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Educational Environment in Agricultural Colleges from Maharashtra

S.S. Mane[1] M.C. Ahire[2] S.B. Agale[3]

[1] Associate Professor, Agricultural Extension and Communication, School of Agril. Sciences, G H Raisoni University, Saikheda, Madhya Pradesh, India
[2] Head, Department of Agril. Extension and Communication, Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri, Maharashtra, India
[3] Junior Research Assistant, Agril. Tech. School, Dhule, Maharashtra, India

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ABSTRACT

Educational environment refers to the physical, social, biological and artificial surroundings provided by the agricultural college so as to fulfill requirements of the students during their B.Sc. Agri. Degree. The study was undertaken to know the status of educational environment in affiliated agricultural colleges in comparison with constituent agricultural colleges from the state of Maharashtra. An educational environment was measured with the help of a three-point continuum scale developed by Tarde (2002) and Thoke (2011) with some additions. It was observed that, two third of affiliated agricultural colleges were having 'fair' educational environment followed. As regards to the constituent agricultural colleges, the majority of constituent agricultural colleges were having 'fair' educational environment. There was no constituent college in the category of 'poor' educational environment. Correlation analysis showed that, there was a positive association between educational environment and overall performance of the both types of agricultural colleges. However, the difference between educational environment of affiliated and constituent colleges was found to be non-significant.

Introduction

Maharashtra Agricultural Universities (Krishi Vidyapeeth's) Act.1983 had provision of affiliation of affiliated colleges with the agricultural universities of Maharashtra. Maharashtra Council of Agricultural and Research, (MCAER) Pune, which is the statutory body constituted on 10th September 1984 under section 12 of the Maharashtra Agricultural Universities (Krishi Vidyapeeth's) Act, 1983. The MCAER has been empowered to grant permission to start the new constituent as well as affiliated colleges. Maharashtra at present has 156 affiliated agriculture and allied colleges which are the highest number of agricultural colleges in the country, in which nearly 11990 students admitted in affiliated colleges and 2717 students admitted in constituent colleges. As the advent of these affiliated colleges, many issues are raised regarding the quality of education maintained by these colleges. Therefore, researchers have planned to study the educational environment of affiliated agricultural colleges in comparison with constituent agricultural colleges.

Material and methods

Educational environment refers to the physical, social, biological and artificial surroundings provided by the agricultural college so as to fulfill requirements of the students during their B.Sc. Agriculture Degree. For studying the educational environment, the jurisdiction of all the four agricultural universities *viz.* Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri; Dr. Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, Dapoli; Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola and Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth,

*Corresponding author.
E-mail address: ssm2328@gmail.com (S.S. Mane)
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Parbhani was considered so as to achieve the even distribution of samples or regional balance. Constituent and affiliated agricultural colleges were selected purposely which have completed minimum of eight years. In all 40 agricultural colleges (13 constituent and 27 affiliated colleges) were selected from the Maharashtra state.

For collecting required data from the respondents, 30 students from each sample college were selected randomly (15 students from final year and 15 graduated students) and data were collected by a structured interview schedule developed for the purpose. An educational environment was measured with the help of a three point continuum scale developed by Tarde (2002) and Thoke (2011) with some additions (box 1). The schedule consisted of 24 items, the responses for which were obtained from selected students from respective colleges on three point continuum and numerical score of 3,2 and 1 was given for 'fully satisfied', 'partially satisfied' and 'not satisfied; respectively. Thus the obtainable score for this variable comes to 72. The maximum and minimum scores obtained by agricultural colleges were 69.09 and 42.45 respectively. On the basis of scores obtained by agricultural colleges as well as mean and standard deviation, they were grouped into three categories such as poor, fair and good.

Results and Discussion

It is observed from the Table 1 that, the two third of affiliated agricultural colleges (66.67 %) were having 'fair' educational environment followed by 22.22 per cent of the affiliated agricultural colleges had 'poor' educational environment, while only 11.11 per cent affiliated agricultural colleges were having 'good' educational environment. As regards to the constituent agricultural colleges, majority (84.62 %) of constituent agricultural colleges were having 'fair' educational environment, followed by 15.38 per cent colleges were having 'good' educational environment. There was no constituent college in the category of 'poor' educational environment. These comparative results are in conformity with the results of Sunita (2005).

