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# MEANING AND VALUE OF WORK AND JOB SATISFACTION OF YOUNG/ADULT FARMERS AND VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE INSTRUCTORS

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Recent concerns expressed by the media indicate that those persons in the agricultural community may view their work differently today than they did in previous times. The early work ethic that developed in this country was a farm work ethic. The American Revolution was fought by a group of dissonant colonists of which "90 percent were farmers" (Roy, 1975:11). Since that time, the make up of our nation's work force has shifted from a primarily farm oriented work force to a non-farm work force.

Meanings, values and attitudes develop as a result of the experiences and knowledge acquisition of the individual. As the farm population becomes a lower percentage of the total population, those remaining on the farm and those working with farmers may be influenced to a greater extent by non-farm work values. Perhaps vocational agriculture instructors are exposed even to a greater extent to non-farm values than the farmers with which they work. However, most of both groups have had rural farm environments during the formative years prior to adulthood.

## *Purposes*

The purposes of this study were to ascertain whether or not young/adult farmers participating in adult education programs perceived work in a different manner than vocational agriculture instructors working with adult education programs, and whether or not job satisfaction and selected demographic variables were related to the meaning and the value of work as perceived by both groups.

## *Methodology*

The design of the study was ex post facto since it was not possible to exert direct control over the independent variables.

### *Population and Sample*

The population consisted of all persons engaged in production agriculture with regular attendance at young/adult farmer classes

in Northwest Missouri and all vocational agriculture instructors in Missouri serving as Young Farmer Chapter advisors. The study sample consisted of 119 selected young/adult farmers from Northwest Missouri and 55 vocational agriculture instructors from Missouri who serve as Young Farmer Chapter advisors. Young Farmer Chapter advisors were selected because they are dealing with adults who are engaged in farming.

Young/adult farmer subjects were selected by vocational agriculture instructors. Enrollment in young/adult farmer classes consists of attending from one to all of the class sessions held in a respective school on topics related to agricultural production and mechanics. Through random sampling of this population, it would have been possible to select a number of subjects atypical of the person most often receiving young/adult farmer instruction related to production. Because of this rationale, purposive sampling was utilized. Kerlinger (1973:129) stated that purposive sampling is "characterized by the use of judgement and a deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including presumable typical areas or groups in the sample." The criterion vocational agriculture instructors used for selection of young farmers was to include only those involved in production agriculture who regularly attended classes.

### *Instrumentation*

*Meaning and Value of Work Scale (MVWS).* The *MVWS* is a two-part instrument developed by Kazanas (1973) to measure a respondent's perception of the term "work." Part I consists of statements developed from nine constructs about work which were identified from a review of the literature. A five point Likert-type scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" was utilized to indicate the extent of the subject's agreement or disagreement with each statement concerning work. Part II of the *MVWS* gives a measure of a subject's intrinsic-extrinsic work value orientation. A subject must choose either an intrinsic or extrinsic value from each of the 42 dichotomously paired statements. The Kuder-Richardson 20 formula was used to check for internal consistency. The reliability for Parts I and II of the *MVWS* were .89 and .90, respectively.

*Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS).* The *JSS* is a standardized instrument developed by Weiss, et al, (1967) for the Work Adjustment Project at the University of Minnesota.

### *Data Analysis*

Comparisons of the mean scores of the young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors were made for the three scales. All respondants were compared on the variables of age, number of

occupational positions previously held, outside income and enrollment in high school vocational agriculture.

A within group comparison was made for young/adult farmers on the variables of debt, business organization and post secondary training. A within group comparison was also made for instructors on the variables of years of teaching, teaching responsibility, debt, farm involvement and level of education.

The data were analyzed using analysis of variance and correlation statistical procedures. Null hypotheses were formulated and tested at an alpha level of .05.

## *Findings*

The mean scores for young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors are presented for each scale in Table 1. No significant difference was found between the mean scores of young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors as measured by the *JSS, MVWSI and MVWSII*. The analysis of variance tables for groups are presented in Table 2 for each scale.

There was no significant difference among the mean scores as measured by the *JSS, MVWSI, and MVWSII* for young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors on the demographic variables of age, number of occupational positions held and outside income.

