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A Study of the Factors Which Influenced the Perception of Cooperation Between County Extension Agents and Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Nebraska

Robert DuWaine Boettcher

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A STUDY OF THE FACTORS
WHICH INFLUENCED THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION
BETWEEN COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS AND
VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
IN NEBRASKA

by

Robert DuWaine Boettcher

A THESIS
Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College in the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Science

Major: Agriculture Education

Under the Supervision of Professor Roy D. Dillon

Lincoln, Nebraska
December, 1986
A study of the factors which influenced the perception of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska

Robert DuWaine Boettcher, M.S.
University of Nebraska, 1986

Advisor: Dr. Roy D. Dillon

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the factors which county agents and vocational agriculture teachers perceived to influence the extent of cooperative arrangements and activities that exist in Nebraska.

A questionnaire was used to survey county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. The sample was drawn from all agents and teachers in Nebraska in April 1986. A 50 percent sample of each population was selected to receive surveys with 34 of the 45 county agents and 61 of the 70 vocational agriculture teachers providing valid responses. The results were tested for frequency and then crosstabulated with the mean scores of the questions. T-tests were performed to determine if there was significance in the responses made by county agents and the vocational agriculture teachers.

The results indicated that significance existed in the responses relating to personal factors and activities. Mean scores indicated that both groups, county agents and vocational agriculture teachers, responded negatively to the questions in this area. Mean scores also indicated the vocational agriculture teachers perceived the questions to have a more negative effect than did the county extension agents.
DEDICATION

To the memory of my loving mother,

Lois Boettcher,

who encouraged me to pursue an education.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to take this opportunity to express his appreciation to those who have given their guidance, patience and assistance in completing this study.

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my wife, Jean, for her continual motivation to complete the work. Also my children, Bridget and Jennifer, who did not always understand why there was not "enough" time to spend with them. Their sacrifices have been greatly appreciated.

To my advisor, Dr. Roy D. Dillon, I owe a special debt of gratitude for his expert guidance, encouragement and patience during my study. His interest in my professional growth and development are greatly appreciated.

I also express my appreciation to Dr. Laverne Barrett and Dr. Robert Florell for reviewing this thesis and for serving on my graduate committee.

I owe special thanks to Mike Adeline for rescuing me from a tight squeeze with my data analysis.

R.D.B.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Cooperative extension and vocational agriculture owe a great deal to Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia. It was Senator Smith who was instrumental in introducing legislation that provided for funding of each respective organization. In addition to funding, direction and purpose was outlined to a certain extent, in each act.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 was the first comprehensive legislation relating to agricultural extension work. The act stated, "Cooperative agricultural extension work shall consist of the giving of instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture ..." (12:29)

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, a national vocational education act, originally provided for the promotion and cooperation of the States in the promotion of education in agriculture. Although this act was later amended by the Vocational Education Act of 1963, it provided the impetus for vocational agriculture in the United States.

From these acts it can be concluded that vocational agriculture teachers and county extension agents share many of the same responsibilities and purposes. As Dillon states, "Both groups deal with youth and adults in production agriculture and agribusiness." (5:3) With this as their common goal, there should be a cooperative attitude that does not always exist.

According to Anderson, the Cooperative Extension Service is a resource under-utilized by teachers of vocational agriculture. He goes on to say that part of the reason for this is a lack of time on the
teacher's part. He projects the real reason to be "...a lack of cooperation." (1:55)

In a workshop on range management, conducted in 1976 by the Extension Service at Utah State University for vocational agriculture teachers, the goal of cooperation was achieved. As Long and Busby lament, "The success with this cooperative effort suggests that agricultural education cannot afford to allow Extension and vocational agriculture efforts to go their separate ways." (9:24)

This study was conducted in an effort to determine what factors influence the cooperative efforts between the county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. It is hoped that the data collected in this study will be used to further enhance cooperation between county agricultural extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

While it is known that many agents and agriculture teachers work closely on some activities there are still areas where duplication of services exist and no effort has been made to work together. As funding for government agencies continues to be reduced it is imperative that more cooperation occur. The problem studied was to determine what factors influenced the perception of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska?
PURPOSE OF STUDY

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the factors which county agents and vocational agriculture teachers perceived to influence the extent of cooperative arrangements and activities that exist in Nebraska. The following objectives were formulated to accomplish this purpose:

1. To determine the degree to which age influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

2. To determine the degree to which the college degree held influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

3. To determine the degree to which years of experience as a county agent or vocational agriculture teacher influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

4. To determine the degree to which the years in present position influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

5. To determine the degree to which average distance between work stations influenced perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

6. To make recommendations which might increase the cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations:

1. The validity of a research instrument of the "questionnaire" type was a limit of this study.
2. This study was limited to county agriculture extension agents and secondary vocational agriculture teachers in the state of Nebraska.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cooperation: A social process in which achievement of a goal by each group member facilitates good achievement by other groups' members.

County Extension Agent: For this study, the agriculture program leader of the County Extension Office, a part of the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service.

Vocational Agriculture: A high school program (grades 9, 10, 11 or 12) dealing with agriculture that has been approved for state and federal reimbursement by the Nebraska State Department of Vocational Education.

Vocational Agriculture Teacher: A person certified to teach Vocational Agriculture.
Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As tax dollars are stretched over broader areas, it becomes necessary for organizations with similar roles to work together and eliminate duplicated situations. Duplication of livestock judging clinics, tractor safety instruction programs for youth and management seminars for adults is a costly reality in time and dollars spent. Before these duplicate situations can be eliminated it is necessary to determine the extent of cooperative arrangements and activities that exist between county extension agents and teachers of vocational agriculture in the state of Nebraska.