It was found that, at overall level, the majority of the agricultural colleges (72.50 %) had 'fair' educational environment, while the remaining agricultural colleges were nearby equally distributed (15.00 per cent and 12.50 %) in 'poor' and 'good' categories respectively. The average educational environment score was 55.63 which indicated 'fair' educational environment. These findings are similar with the findings of Tarde (2002) and Thoke (2011).

Box 1 Items of measurement tool used for educational environment

Sr. No.	Item
01	College have sufficient number of classrooms with good seating facility
02	College have sufficient Number of LCD projectors
03	College have well equipped laboratories
04	College have sufficient qualified and experienced teachers
05	College have stable teachers
06	College have sufficient teaching aids and used in teaching learning process
07	Practicals are conducted on farm for better understanding
08	Experiments are shown in laboratories and opportunity is given for exercise
09	Crop cafeteria for field crops
10	Crop cafeteria for vegetables and flowers
11	Sufficient farm projects such as nursery, demo. plots, micro-irrigation etc. are available for study
12	Organization of sufficient field visits for better exposure
13	Teachers cooperation in addressing problems
14	Sufficient availability of books in library
15	Sufficient availability of reading rooms
16	Sufficient availability of question paper sets for reference
17	Sufficient availability of hostel and mess with essential facilities
18	Sufficient availability of play ground
19	Sufficient availability of sport instruments
20	Sufficient availability of instruments in gymnasium
21	Participation in Inter university tournaments
22	Cooperation from administrative staff of the college
23	Availability of health services
24	Overall college ambience

Table 1 Distribution of Agricultural Colleges according to Educational Environment

Categories	Affiliated Colleges (n=27)	Categories	Constituent Colleges (n=13)	Categories	Overall (n=40)
	Frequency		Frequency		Frequency
Poor (up to 48.02)	6 (22.22)	Poor (up to 52.77)	0	Poor (up to 49.40)	6 (15.00)
Fair (48.03 to 61.24)	18 (66.67)	Fair (52.78 to 62.63)	11 (84.62)	Fair (49.41 to 61.86)	29 (72.50)
Good (61.25 and above)	3 (11.11)	Good (62.64 and above)	2 (15.38)	Good (61.87 and above)	5 (12.50)
Mean : 55.63	S.D. : 6.61	Mean : 57.70	S.D. : 4.93	Mean : 55.63	S.D. : 6.23

(Figures in Parenthesis indicates percentages)

Regarding comparison between educational environment of constituent and affiliated agricultural colleges, it was revealed that, the average score for affiliated agricultural colleges was found 54.64 (75.88 %) while it was 57.70 (80.13 %) for the constituent agricultural colleges, whereas, the overall average score was 55.63 (77.26 %). This clearly showed that there was little difference between the educational environment maintained in the agricultural colleges as perceived by the students.

For testing hypothesis, 't' test was used and it was found that the difference between educational environment of affiliated and constituent colleges was non significant (P value 0.07). Therefore hypothesis stating 'The educational environment of affiliated colleges is not at par with constituent colleges' was rejected.

The correlation analysis indicated that there was a positive and significant association between educational environment and overall performance of the agricultural colleges (Y) at 1.00 per cent level of probability, for affiliated and constituent agricultural colleges also meaning thereby, that educational environment had influence (r=0.6225) on the performance of the agricultural colleges. Hence, the hypothesis stating performance of the agricultural colleges depends on the educational environment is accepted.

Conclusion

The selected affiliated and constituent agricultural colleges had different educational environments. Affiliated agricultural colleges are more in 'fair' and 'poor' categories of educational environment, while more constituent agricultural colleges are under 'fair' category of educational environment. Hence these affiliated agricultural colleges have to be supported by management to induce an educational environment in the poor category colleges. It may also infer that neither students of constituent agricultural colleges nor students of affiliated agricultural colleges were satisfied with the educational environment maintained in these colleges. However both affiliated and constituent agricultural college student's priorities are different.

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