20 per cent of the teachers involved in teaching post-graduate and Ph.D. courses shall be selected. Hence, the number of teachers selected from IARI, New Delhi; NDRI, Karnal; TNAU, Coimbatore and UAS, Bangalore were 80, 40, 30 and 30 respectively. Thus, the total sample size was 180 agricultural teachers.

Attitude is the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object (Thurstone, 1946); a psychological object can be any symbol, phrase, slogan, person, institution, ideal or idea towards which people can differ with respect to positive or negative affect. For the present study, attitude was operationalized as agricultural teachers' predisposition, feeling, belief and thought about teaching profession. The modified attitude scale developed by Shaukat Hussain (2004) was used for the study after administering it to the selected agricultural teachers. The responses on the scale were recorded on a five-point continuum *viz.*, strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree with the scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively for each statements. The data were analyzed with non-parametric tests *viz.*, Friedman's test and Kruskal-Wallis test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Difference between the attitudes of teachers within a university was analyzed using Friedman's two-way ANOVA; whereas, for examining the attitude difference of teachers between the selected universities, Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA was used.

The data in Table 1 showed that the computed p-value of Friedman's test was less than the p-value at five percent level of significance ($p < 0.05$); hence, it can be inferred that the attitude of teachers towards teaching differed significantly within a university.

Test for difference analysis (Friedman's ANOVA statistic, Chi-Square = 1207.550, $df = 25$, $p < 0.05$) between the teachers of IARI has proved that the attitude of the teachers differed significantly in IARI. From Table 1 it is apparent that teachers have a positive attitude towards teaching since a high mean rank was obtained for the statements exhibiting positive attitude and a low mean rank for the statements showing negative attitude. They view teaching as a sort of education for them as well, to update their knowledge (mean rank 21.06). They considered teaching as an inspirational profession (mean rank 20.20) which provides them a chance to transform individuals (mean rank 20.53) by developing their personality and character (mean rank 20.03). From the low rating they have given for statements like teaching is good only for some people but not for me (mean rank 6.17), it is merely a routine job (mean rank 6.40) which people will do when they do not find any other job (mean rank 7.06); it can be inferred that teachers in IARI have positive attitude towards teaching.

Teachers of NDRI (Friedman's ANOVA statistic, Chi-Square = 531.089, $df = 25$, $p < 0.05$) were also in agreement (high mean rank score) that teaching is an exciting profession (mean rank 20.99) which is a kind of education for teachers also (mean rank 20.23); which shows that they have positive affect for teaching.

Table 1: Attitude of teachers based on mean ranks as per Friedman's test

Statement	IARI (N= 80)		NDRI (N= 40)		UAS (N= 30)		TNAU (N= 30)	
	Mean Rank	Rank	Mean Rank	Rank	Mean Rank	Rank	Mean Rank	Rank
I am proud to be a teacher and feel proud to express it	19.77	V	20.00	III	20.95	I	21.27	I
Teaching is not often done whole-heartedly	11.56	XIV	8.63	XIX	8.87	XVII	10.98	XIV
Teaching is just another means of existence	9.43	XVII	8.08	XXIII	9.30	XV	7.60	XXII
Teaching is one of the best means of striving humanity	17.23	XI	17.39	XII	17.70	XI	19.52	IV

I will change my current employer if I have the opportunity to do so	10.06	XVI	8.58	XX	9.47	XIV	8.83	XVI
Teaching profession is not socially ranked high	10.78	XV	8.78	XXVIII	9.17	XVI	9.27	XV
Teaching profession provides the best chance to develop good citizens	20.53	II	18.89	VII	19.47	VII	18.72	IX
I would encourage able and sincere individuals to enter the teaching profession	18.56	IX	18.99	VI	19.40	VIII	19.30	VI
Teaching becomes boring after sometime	8.38	XIX	7.61	XXIV	7.88	XXI	6.97	XXIV
Teaching is a profession requiring only average ability	6.47	XXIV	7.29	XXVI	8.42	XIX	7.85	XX
Teaching is an inspirational profession	20.20	III	20.99	I	19.53	VI	19.93	II
Teaching is the best means of self-expression	18.84	VIII	18.28	IX	19.62	V	18.90	VIII
Teaching is a monotonous profession	7.23	XXI	7.41	XXV	6.60	XXIV	7.72	XXI
Much satisfaction can be derived from teaching	19.06	VII	19.19	IV	20.07	III	17.90	XII
Adopting teaching strategies in classroom wastes too much time	8.49	XXVIII	8.96	XVI	6.93	XXII	8.75	XVII
Teaching is an education for the teachers also	21.06	I	20.23	II	18.13	X	19.32	V
People teach only when they can find nothing else to do	7.06	XXII	8.28	XXI	6.13	XXV	6.53	XXV
Teaching develops personality and character	20.03	IV	19.05	V	20.68	II	19.00	VII
The intellectual standard of a country depends upon its teachers	19.52	VI	17.54	XI	19.90	IV	18.27	X
Teaching is as good job as any	16.52	XII	18.65	VIII	16.70	XIII	18.13	XI
The moral standards of teaching profession is very low	8.26	XX	9.44	XIV	8.38	XX	7.27	XXIII
Teaching may be all right for some people but not for me	6.17	XXVI	8.21	XXII	6.05	XXVI	5.55	XVI
Teaching is the best job that I can think of	15.00	XIII	14.83	XIII	17.03	XII	17.10	XIII
I am not convinced of the importance of teaching as a career	6.79	XXIII	9.28	XV	8.60	XXVIII	8.38	XVIII
Teachers have a powerful influence on students when all factors are considered	17.62	X	17.56	X	19.38	IX	19.68	III
Teaching is merely a routine job	6.40	XXV	8.91	XVII	6.63	XXIII	8.27	XIX
Friedman's test statistics								
Chi- Square	1207.550		531.089		490.238		478.324	
df	25		25		25		25	
Asymp. Sig.(p)	0.000		0.000		0.000		0.000	