As pointed out in Chapter I, the Cooperative Extension Service and vocational agriculture owe a great deal to Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia. Early legislative attempts contained provisions for both extension and vocational agriculture. Because of the difficulty in gaining support, in 1914 the provisions for extension work were split off and passed as the Smith-Lever Act. In 1917 the provisions for vocational agriculture were passed as the Smith-Hughes Act. As Hammonds points out:

"...Senator Smith was senior author of the Smith-Lever Act and the Smith-Hughes Act. Both acts were supported by about the same people, passed by sessions of Congress having about the same personnel, and signed by the same President. The two acts were intended to supplement each other."(6:307)

One only needs to read the general objectives set for both groups to realize they are very similar. Both place an emphasis on developing
the individual to his/her fullest potential as well as family relationships and community responsibility. With the legislative background and the similarity in the general objectives there should exist a strong bond of cooperation between the county agent and the vocational agriculture teacher.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 amended the Smith-Hughes Act to strengthen and improve vocational education as well as to expand opportunities in vocational education. Vocational agriculture benefitted from the act by the increased number of people who could now take advantage of vocational education. The act removed requirements for direct or supervised practices on the farm and provided opportunities for any occupation involving knowledge and skills in agriculture to take advantage of vocational agriculture courses. According to Phipps, "The Vocational Education Act of 1963 opened a whole new "box" of opportunities in vocational education in agriculture." (11:14)

The essence of agricultural extension and vocational agriculture is to provide an opportunity for learning about agriculture. Since these two groups are primarily concerned with preparing programs of agricultural education, Wood states, it is important they: "(1) provide people with an opportunity to learn, and (2) stimulate mental and physical activity that produces the desired learning." (17:1)

Both the county extension agent and the vocational agriculture teacher are in charge of working with adults and youth. In the case of the vocational agriculture teacher it is the daytime students (youth) and adults enrolled in evening or other types of adult classes. The
county extension agent works more with 4-H (youth) and the adult who is not enrolled in scheduled classes. With the very similar roles, why then do we so often hear of disparity between the two professions? McGhee and Summerhill believe it to be "...lack of understanding of one another's roles or functions, lack of individual communication between agents and teachers with common interests, and struggles for territorial rights." (15:7)

There are many opportunities for the vocational agriculture teacher and the county extension agent to cooperate. The exchange of reference and media materials is an important way for both individuals to keep up-to-date on changes in agriculture. (5) Dillon lists some areas that county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers are supporting each other's programs in Nebraska. These areas include:

1. Conducting tractor operation and safety courses on a county basis, with agent and teacher either jointly teaching, alternating in teaching, or agreeing that one of the two will conduct the program.

2. Training each other's judging teams. Planning within the county has allowed the agents and agriculture teachers to conduct practice sessions for both 4-H and FFA members at the same time.

3. Conducting judging contests simultaneously. Conducting county or area crop, land use, and livestock and poultry judging contests for both 4-H and FFA at the same time allowed more efficient and effective use of time, facilities, and personnel.

4. Helping judge each other's leadership and public speaking contests.

5. Assisting in the judging and evaluation of awards in each other's program.

6. Combining efforts in planning and carrying out the county fair exhibition program. (5)
It can be seen from this list of activities there is a certain amount of cooperation taking place between some county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. What are the factors which have influenced this cooperation in some counties while in other locations there exists competition between the two groups? Caldwell and Ward state, "Congeniality, cooperation and adequate communication should be the basis of working relationships and understanding between the two programs."(16)

A few studies have been conducted in other states dealing with cooperation at various levels and between various agencies. These studies have looked at interagency cooperation, cooperation with community colleges and cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

Omar conducted his study in Michigan in 1964 to investigate activities and factors in working relationships of county extension agents and teachers of vocational agriculture and to determine differences in opinions regarding these working relationships.(10)

In the findings, the extent to which activities were carried out varied among the agents and teachers as did their opinions with regard to the degree of involvement of the factors in their working relationships. The study indicated that the opinions of the teachers and agents varied significantly with regard to the following factors: (1) the other's personality, (2) degree of academic education, (3) similarity of educational specialization, (4) similarity of in-service training in technical subject matter, (5) difference of in-service training in technical subject matter, (6) similarity of in-service
training in teaching methods, (7) the other's experience in working with rural people, (8) the other's experience in the field of agriculture, (9) one's experience in the field of agriculture and (10) relationships between school administrators and county extension staff.

The agents and teachers' responses tended to indicate positive or neutral effects of all factors except for the intraorganizational factors, which were viewed to have a mostly negative effect.

No relationship was found between age, college degree achieved, and length of experience of the teachers and their opinions regarding the desirability of carrying out activities for implementing educational programs in agriculture. Having teachers and agents serve on each other's advisory committees indicated among the agents a significant relationship between background characteristics and opinions regarding the implementation of this activity. Agents who were older, had achieved a higher educational degree or had more experience, appeared to be more in favor of the activity than did younger agents.

Twenty implications, all of which support and encourage close working relationships between the two professional groups, were drawn from the findings.

In a 1974 study, Hansen identified and analyzed avenues of intrastate cooperation between three selected state agencies regarding overlapping responsibilities in educational programs beyond the normal high school level. To measure this, a nation-wide survey regarding joint agency involvements was conducted in each state regarding adult and continuing education (ACE), vocational and technical education (VTE), and community junior colleges (CJC).
In the findings, voluntarily arranged methods were preferred by the VTE and CJC while ACE agency directors preferred mandated avenues of interagency cooperation. Designated as most effective and preferred mode of cooperation was regular joint agency meetings.

