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Socio-psychological profile analysis of agricultural officers of Kalaburagi district of Kalyana Karnataka region

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken to assess the socio-psychological characteristics of agricultural officers (AOs) working in Kalaburagi district of Kalyana Karnataka region during the year 2021-22. Agricultural officers (AO's) working in the State Department of Agriculture had greater responsibilities on them to convey recent advancements to the farmers. The profile characteristics of the AOs shows how well they are equipped and can plan the activities that benefit the farmers. The results revealed that nearly half (46.66%) of the agricultural officers (AOs) were in young age and middle age (40.00%), while, half (50.00%) of AOs were post graduates & 23.00 percent were B.Sc. (Agri.) graduates. Most of the AOs were from rural background and had low (less than 8 years) to medium (8-24 years) job experience. Regarding training, majority (78.34%) of them not undergone any training programme before joining the job and most of them undergone 5-10 in-service training. With regard work load, most of them had perceived medium (51.66%) to high workload (33.36%) and more than half (53.33%) of the AOs had medium favorable attitude towards extension work. Majority (63.33%) of them had high information seeking behavior and half (50.00%) of them had medium level of awareness about use of ICT.

Keywords: Agricultural officers (AOS), socio-psychological profile, training programme

Introduction

Agriculture occupies a place of pride in the economic development of the nation and welfare of people. With increases in population, the pressure on agriculture production is also increasing day by day. There is need to increase production and productivity of agriculture crops to feed the growing population. It is also widely recognized fact that transfer of technology from research station to farmer's field is essential for increasing agricultural production. Raitha Samparka Kendras established under Raitha Mithra Yojane during 2000 are the hobli level organization providing agricultural extension services to the farming community at the hobli level. The staffing pattern of RSKs consists of Assistant Agricultural Officers (AAO's) and Agricultural Officer (AO's). Agricultural Officers are extension personnel and the most important technical personnel at the hobli level, who are entrusted with the vital role of inducing the farmers to take up improved agricultural technology to the farming community. It implies that agricultural extension workers should have sound knowledge of the subject and possess communication skills for educating and motivating farmers to adopt new technology. Human behaviour is a set of attributes comprising of knowledge, skills, attitude, social role and motives which influences an individual to perform his duties

and manage the situations efficiently (Shermon, 2004) [8]. The personal, psychological economic characters of an extension officer improve their job performance (Mishra *et al.*, 2011) [4]. Hence this study was conducted to study the socio-psychological profile of Agricultural officers.

Methodology

The study was conducted in 7 Taluks of Kalaburagi District of Kalyana Karnataka during the year 2021-22. Samples of 60 Agricultural officers were selected from 27 Raita Samparka Kendras of Kalaburagi Districts. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study. The selected respondents were interviewed and the desired information was collected with the help of pre-designed and pre-tested questionnaire. The gathered information was analyzed by using appropriate statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation etc. Independent variables like age, education, rural –urban background, service experience, information seeking behavior, pre service & in service training undergone, awareness about ICT, work load, job satisfaction and attitude towards extension work were selected for the study.

Results and Discussion

The Agricultural officers have an important role to play in

Agriculture development through effective technology transfer. It is important to have clear understanding of their personal and psychological profile as the job performance is influenced by different characteristics of the agricultural officers.

Personal and Socio-psychological Characteristics of the Agricultural Officers

The Personal and Socio-psychological characteristics of Agricultural officers of Kalaburagi district were studied and the results are presented in Table 1.

Age

The study revealed that (Table 1) majority (46.66%) of the Agricultural officers (AOs) were belong to young age group upto 35 years followed by 40.00 percent belong to middle age group of 36-55 years. The findings revealed that majority of the AOs belong to young age category. The possible reason might be that, they are recently recruited. The results of the study are in consistency with Reddy *et al.*, (2017) ^[7], Kavyashree *et al.*, (2021) ^[3], Chandra Jyothi *et al.* (2022) ^[2].

Education

The data in Table 1 indicates that, half (50.00%) of the agricultural officers were post graduates in various agricultural disciplines & 23.00 percent were B.Sc.(Agri.) graduates and 13.00 percent were educated upto SSLC. Only 3.33 percent were doctorate. Majority of AOs possessed B.Sc. & M.Sc. (Agri.), it may be due fact that most of them have joined for service immediately after the degree. Moreover, the minimum educational qualification to get into the services is B. Sc. (Agri.) only. Hence majority have studied upto B.Sc. & M.Sc. (Agri.). The results are in conformity with the findings reported by Gopika (2015); Kavyashree *et al.* (2021) ^[3].

Rural urban Background

Data in the Table 1 indicated that majority (63.00%) of agricultural officers were from rural areas and 26.66 percent from urban areas. This might be due to the fact they are from the farming families having interest to serve the rural people. The results get support from the findings of Diksha Patel, *et al.* (2017) ^[2].

Service experience

It was concluded from Table-1 that more than one third (38.33%) of the agricultural officers had less than 8 years job experience and 36.66 percent had between 8-24 years of job experience and the rest 25.00 percent had more than 24 years of experience. Majority of respondents had low to medium job experience. This is because majority of the agriculture officers were young and middle aged and they are recently recruited. One fourth of respondents had high job experience. Because most of them are near to the retirement age hence their experience in job was high. Similar findings were reported by Diksha Patel, *et al.* (2017) ^[2].

