

An Analysis of Job Performance of Agricultural Assistants in Dharwad District Under T&V System*

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Abstract :Two hundred and six Agricultural Assistants working in Dharwad district were randomly selected. Job performance was measured with the scale developed for the purpose. The data was gathered through pre-tested schedule. Discriminant function analysis was applied to identify high and low job performance characteristics of Agricultural Assistants. Majority of the Agricultural Assistants had medium level of job performance. Job attitude, Mass-media exposure, Job satisfaction, Organisational commitment and Job perception have substantially contributed for the discrimination.

Introduction

The T & V system of extension came into operation in Karnataka during 1978-79 called as Agricultural Extension Project. It was implemented in three phases and the whole State of Karnataka was covered under the programme by 1980-81. In Karnataka, the field level functionary is known as Agricultural Assistant.

In T & V system, the field extension worker play pivotal role in transfer of technology more than anyone else in the organisation. Though less educated than other staff in the system, his role is not less professional and specialised as he is the basic extension worker who teaches production techniques to the farmers. Therefore the success of overall T & V system efforts largely depend on how well the extension personnel at field level perform their job with all interest and ingenuity in their positions.

Many research studies revealed that the performance of field extension workers were not upto the expected level. Palanival (1983) reported that 48% of the information formulated at the monthly zonal workshop has transferred to non contact farmers level. Patel (1983) reported that village level workers were found to be irregular in their field visits. Hence, there is a *prima facie* evidence to question as to whether all the field extension staff are performing their duties and responsibilities as expected.

Lately it has been realised and emphasized by agricultural scientists, social scientists and extension specialists that an effective and efficient job performance leading to higher productivity of extension functionaries, is not only based on personal aspects but also on socio-psychological and organisational aspects. Hence, it is important to unearth the characters which discriminate between high and low job performance categories of Agricultural Assistants.

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Against this background, the present investigation was formulated with the following objectives.

1. To measure the level of job performance of Agricultural Assistants.
2. To identify characteristics which discriminate the Agricultural Assistants of high and low job performance categories.

Material and Methods

The present study was conducted in all the 17 talukas of Dharwad district of Karnataka State. The research design used for the study was *ex-post facto*, since the phenomenon had already occurred. All the 412 Agricultural Assistants working in the T & V system of Dharwad district formed the population for the study. It was decided to cover 50 per cent of Agricultural Assistants working in each taluk randomly. Thus, the sample for the study was 206 Agricultural Assistants.

The job performance was measured with the help of separate scale developed for the purpose. For quantifying independent variables, some measurement techniques, scoring procedures were developed and some of the valid scales developed by earlier researchers were also used. The data were collected with the help of a well structured and pretested questionnaire.

In order to identify the characteristics which discriminate the Agricultural Assistants of high and low groups with respect to their job performance, discriminant function analysis (Goulden, 1962) was carried out.

In order to find out whether on all the 16 independent variables under study, the Agricultural Assistants of high and low categories could be effectively discriminated, the Mahalanobis D^2 statistics was calculated. The 'F' statistics was used to see if the two groups were different from each other. To pin-point the most contributing variables for effective discrimination, arbitrarily a minimum of 10 per cent for the total discrimination was used as a standard in this study.

Results and Discussion

A perusal of table 1 indicates that majority of Agricultural Assistants had medium level of job performance. This finding is in complete agreement with the findings of Reddy (1986). This might be because of similar situation of the working conditions in which these Agricultural Assistants were working, as well as might be due to the uniform targets prescribed for them in T & V system. In addition, the uniform agent farmer ratio, the type of training and the *modus operandi* might have put majority of the Agricultural Assistants on the common platform with regard to their level of job performance.

Table 1. Level of Job performance of agricultural assistants

Category	Number	(n=206) Percentage
Low	28	13.59
Medium	148	71.85
High	30	14.56

An analysis of Job.....

The Agricultural Assistants now-a-days are assigned many, other than job chart activities, which leaves them with less time, patience and mental capacity to attend to their regular assigned duties, leading to frustration and lack of organisational commitment and a feeling of lack of proper perception of their job. This in turn contributes towards low job performance by many of the Agricultural Assistants.