Recognition of need, cooperative intent, agency flexibility, complementation of effort, ongoing cooperative processes and a reciprocally accepted common concern in meeting needs were seen as the criteria for the development of effective interagency cooperation.

Brooks, in a 1975 study, assessed organizational linkage between the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and selected related organizations at the county level. Organizational linkage was examined in relation to population, geographical proximity, county extension staff size, and tenure, education or age of county extension chairman. Another facet of the study dealt with the perceptions of county extension chairmans perceptions of linkage in regard to adequacy of linkage, inhibitors of linkage, ways to increase linkage, factors which have created linkage, and linkage now compared to five or ten years ago.

Findings indicated a considerable lack of agreement in the perception of linkage as viewed by the county extension chairmen and corresponding agency representatives. The highest level of agreement occurred on questions dealing with mutual program involvement. To some degree, agents with tenure of greater than ten years reported greater linkage than those with less tenure.

In related findings from answers to open ended questions it was indicated that effecting linkage relationships was too time consuming
and fear of losing agency identity were perceived to be the greatest hindrance to linkage.

Another study conducted in North Carolina assessed the current level of interagency cooperation between the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service and the North Carolina Community College System as perceived by county Extension chairmen and Community College System deans of instruction. (4)

Conclusions drawn from the responses to Cole's open-ended questions which are pertinent to this study were: (1) a majority of county extension chairmen and deans of instruction desired a higher level of interagency linkage than currently existed, (2) most of the interagency linkage currently observed was mechanical in nature, (3) cooperation has been tried on the basis of traditional programs and personnel, but neither agency has attempted to develop innovative approaches or packages to facilitate cooperative programming and (4) neither the Extension service or community colleges has developed plans for interagency linkage in their annual planning of objectives.

Conducted in 1979, Woods study (1) investigated the perceptions held by extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers about the process of cooperation in regard to planning and conducting agricultural education programs in New York State; (2) investigated the relationship of selected demographic characteristics and the opinions held by extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in regard to cooperative activities; (3) determined if differences in opinion existed among Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) and central school teachers of vocational agriculture in regard to cooperation and;
(4) synthesized a set of recommendations for increased cooperative efforts between the two agencies.

Woods findings indicated positive influence on cooperation by eighteen of his forty-four factors while only five of the factors proved to hinder or have a slight negative effect on cooperation. When considering the demographic factors of age, college degree held, county population, years in present position, vocational agriculture experience, county extension experience and school type only county population, extension experience and school type had any influence on the perceptions of cooperation between county extension and vocational agriculture.

SUMMARY

From the review of literature it can be seen that the roles of county extension and vocational agriculture are not only similar but meant to compliment each according to the original intent of the legislation introduced to provide for their existence. Why then do see that in many instances, cooperation is limited or totally lacking.

The limited amount of research which has been compiled on the topic of cooperation between the two organizations led the author to believe there existed a need for a study of this type to be conducted in each of the fifty states. With the current efforts to reduce the budgets of most government agencies, it becomes increasingly important that duplicate activities be reduced and that agencies responsible for conducting these activities work to utilize the publics money most efficiently.
This study was conducted in an effort to determine how certain factors influenced the perception of cooperation so that recommendations could be made which could increase the extent of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in the state of Nebraska.
Chapter III

THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree to which certain factors influenced the perception of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. This chapter describes the design, the population, the sample, and the methods used to collect the data.

HYPOTHESES

There are several factors which may have influenced the degree of perception of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. The following null hypotheses were developed to study the perceptions of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on age.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on college degree held.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on years of experience as a county agent or vocational agriculture teacher.
Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on years in present position.

Null Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on average distance between work stations.

Null Hypothesis 6

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on personal activities and factors.

Null Hypothesis 7

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in planning and conducting cooperative activities.

Null Hypothesis 8

There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in evaluation of cooperative activities.

POPULATION

The population consisted of all ninety county extension agents and all 140 secondary vocational agriculture teachers in the state of Nebraska. The population was identified from mailing lists provided by the Cooperative Extension Service and the Department of Agricultural Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
SELECTION OF SAMPLE

A random sample, consisting of forty-five (50%) county extension agents and seventy (50%) vocational agriculture teachers, was drawn from the population. Numbers were assigned to each individual on the respective mailing lists and a random number generation program was used to select fifty percent of each of the population components.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was one developed and utilized by Jeff Woods in completing a similar study conducted in New York state while he was a student at Cornell University. The first part of the questionnaire asked for certain demographic information which may or may not have an influence on cooperation. The second part is a list of activities or factors that may or may not influence cooperation. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree of influence each activity or factor has on cooperation. The scale used was as follows:

0 (--) Negative effect: retards cooperation
1 (-) Slight negative effect: hinders cooperation
2 (0) No effect
3 (+) Slight positive effect: increases cooperation
4 (++ Positive effect: promotes cooperation

On the scale, a 0 would indicate a negative effect: retards cooperation and a 4 would indicate a positive effect: promoting cooperation.

The original questionnaire prepared by Woods was validated by a group of state leaders in Agriculture Education and Cooperative Extension, a jury of educational and extension professionals, and a graduate seminar in Agricultural and Occupational Education at Cornell University.
PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION

The first step in the collection of data was to mail the questionnaire (Appendix A), with cover letter (Appendices B and C), to those county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers drawn in the random sample. The cover letter explained the purpose of the research and the importance of returning the completed questionnaire within the time allowed.