Pre service training received

As evident from the data in Table 1 that only 21.66 percent of agricultural officers undergone less than 4 training program before joining the job and majority (78.34%) of

them not undergone any training programme before joining the job. The probable reasons might be that most of them joined immediately after the degree.

In service training received

Regarding in service training received more than one third (43.33 percent) of agricultural officers undergone less than 5 in-service training and 36.00 percent received 5-10 in-service training. The probable reasons might be that the agricultural officers getting seasonal training at the district training centers. Similar findings were reported by Ramappa Patil (2019) ^[6]. Diksha Patel, *et al.* (2017) ^[2].

Awareness about ICT

The present study exhibited that half (50.00%) of the agricultural officers had medium level of awareness about use of ICT, followed by high (13.33%) and low (22.22%) level. The possible reason might be that, the newly recruited AOs had a knowledge of using the ICT tools where as promoted AOs who joined service on SSLC do not have any knowledge about the use of ICTs except mobile phones. The findings are in agreement with the studies conducted by Ramappa Patil (2019) ^[6].

Work load

Table 1 also depicted the information regarding work load of the extension functionaries. The data indicated that, majority (51.66%) of agricultural officers had perceived medium level of work load, whereas 33.33 percent of them had perceived high work load and 15.00 percent of them had low work load. The probable reason might be that in a year they will get high work load during crop season as they are involved in several activities like input distribution seed & fertilizer distribution, demonstrations, field visits, facing farmers' problems and other govt. programme & scheme works. The results are in accordance with the findings of Ramappa Patil (2019) ^[5], Chandra Jyothi *et al.* (2022) ^[2].

Job satisfaction

The study revealed that, half (50.00%) of agricultural officers were moderately satisfied with their job and one forth of them (28.33%) had low job satisfaction. The probable reason might be that lack of working facilities, infrastructure, rewards & incentives, promotional opportunities, low salary, heavy work load etc. The results are in accordance with the findings of Diksha Patel, *et al.* (2017) ^[2], Chandra Jyothi *et al.* (2022) ^[2].

Attitude towards extension work

It was also reported that majority (53.33%) of agricultural officers had favorable attitude towards the extension work and 36.66 percent had highly favorable attitude towards the extension work. Most of them had medium and highly favorable attitude. This mainly because most of them had come from either rural areas or semi urban areas. A few of them had less favorable attitude towards their job because they have to work in the rural areas where infrastructural facilities are not adequate, less educational opportunities for the children and heavy work load.

Information seeking behavior

In information seeking behavior, majority (63.33%) of

agricultural officers were high information seekers followed by medium (26.66%) and low (10.00%) category. Most of agricultural officers were high information seekers. The probable reason might be that most of AOs belong young and middle age, they are committed and desire to acquire

ideas & information from various sources to update their knowledge and skill to provide better service and solution to farmer's problem. The findings are in agreement with the studies conducted by Mishra *et al.* (2007) ^[5].

Table 1: Personal and Socio-psychological Characteristics of the of Agricultural Officer (n= 60)

Sl. No.	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
1.	Age	Young age (Upto 35 years)	21	35.00
		Middle age (36-55 years)	28	46.66
		Old Age (56 years and above)	11	18.33
2.	Education	Non Graduate in Agriculture	03	05.00
		Graduate in Agriculture	14	23.33
		Post Graduate	30	50.00
		Doctorate	02	03.33
		PUC	03	05.00
		SSLC	08	13.33
3.	Rural urban Background	Rural	38	63.33
		Urban	16	26.66
		Semi urban	06	10.00
4.	Service experience	Low (<8 years)	22	36.66
		Medium (8 to 24 years)	23	38.33
		High (24 years and above)	15	25.00
5.	Number of pre service training received	Below 4	13	21.66
		4 to 8	00	00.00
		Above 8	00	00.00
6.	Number of in service training received	Below 4	26	43.33
		4 to 8	22	36.66
		Above 8	12	20.00
7.	Awareness about ICT	Low	22	36.66
		Medium	30	50.00
		High	08	13.33
8.	Work load	Low	09	15.00
		Medium	31	51.66
		High	20	33.33
9.	Job satisfaction	Low satisfactory (<39.95)	17	28.33
		Moderately satisfactory (between 39.95 to 46.65)	30	50.00
		Highly satisfactory (>46.65)	13	21.66
			Mean=13.99 SD=10.19	
10.	Attitude towards extension work	Highly favorable (>76.64)	22	36.66
		Favorable (between 73.74-76.64)	32	53.33
		Unfavorable (<73.74)	06	10.00
			Mean=75.19 SD=2.911	
11.	Information seeking behaviour	Low	06	10.00
		Medium	16	26.66
		High	38	63.33

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the results of the study that, majority of agricultural officers were in young & medium age, most of them were post graduates and from rural background, had medium job experience, majority of them perceived medium to high workload, hence government should fill up the vacant post in department to reduce workload of agriculture officers. Most of them had medium job satisfaction; therefore the departments need to pay more attention on human resource management strategies especially in terms of awards, rewards, appreciation of hard work, policies related to promotion and transfer; so that agricultural officers can feel more satisfied with their job. Majority of them undergone average training, had medium level of awareness about use of ICT. Hence, training programmes on agricultural technologies and use of ICTs should be organized for the benefit of the agricultural

officers.

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