Table 1

MEAN SCORES BY GROUPS

| Group | N | Job Satisfaction (JSS) | Meaning of Work (MVWSI) | Value of Work (MVWSII) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Farmer | 118 | 79.59 | 163.43 | 31.52 |
| Instructor | 55 | 77.31 | 164.67 | 31.53 |

It was found that there was a significant difference on enrollment in high school vocational agriculture. When the mean scores of young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors were examined on the basis of enrollment in high school vocational

agriculture, it was found that a significant difference existed between instructors who had not been enrolled in high school vocational agriculture and both farmer groups. Vocational agriculture instructors who had not been enrolled in vocational agriculture were less satisfied with their job than young/adult farmers.

No significant difference was found among the scores as measured by the *JSS, MVWSI and MVWSII* for farmers on the variables of debt, business organization and postsecondary training.

Years of teaching, teaching responsibility, debt, farm involvement and education did not significantly affect the mean scores on the *JSS, MVWSI and MVWSII* for the instructors who work with adults.

Correlations among the scales were computed using the data from all respondents. The correlations are reported in Table 3. The *JSS and MVWSI* scales were found to be significantly correlated as was the *MVWSI and MVWSII*. However, the *JSS and MVWSII* were not found to be correlated. The *MVWSII* is a measure of values based on intrinsic or extrinsic factors. The higher the score the more intrinsic the value system. A low correlation would indicate job satisfaction can be either intrinsic or extrinsic.

## *Conclusions and Implications*

When comparing the mean scores of the young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors, no significant difference was found between the groups. This may be due to the fact that most farmers and instructors have farm backgrounds. In other words, their environments were similar during their formative years. Another factor possibly contributing to the lack of significant difference was the fact that the instructors and the young/adult farmers work closely together. Therefore, vocational agriculture instructors working with young/adult farmers and the young/adult farmers they work with should have no predictable conflicts relative to meanings and values of work.

Vocational agriculture instructors who have not been enrolled in vocational agriculture were found to be less satisfied with their jobs than the young/adult farmers with whom they work. This factor may be explained by the fact that this group of teachers had less background concerning the expectations of their job.

Job satisfaction was not found to be significantly correlated with the value of work. Therefore, job satisfaction of young/adult farmers and vocational agriculture instructors who work with young/adult farmers may be due to either intrinsic or extrinsic factors. A high level of job satisfaction might be due to extrinsic factors

Table 2

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF GROUPS ON JOB SATISFACTION MEANING AND VALUE OF WORK

| Variable | Source | SS | df | MS | F | PR>F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Job Satisfaction (JSS) | Between | 195.72 | 1 | 195.72 | 2.78 | .0976 |
| | Within | 12060.22 | 171 | 70.53 | | |
| | Total | 12255.94 | 172 | | | |
| Meaning of Work (MVWSI) | Between | 57.73 | 1 | 57.73 | 0.33 | .5667 |
| | Within | 29957.07 | 171 | 175.19 | | |
| | Total | 30014.80 | 172 | | | |
| Value of Work (MVWSII) | Between | 0.00 | 1 | 0.00 | 0.00 | .9906 |
| | Within | 4893.18 | 171 | 28.62 | | |
| | Total | 4893.18 | 172 | | | |

Table 3

CORRELATIONS AMONG SCALES FOR ALL RESPONDENTS

| Variable | | JSS | MW | VW |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Job Satisfaction (JSS) | Coefficient | 1.00 | 0.33 | 0.15* |
| | Probability | .00 | .00 | .05 |
| | Observations | 173 | 173 | 173 |
| Meaning of Work (MVWSI) | Coefficient | 0.33 | 1.00 | 0.27 |
| | Probability | .00 | .00 | .00 |
| | Observations | 173 | 174 | 173 |
| Value of Work (MVWSII) | Coefficient | 0.15* | 0.27 | 1.00 |
| | Probability | .05 | .00 | .00 |
| | Observations | 173 | 173 | 173 |

*Significant at an alpha level of .05.

as pay, or security, or it might be due to such intrinsic factors as the job itself or the opportunity for personal improvement.

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