After ten days, a follow-up letter (Appendices D and E), second questionnaire and return envelope was sent asking those who had not returned the questionnaire to please take the time and complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed envelope. To those who had already returned the questionnaire, a letter (Appendix F) was mailed thanking them for their cooperation.

The questionnaire was color coded for easy identification of county extension agents' and vocational agriculture teachers' responses. In addition to color coding, number codes were used to identify the respondents within each group.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data were obtained from the mailed survey instrument from each respondent. This information was coded and entered into the computer at the University of Nebraska for analysis.

Frequency of responses, ranges, means and standard deviations were determined for the sample. Using the SPSSX program, a pooled variance mean was obtained which gave a T-value and related probability. This information was then used to determine if significance existed.
Chapter IV

FINDINGS

This study was concerned with identifying activities and factors which influenced the perception of cooperation between county agricultural extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska. Information for the study was obtained from randomly selected county agents and vocational agriculture teachers on a statewide basis.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the degree to which age influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
2. To determine the degree to which the college degree held influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
3. To determine the degree to which years of experience as a county agent or vocational agriculture teacher influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
4. To determine the degree to which the years in present position influenced the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
5. To determine the degree to which average distance between work stations influenced perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.
6. To make recommendations which might increase the cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

To study the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers, certain demographic information was obtained in regard to age, degree held, years of experience as a county agent and/or vocational agriculture teacher, years in present position and average distance between work stations.

Age of Respondents

Thirty-four county agents and sixty-one vocational agriculture teachers provided valid responses. This was an 87.1 percent response for the vocational agriculture teachers and a 75.6 percent response for the county agents. The frequency distribution by age is indicated in Table 1. Inspection of Table 1 shows that 30.5 percent of respondents were under 30 years of age, 29.4 percent were aged 31 to 40, 23.2 percent were between the ages of 41 and 50 and 16.9 percent were 51 years or older.

College Degree Held by Respondents

The type of college degree held by the respondents was surveyed to determine the degree of influence which it had on the perception of cooperation. Of the valid responses received more than fifty percent of all respondents held a master’s degree or higher. Of the sixty-one vocational agriculture teachers responding, 62.3 percent had a bachelor of science degree. The remaining 37.7 percent held a master’s degree or higher. Of the thirty-four county agents responding only 8.8 percent
held a bachelor of science degree with the remaining 91.2 percent holding a master's degree or higher. Table 2 indicates the distribution of the degree held by the respondents.

Table 1

DISTRIBUTION BY AGE OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 or younger</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 or older</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

DISTRIBUTION BY DEGREE HELD OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Held</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's or Higher</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years of Experience

Years of experience was surveyed as years in the teaching profession and years as a county agent. The data in Table 3 reflects
the distribution of the ninety-five respondents. Of the sixty-one vocational agriculture teachers responding 37.7 percent had ten or less years of experience, 34.4 percent had eleven to twenty years, and the remaining 27.9 percent had twenty-one or more years of experience teaching vocational agriculture.

The thirty-four county agents were separated into two groups, one group having only county agent experience while the second group had prior experience as a teacher of vocational agriculture before becoming a county agent. Of the twenty-four respondents without teaching experience 29.2 percent had ten or less years of experience as a county agent, 37.5 percent had eleven to twenty years of experience, and 33.3 percent had twenty-one or more years of experience.

Table 3

DISTRIBUTION BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A TEACHER OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE AND/OR COUNTY AGENT OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>10 or less</th>
<th>11-20</th>
<th>21 or more</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vo-Ag Teachers</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Agent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Agent with Teaching</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The group of county agents with vocational agriculture teaching experience had 50.0 percent of the agents with ten or less years of county agent experience, 40.0 percent with eleven to twenty years, and 10.0 percent with more than twenty-one years of experience.

Of the ten county extension agents who had prior vocational agriculture teacher experience eight agents had ten or less years of teaching experience, while two agents had eleven to twenty years of teaching experience prior to becoming county agents.

**Years in Present Position**

In Table 4 we see that 30.5 percent of the respondents were vocational agriculture teachers who had spent less than five years in the present position compared with 6.3 percent who were county agents. When we compared the percentage of respondents who had been in the present position for six to ten years we found that 13.7 percent were agriculture teachers and 13.7 percent were county agents. In the eleven to twenty year category 11.6 percent of the respondents were vocational agriculture teachers with 9.5 percent were county agents. The twenty-one or more years category there were 8.4 percent of the respondents who were vocational agriculture teachers with 6.3 percent as county agents.

**Distance Between Work Stations**

Table 5 reveals that 28.4 percent of the respondents were vocational agriculture teachers were located in the same community as their county agent while 11.6 percent were county agents who had a vocational agriculture program in the same community. For the category fifteen or less miles between work stations we find 12.6 percent of the
Table 4

DISTRIBUTION BY YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years, Present Position</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 or less</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

DISTRIBUTION BY DISTANCE BETWEEN WORK STATIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miles Between Work Stations Teachers</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>County Agents Percent</th>
<th>Total Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - same community</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 or less</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

respondents were vocational agriculture teachers with 8.4 percent county agents. We see that 20.0 percent of the respondents were vocational agriculture teachers with sixteen to thirty miles between work stations while 11.6 percent were county agents. In the over thirty miles between
The analysis of data involved cross-tabulating the position, either vocational agriculture teacher or county agent, with the age, degree held, years of experience as a vocational agriculture teacher and/or county agent, years in present position, distance between work stations, and the responses to the forty-five questions grouped according to personal, planning and conducting activities, and evaluation of activities. This method of analysis allowed for separate tests of interaction between position and each of the remaining items.