They were also honored and pleased to be teachers (mean rank 20.00), and agreed that teaching provides them much satisfaction (mean rank 19.19) and it was also a way to develop one's personality and character (mean rank 19.05). The low mean rank for statements, like teaching is a monotonous (mean rank 7.41), boring profession (mean rank 7.61), which requires only average ability (mean rank 7.29) and it was taken up as a profession when people did not find another means of existence (mean rank 8.08), clearly indicates that teachers of NDRI have more of a positive inclination towards teaching as a profession.

The Table 1 (Friedman's ANOVA statistic, Chi-Square = 490.238, df = 25, p < 0.05), it is evident that teachers of UAS, Bangalore also showcased positive inclination towards teaching. The high mean score teachers gave for statements such as proud of their profession (mean rank 20.95), role played by teachers in developing personality and character of students (mean

rank 20.68) and satisfaction they derived from this job (mean rank 20.07) proves the positive disposition of teachers. They agreed that teaching is the best means of self-expression (mean rank 19.62) and the intellectual standards of our country depend on its teachers (mean rank 19.90). They displayed strong disagreement with the statement such as teaching can be done satisfactorily only by few people (mean rank 6.05) and individuals start teaching when they do not find any other job (mean rank 6.13). From their rating it can be drawn that teaching is not a routine (mean rank 6.63) and monotonous job for them (mean rank 6.60), and they are of the opinion that adopting various approaches for teaching is not a wastage of time. Therefore, it is clear from their responses that they are convinced about their profession as teacher.

Similarly, from the response of agricultural teachers in TNAU (Table 1, Friedman's ANOVA statistic, Chi-Square = 478.324, df = 25, p < 0.05) it can be drawn that they were also pleased about their profession as a teacher (mean rank 21.27). They indicated that teaching offers a motivating career (mean rank 19.93), which allows them to influence students when all the aspects are considered (mean rank 19.68). They also agreed that teaching is one of the best professions to serve the humanity (mean rank 19.52) and it is a means of learning for the teachers themselves (mean rank 19.32). Like the teachers in other universities, they also disagreed that teaching can be done effectively by only few (mean rank 6.53) and it is a wearisome (mean rank 7.72) and boring profession (mean rank 6.97). For them teaching is one of most respected profession with very high moral standards. Therefore, from their response itself we can clearly make out that teachers of TNAU, also have a positive attitude towards teaching.

A comparison of the attitudes of agricultural teachers between the selected universities was done using Kruskal-Wallis's one way ANOVA. The p-value was greater than the table value at five percent level of significance (Table 2). Thus, it can be inferred that there exist no significance difference between the attitudes of teachers towards teaching in the selected agricultural universities.

Table 2: Kruskal Wallis test statistics for attitude of teachers towards teaching

n=180	
Category	Values
Chi- Square	0.487
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.922

Table 3: Comparison of attitude of teachers towards teaching based on mean ranks as per Kruskal Wallis test

Category	N	Mean Rank
IARI	80	92.04
NDRI	40	88.88
UAS	30	82.70
TNAU	30	96.35
Total	180	

The importance of attitude in teaching was supported by other researchers also. Hargreaves, 1994 and Freeman, 1990; opined that teachers' performance in class is moulded by "minds" and "attitudes". According to Freeman (mentioned in Clemente, 2001), attitudes are such significant factors that they can be considered the reason of teachers' success or failure.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the study that teachers in all four universities had a positive attitude towards teaching profession. All of them agreed that teaching is an inspirational profession and were delighted to be a teacher as well as to express it. Teachers were of the outlook that teaching develops personality and character. All of them disagreed that teaching is a monotonous profession and one practices it when they do not find any other job. Therefore, it is clearly evident from the study that even if teachers from different universities have different views about the teaching profession, all of them showcased a positive attitude towards teaching as a profession. The way teachers view themselves in relation to their job is an attitudinal factor that has been overlooked. Generally, a person's approach toward an object affects the person's intents to perform behaviours relating to that object.

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