The results presented in table 2 revealed that the value of D^2 based on all the 16 variables together and its 'F' value were 7.45 and 4.94, respectively. The 'F' value was significant at 1 per cent level of

probability. Hence, the calculated value of 'F' based on D^2 function showed a significant discriminating power.

To examine the relative importance of the variables based on their power to discriminate between the two job performance categories, the percentage contribution of these variables to the total distance measured were also calculated, taking into consideration the mean differences of two group in respect of each variable and the results are presented in table 3.

Table 2. Values of coefficients and discriminant function

Name of the variable	Coefficients	D^2
Job attitude	-0.0033	
Age	-0.0012	
Education	0.0032	
Total experience	0.0020	
T and V experience	-0.0028	
Rural-urban background	-0.0042	
Mass media exposure	-0.0171	
Job perception	-0.0060	
Achievement motivation	0.0055	
Organisational climate	-0.0004	7.45
Organisational commitment	-0.0022	
Job involvement	0.0015	
Job satisfaction	-0.0040	
Facilities and resources	0.0008	
Organisation stress	0.0004	
Job stress	0.0018	

F=4.94**

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

Table 3. Means, their differences and 't' values of the independent variables with respect to job performance categories of Agricultural Assistants.

Variable	Mean values of job performance categories		Mean differences	t value
	High group	Low group		
Job attitude	91.17	77.04	14.13	5.50**
Age	38.13	39.61	01.48	-0.93 ^{NS}
Education	11.90	11.31	00.58	1.00 ^{NS}
Total experience	11.20	13.61	-02.41	-1.35 ^{NS}
T and V experience	08.63	08.82	-00.19	-0.17 ^{NS}
Rural-urban background	19.20	17.61	01.59	1.70 ^{NS}
Mass media exposure	07.17	05.54	01.63	3.03**
Job perception	32.87	30.64	01.65	2.45*
Achievement motivation	32.03	30.07	01.96	2.16*
Organisational climate	25.70	22.11	03.59	3.12**
Organisational commitment	53.27	45.89	07.38	4.64**
Job involvement	75.80	72.04	03.76	2.37*
Job satisfaction	37.60	31.75	05.85	4.39**
Facilities and resources	21.77	21.04	00.73	0.58 ^{NS}
Organisation stress	21.03	24.50	-03.47	-3.01**
Job stress	30.43	35.57	-05.14	-2.63**

* Significant at 5 per cent level of probability

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability

NS Non-significant

One could draw the profile of both high and low job performing Agricultural Assistants from the findings in table 3. It could be inferred that the Agricultural Assistants with high job performance were younger, less experienced with much favourable attitude towards their job. They had better job perception, higher level of achievement motivation, deeply committed and involved in their job and more satisfied with their job. Further, they felt the pressure

of stress factors relating to their organisational and job to a lesser extent than the Agricultural Assistants of low job performance category.

It may be seen from table 4 that five out of 16 variable were substantially contributed for the discrimination. From the results it is possible to differentiate the high job performance Agricultural Assistants from low job performance Agricultural Assistants

in terms of the magnitude of discrimination of each variable. The results clearly indicate that the variable viz., job attitude, was formed in its discriminating power (35.63%). Next to this, mass-media exposure contributed 21.05 per cent for the total discrimination which was followed by job satisfaction with 17.83 per cent contribution. The variables-organisational commitment and job perception contributed 12.65 per cent and 10.58 per cent, respectively, for the total discrimination.

Table 4. Percentage of contribution for total discrimination by the most discriminating characteristic variables

Variables	Percentage of contribution
Job attitude	35.63
Mass media exposure	21.05
Job satisfaction	17.83
Organisational commitment	12.65
Job perception	10.58

Hence, it could be concluded that the Agricultural Assistants of high job performance and the Agricultural Assistants of low job performance could be effectively discriminated on their level of job attitude, exposure to mass-media, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job perception.

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