T-tests were run to determine if there was a significant difference in the responses by vocational agriculture teachers and county agents to the forty-five questions of the survey by age, degree held, years of experience, years in present position, and distance between work stations. Tests for significance in responses by vocational agriculture teachers and county agents to sub-scales were also performed. The first sub-scale consisted of questions 1-13 involving personal factors and activities. The second sub-scale, questions 14-34 dealt with factors involved in planning and conducting activities. The final sub-scale, questions 35-45 dealt with the evaluation of activities.
FINDINGS FOR NULL HYPOTHESES

Since the null hypothesis was used as a statistical frame of reference in the study, the results will consist of interpretation in terms of the null hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis 1

Null hypothesis 1 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on age.

The findings presented in Table 6 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between age and the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to age and perception of cooperation was accepted.

Table 6

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON AGE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>County Agents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or younger</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40</td>
<td>.0552</td>
<td>.0536</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50</td>
<td>.0578</td>
<td>.0536</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 or older</td>
<td>.0559</td>
<td>.0556</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Null Hypothesis 2**

Null hypothesis 2 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on college degree held.

The findings presented in Table 7 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between college degree held and the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to college degree held was accepted.

| Mean Scores, T-values, and Probability for Vocational Agriculture Teachers and County Agents Who Responded to a Survey of Factors Influencing the Perception of Cooperation in Nebraska, Based on College Degree Held. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|------|
| **Degree Held** | **Mean** | **Teachers** | **County Agents** | **T-value** | **Prob.** |
| Bachelor of Science | .0534 | .0547 | .19 | .847 |
| Masters or Higher | .0552 | .0544 | .51 | .612 |
| **Total (n)** | 61 | 34 |

**Null Hypothesis 3**

Null hypothesis 3 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on years of experience as a county agent or vocational agriculture teacher.

The findings presented in Table 8 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between vocational agriculture teachers,
county agents with prior vocational agriculture teaching experience, and county agents. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to years of experience and perception of cooperation was accepted.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ag. Teachers and County Agents w/ Teaching</td>
<td>.0541</td>
<td>.0574</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag. Teachers and All County Agents</td>
<td>.0541</td>
<td>.0544</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis 4

Null hypothesis 4 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on years in present position.

The findings presented in Table 9 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between years in present position and the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to years in present position and perception of cooperation was accepted.
Table 9

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in Position</th>
<th>Mean Scores Teachers</th>
<th>Mean Scores County Agents</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 or less</td>
<td>.0524</td>
<td>.0552</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10</td>
<td>.0537</td>
<td>.0551</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 20</td>
<td>.0559</td>
<td>.0506</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>.0584</td>
<td>.0577</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis 5

Null hypothesis 5 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on average distance between work stations.

The findings presented in Table 10 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between the average distance between work stations and the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to average distance between work stations and the perception of cooperation was accepted.

Null Hypothesis 6

Null hypothesis 6 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers based on personal activities and factors.
Table 10

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON AVERAGE DISTANCE BETWEEN WORK STATIONS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Distance</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>County Agents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-same community</td>
<td>.0543</td>
<td>.0556</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 15</td>
<td>.0551</td>
<td>.0530</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 30</td>
<td>.0535</td>
<td>.0541</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 or more</td>
<td>.0515</td>
<td>.0544</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings presented in Table 11 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationships personal factors and activities and the perception of cooperation. There was significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to personal activities and factors and the perception of cooperation was rejected.

Table 11

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON PERSONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACTORS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>County Agents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Factors</td>
<td>.1701</td>
<td>.1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With significance occurring at the .05 level for the sub-scale of personal factors and activities, t-tests were run on each of the thirteen factors included in the sub-scale. Table 11a presents a
Table 11a

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS 1-13 ON A SURVEY
OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Difference in age between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; teacher and Extension Agent.</td>
<td>2.131</td>
<td>1.941</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Difference in colleague's college degree(s).</td>
<td>2.148</td>
<td>2.029</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Difference in colleague's college major.</td>
<td>2.164</td>
<td>1.912</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.065</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Colleague's degree granted out of state.</td>
<td>2.033</td>
<td>1.882</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Colleague seeking promotion. (&quot;Glory seeking&quot;)</td>
<td>1.689</td>
<td>1.177</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Personality of colleague.</td>
<td>2.590</td>
<td>2.024</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Variation in total years experience as educators.</td>
<td>2.148</td>
<td>2.059</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Total years in present location.</td>
<td>2.557</td>
<td>2.324</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Having to take initiative in contacting colleague.</td>
<td>1.984</td>
<td>1.706</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>0.116</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Attitudes of colleagues.</td>
<td>2.541</td>
<td>2.235</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.199</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Failure to recognize that the younger teachers or agents have just as good abilities as those with experience.</td>
<td>1.869</td>
<td>1.500</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Awareness of colleague's local civic responsibilities or demands.</td>
<td>2.344</td>
<td>2.177</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.326</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Agreement on sources of technical information or who should be viewed as authorities; i.e., local veterinarian or UNL staff, magazine article or UNL staff, etc.</td>
<td>2.557</td>
<td>2.382</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.331</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
listing of the factors with mean scores for vocational agriculture teachers and county agents, T-value and probability.

After careful study of Table 11a we can see that three of the thirteen factors are significant. Question 5, "Colleague seeking promotion ("Glory seeking")." is highly significant at the .05 level with significance indicated at the .001 level.

Question 6, "Personality of colleague." also indicated that significance existed at the .05 level as did question 11, "Failure to recognize that the younger teacher or agents have just as good abilities as those with experience."

Null Hypothesis 7

Null hypothesis 7 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in planning and conducting activities.

The findings presented in Table 12 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship of planning and conducting activities to the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis for planning and conducting activities in relationship to the perception of cooperation was accepted.

Null Hypothesis 8

Null hypothesis 8 was: There is no significant difference in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in evaluation of cooperative activities.

The findings presented in Table 13 for this null hypothesis summarized the relationship between evaluation of cooperative activities and the perception of cooperation. There was no significance at the .05
Table 12

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON PLANNING AND CONDUCTING ACTIVITIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Conducting Activities</td>
<td>.1254</td>
<td>.1331</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13

MEAN SCORES, T-VALUES, AND PROBABILITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS AND COUNTY AGENTS WHO RESPONDED TO A SURVEY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION IN NEBRASKA, BASED ON EVALUATION OF COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>County Agents</th>
<th>T-value</th>
<th>Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Cooperative Activities</td>
<td>.2314</td>
<td>.2369</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total(n)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

level. Therefore, the null hypothesis relating to evaluation of cooperative activities to the perception of cooperation was accepted.
SUMMARY

Statement of Problem

The problem that was addressed in this study was to determine what factors influenced the perception of cooperation between county extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska.

Procedure

The questionnaire used in the study was developed and validated by Jeff Woods in a previous study conducted at Cornell University. The author modified it slightly to fit the research being completed.

The sample of county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska was randomly selected from all county agents and agriculture teachers in April 1986. A fifty percent sample was drawn from each population component providing for forty-five county agents and seventy vocational agriculture teachers to be surveyed for the study.

The data which was collected from each valid response was analyzed by computer to determine frequencies, means, T-values and probabilities.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions for this study generalize to county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska their perceptions of
cooperation as influenced by the factors or activities listed on the questionnaire.

Conclusion #1:

The first conclusion drawn is that demographic factors from the survey are not significant in influencing the perception of cooperation between vocational agriculture teachers and county agents in Nebraska.

The author felt age was not a factor because people no longer view age as a limiting factor in a person's ability to possess knowledge and skills which were once gained only through years of job related experience.

The highest degree held was not a significant factor, the author concluded because county agents in Nebraska are required to possess a master's degree before they can be hired. Vocational agriculture teachers are required by law to "earn" professional growth points to renew teaching certificates. Many teachers use graduate hours in lieu of growth points and are working on attaining graduate degrees.

The author felt years of experience was not indicated as a significant factor because an individual coming into a specific area will require a period of adjustment in which cooperation with the county agent or vocational agriculture teacher should nurture a growth of that cooperative spirit.

Years in present position does not take into consideration the years of experience or type of experience which the individual has when they assumed their current position. Therefore, it was concluded years in present position would not be a factor influencing perception of cooperation.
With modern transportation and communication methods, average distance between work stations would pose few problems in planning, conducting or evaluating most activities. Distance could prove to be a positive influence if county agents and vocational agriculture teachers are willing to assist with county-wide projects that could benefit teachers, agents and project patrons by reducing the miles which must be traveled.

**Conclusion #2:**

Of the three sub-scales used from the questionnaire, personal factors and activities, planning and conducting activities, and evaluation of activities, only the personal factors and activities indicated significance in influencing cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska.

The results of the survey indicated that cooperation was occurring and the factors or activities listed under the sub-scales planning and conducting cooperative activities and evaluation of cooperative activities would neither hinder nor influence that cooperation further.

The personal factors or activities listed on the first sub-scale indicated significance in the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers. The personal factors or activities are listed below:

1. Difference in age between "Vo Ag" teacher and Extension Agent.
2. Difference in colleague's college degree(s).
3. Difference in colleague's college major.
4. Colleague's degree granted out of state.
5. Colleague seeking promotion. ("Glory seeking")
6. Personality of colleague.
7. Variation in total years of experience as educators.
8. Total years in present location.
9. Having to take initiative in contacting colleague.
10. Attitudes of colleagues.
11. Failure to recognize that the younger teachers or agents have just as good abilities as those with experience.
12. Awareness of colleagues' local civic responsibilities or demands.
13. Agreement on sources of technical information or who should be viewed as authorities; i.e., local veterinarian or UNL staff, magazine article or UNL staff, etc.

Of the thirteen factors listed, three indicated significance at the .05 level with one of the three indicating significance at the .001 level. Factor #5: Colleague seeking promotion. ("Glory seeking"), indicated significance at the .001 level. It was concluded this factor was significant because the organizational structure of the extension service and the fact most vocational agriculture departments in Nebraska are single teacher departments does not allow for promotion. Most recognition is given for getting a name in the paper or by awards from other organizations. Because of this, the cooperative relationship can be severely strained if either the agent or teacher attempts to take the major share of the credit for sponsoring an activity.

Factor #6: Personality of colleague, also indicated significance at the .05 level. The author concluded that as with any situation where people are involved there are going to be personality conflicts and county extension work and vocational agriculture are no exception.

Factor #11: Failure to recognize that the younger teachers or agents have just as good abilities as those with experience, indicated significance at the .05 level. While years of experience was not a significant factor in itself, the author concluded younger teachers and agents are often asked to perform less critical tasks to prove themselves to more experienced personnel.
Six of the remaining ten factors deal directly with information that was shown insignificant when considered in the demographic data analysis. Two additional factors can be closely related to personality of colleague yet indicated no significance at the .05 level. The remaining factors are independent of any previous material and indicated no significance at the .05 level.

The author concluded the significance indicated by the personal factors is a direct result of the personality of the county agent and vocational agriculture teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the findings of this research and the judgements of the author, the following recommendations are offered with reference to the factors which influence the perception of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska:

1. A summary of this study should be made available to all county agents and vocational agriculture teachers concerned with perceptions of cooperation between the two groups. This could be beneficial to all interested parties by dispelling the myths why county agents and vocational agriculture teachers have difficulty cooperating.

2. It is recommended that county agents and vocational agriculture teachers give serious consideration to the personal factors or activities where significance was found to determine if their attitudes reflect the findings of the study.
3. Further research needs to be conducted in the area of personal factors to determine why county agents and vocational agriculture teachers view the factors negatively.

4. Further research needs to be conducted to determine if proximity to a post-secondary institution with an agricultural program and/or extension research center has any effect on the perception of cooperation.

5. It would be of value to follow up this study with a similar research effort in four or five years to determine if changes in the perceptions of cooperation between county agents and vocational agriculture teachers in Nebraska have occurred.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Questionnaire
Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE

A study of the cooperative relationships between Cooperative Extension agents and teachers of vocational agriculture in planning and conducting instructional programs in Nebraska.

INSTRUCTIONS

Most items in this questionnaire require only a check mark [✓] to give your answer. Answers requiring brief statements may be written with pen or pencil. Please answer all items.

I. Personal Characteristics:

1. Your age:
   - [ ] (1) 24 or younger
   - [ ] (2) 25-30
   - [ ] (3) 31-35
   - [ ] (4) 36-40
   - [ ] (5) 41-45
   - [ ] (6) 46-50
   - [ ] (7) 51+

2. What is the highest degree you hold? (Check one)
   - [ ] (1) B.S.
   - [ ] (2) M.S.
   - [ ] (3) Ph.D.
   - [ ] (4) Other (Specify)

3. Your total years experience as a vocational agriculture teacher:
   - [ ] (1) 0
   - [ ] (2) 5 or less
   - [ ] (3) 6-10
   - [ ] (4) 11-15
   - [ ] (5) 16-20
   - [ ] (6) 21+

**EVEN IF YOU CHECKED 0 YEARS IN QUESTION 3, PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE**

4. Your total years experience as an agricultural extension agent:
   - [ ] (1) 0
   - [ ] (2) 5 or less
   - [ ] (3) 6-10
   - [ ] (4) 11-15
   - [ ] (5) 16-20
   - [ ] (6) 21+

**EVEN IF YOU CHECKED 0 YEARS IN QUESTION 4, PLEASE COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE**

5. Years in present position:
   - [ ] (1) 5 or less
   - [ ] (2) 6-10
   - [ ] (3) 11-15
   - [ ] (4) 16-20
   - [ ] (5) 21+

6. Distance (in miles) between school and county extension office:
   - [ ] (1) 0 - same community
   - [ ] (2) 16 - 30
   - [ ] (3) 15 or less
   - [ ] (4) 30+
II. Cooperative Programming Areas:

In this section, items termed activities or factors are listed which may, or may not, affect working relationships between Cooperative Extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers.

Directions: Please respond to each of the following statements by indicating the effect it has on cooperation between "Vo Ag" teachers and Cooperative Extension agents in planning and conducting instructional programs.

0 (--): Negative effect: retards cooperation
1 (-): Slight negative effect: hinders cooperation
2 (0): No effect
3 (+): Slight positive effect: increases cooperation
4 (++): Positive effect: promotes cooperation

Circle a number from 0 through 4 on the scale for each activity or factor, thereby indicating the relative importance regarding cooperation in planning and conducting instructional programs.

As an example, the following response would indicate the agent or the vocational agriculture teacher feels the activity of a joint meeting among state directors has a positive effect: promotes cooperation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities or Factors</th>
<th>Effect on Cooperation Between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; Teacher and Cooperative Extension Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A joint meeting among state directors.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The definition of a colleague will be helpful as you attempt to respond to the questionnaire: Colleague - An associate engaged in the agricultural education profession, implying that the vocational agriculture teacher is a colleague of the Cooperative Extension agent, and vice versa.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities or Factors</th>
<th>Effect on Cooperation Between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; Teacher and Cooperative Extension Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Difference in age between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; teacher and Extension agent.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Difference in colleague's college degree(s).</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Difference in colleague's college major.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Colleague's degree granted out of state.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Colleague seeking promotion. (&quot;Glory seeking&quot;)</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Personality of colleague.</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities or Factors</td>
<td>Effect on Cooperation Between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; Teacher and Cooperative Extension Agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Variation in total years experience as educators.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Total years in your present location.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Having to take initiative in contacting colleague.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Attitudes of colleagues.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Failure to recognize that the younger teachers or agents have just as good abilities as those with experience.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Awareness of colleagues' local civic responsibilities or demands.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Agreement on sources of technical information or who should be viewed as authorities; i.e., local veterinarian or UNL staff, magazine article or UNL staff, etc.</td>
<td>(-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planning and Conducting

<p>| 14. Attitude of both colleagues in wanting to be helpful to each other.                | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 15. Both agencies (&quot;Vo Ag&quot; and Extension) wanting to help the community to the fullest, regardless of where the credit goes. | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 16. One agency offering its services to the other.                                    | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 17. Willingness to think and plan on a broad scope.                                  | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 18. Lack of a cooperative relationship between administrators.                       | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 19. Lack of definite procedures for cooperatively planning and conducting programs.   | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 20. Recognition of the complementary roles of &quot;Vo Ag&quot; and Extension.                 | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 21. Change in the need and demands posed by learners in the county.                   | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 22. Consulting colleague's special abilities and knowledge in problem solving.        | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 23. Sharing the responsibility for publicity of education programs.                   | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 24. Exchanging printed and duplicated materials or other educational tools.           | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |
| 25. Conducting joint demonstration projects or county field days.                    | (-) 0 (-) 1 (+) 2 (++) 3 (++++) 4                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities or Factors</th>
<th>Effect on Cooperation Between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; Teacher and Cooperative Extension Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. Discussing community needs pertaining to education in agriculture.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Willingness to serve a portion or all of the county residents.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Serving as consultants (in an advisory capacity) on each other’s advisory councils.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Attitude toward the importance of fairs and shows as educational activities.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Working together cooperatively at county fairs.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Planning and conducting educational meetings, contests, tours, etc.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. The views passed down from state levels in regard to cooperation.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Influence of program committees or advisory councils.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Difference in Extension and &quot;Vo Ag&quot; instructional methods.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Effect on Cooperation Between &quot;Vo Ag&quot; Teacher and Cooperative Extension Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35. Scheduling joint meetings to cooperatively plan and evaluate activities.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Lack of clarity as to the function of both agencies as prescribed by Smith-Lever and Vocational Education Acts.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Differences in goals and objectives in youth programs (4-H, FFA).</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Differences in goals and objectives in adult programs.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Working together with youth programs (Joint planning, activities, etc.).</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Working together with adult programs (Joint planning, activities, etc.).</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Working out standards and criteria for evaluation of agricultural education within the county.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Discussing factors affecting failure or success of agricultural education programs in county.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Publicizing results of effective agricultural education programs in the county.</td>
<td>0  1  2  3  4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Activities or Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Degree of understanding of colleague's overall program goals and objectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Distance that must be traveled between schools and county extension office.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Other Factors

You may or may not know of some other extremely important activities or factors which would tend to affect cooperation. Please list below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND COOPERATION.

PLEASE MAIL THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED TO:

Robert Boettcher  
Rural Route 2, Box 155  
Neligh, NE 68756
APPENDIX B

Letter of Explanation

and

Request for County Agent Participation
Appendix B

May 12, 1986

Dear

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire concerned with cooperative relationships between you and the vocational agriculture instructor(s) in your county.

The Nebraska State Cooperative Extension Service and vocational agriculture are the two primary agencies concerned with the preparation of agricultural education programs in the state. From this study I hope to compile a list of incentives and deterrents which will be useful to you, as well as vocational agriculture instructors and administrators in planning future cooperative educational ventures in agriculture.

In planning this study, I have worked with personnel in the Cooperative Extension Service and the Agricultural Education Department of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Both departments have given the project their approval and feel it will be an asset in future program planning.

Your completed questionnaire is necessary to complete this project. Please be as frank as possible and return the completed questionnaire promptly; individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert Boettcher
APPENDIX C

Letter of Explanation

and

Request for Vocational Agriculture Teacher Participation
Appendix C

May 12, 1986

Dear

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire concerned with cooperative relationships between you and the county agricultural agent in your county.

The Nebraska State Cooperative Extension Service and vocational agriculture are the two primary agencies concerned with the preparation of agricultural education programs in the state. From this study I hope to compile a list of incentives and deterrents which will be useful to you, as well as vocational agriculture instructors and administrators in planning future cooperative educational ventures in agriculture.

In planning this study, I have worked with personnel in the Agricultural Education Department and the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Both departments have given the project their approval and feel it will be an asset in future program planning.

Your completed questionnaire is necessary to complete this project. Please be as frank as possible and return the completed questionnaire promptly; individual responses will be kept strictly confidential.

Thank you for your valuable time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert Boettcher
APPENDIX D

Follow-up Letter to County Agents
Appendix D

May 20, 1986

Dear

Ten days ago you received a questionnaire seeking information about working relationships between county agriculture extension agents and vocational agriculture teachers. I am aware this is a very busy time of year and you have probably not had time to respond.

You may recall that the study has the approval and support of leaders in both the Cooperative Extension Service and Agricultural Education.

Your completed questionnaire is very important to this study. Another questionnaire along with a self addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it in the envelope provide.

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Boettcher

Enclosures
APPENDIX E

Follow-up Letter to Vocational Agriculture Teachers
Appendix E

May 20, 1986

Dear

Two weeks ago you received a questionnaire seeking information about working relationships between vocational agriculture teachers and county agriculture extension agents. I am aware this is a very busy time of year and you have probably not had time to respond.

You may recall that the study has the approval and support of leaders in both Agriculture Education and Cooperative Extension Service.

Your completed questionnaire is very important to this study. Another questionnaire along with a self addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it in the envelope provide.

Thank you for your time and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Boettcher

Enclosures
APPENDIX F

Thank You Letter for All Participants
Appendix F

May 20, 1986

MEMORANDUM

TO: Survey respondents

FROM: Robert Boettcher

I would like to THANK YOU for completing and returning the questionnaire concerning work relationships between vocational agriculture teachers and county agriculture extension agents so promptly. I am aware that now is a very busy time for all of us and the fact that you took the time to complete the questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

If I can be of assistance on any matters in the future please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Again, thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Boettcher