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Orientation of Research Scientists Towards Research Work in Gujarat Agricultural University

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ABSTRACT

The quality and quantity of the research work carried out by the scientists are mainly depending on the attitude of the scientists towards research work. In all, 60 scientists working as head of department/station/project/scheme in Gujarat Agricultural University were studied through mailed questionnaire. The scale developed for the purpose was administered (Patel A. A. 1993). The results indicated that majority (70.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of attitude towards their research work. It also revealed that among all characteristics, personal characteristics viz., age and academic qualification of heads, job related characteristics viz., cadre, total experience and experience as research head, organisational characteristics viz., experimental/station climate and office/research facilities and socio-psychological characteristics viz., workload, job involvement and achievement motivation had positive significant relationship with their attitude towards research work. Off- campus situation and job stress negatively correlated with the attitude of research scientists towards the research work.

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INTRODUCTION

Without having strong research base, it is not possible to increase agricultural production and also reduce poverty, stabilize prices and supplies. Gujarat Agricultural University has been entrusted with triple functions of promoting agricultural education, research and extension education in the State. The considerable emphasis has been given on expanding its research activities so as to enable the scientists to tackle the production constraints faced by the cultivators in the State. Research scientist working as head of department/station/ project/scheme plays a vital role in research work done at different research stations. He has to perform many research management functions. He has to discuss problems, of his co-workers with an active interest. He has to provide maximum help and encouragement to his co-workers. He has to encourage for team work in the department for research tasks. He has to initiate new research activities. Hence, to a considerable extent, the success of overall research done by GAU largely depends on the attitude of the heads of the department/ station/project/scheme towards thier research work. Therefore, the present study was conducted to explore the attitude of the research scientists working as head of the department/station/project/scheme in GAU towards their research work.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Gujarat Agricultural University has about 75 independently working agricultural research departments/stations/projects/schemes. These all departments/stations/projects/schemes were selected for the study purpose. However, few independent research departments/stations/ projects/schemes were not included in the study as their heads were below Assistant Research Scientists cadre. Thus, finally 69 independent research departments/stations/ projects/ schemes of the GAU were selected for the study purpose. The heads of selected 69 departments/ stations/ projects/schemes were considered as respondents for the study. However, during the study the complete responses were received from only 60 out of 69 research departments/stations/projects/ schemes. The data were collected by mailing questionnaire to each head by name with self-addressed stamped envelope. For measuring the attitude of the heads towards research work, the scale developed for the purpose was administered to heads on a five point continuum with categories, strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The scores assigned to these categories were 5 to 1 for positive statements and 1 to 5 for negative statements. The scores obtained by respondents were summed up and based on the mean and standard deviation, the heads were categorised into three groups as low (Mean-S. D.), medium (Mean ± S. D.) and high (Mean + S. D.).

Coefficient of correlation test was applied to find out the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data (Table 1) revealed that majority (70.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of attitude towards research work followed by low (16.67 per cent) and high (13.33 per cent) level of attitude towards research work.

Relationship between different characteristics

Personal Characteristics : The data presented in Table 2 indicates that out of five personal characteristics, age and academic qualifications of heads were significantly correlated with their attitude towards research work. Such findings may be due to the fact that background/knowledge ragarding research work may increase with increase in age and academic qualifications which may lead to favourable attitude.

TABLE 1

Distribution of research scientists according to their attitude towards research work.

N = 60

Attitude	*Frequency*	*Per cent*
Low level attitude	10	16.67
Medium level attitude	42	70.00
High level attitude	8	13.33
Total	60	100.00

TABLE 2

Relationship between different characteristics of Research Scientists working as head of the department/station/project/scheme in GAU and their attitude towards research work.

N = 60

Relationship	*Coefficient of correlation*
A. **Personal characteristics**	
Age and attitude	.31641*
Academic qualification and attitude	.36165*
Family size and attitude	.18452
Belonging state and attitude	.23140
Health and attitude	.19810
B. **Job related characteristics**	
Cadre and attitude	.44747*
Total experience and attitude	.44927*
Experience as a research head and attitude	.35135*
Inservice training received and attitude	-.07517
C. **Organizational characteristics**	
Campus situation and attitude	-.19500
Span of control and attitude	.16903
Research experiments to be conducted and attitude	.31590*
Interpersonal communication and attitude	.29082*
Perception for departmental/station climate and attitude	.26495
Perception for grant facilities for research material and attitude	.07639
Office/Research facilities and attitude	.41552*
Sociopsychological characteristics	
Perception for workload and attitude	-.42977*
Job involvement and attitude	.29432*
Job stress and attitude	-.35963*
Achievement motivation and attitude	.34941*

NS = Nonsignificant at 0.05 level

DF = 58

* = Significant at 0.05 level.

Job related characteristics : Among job related characteristics, cadre, total experience and experience as a research head had significant association with the attitude of head, towards the research work, whereas inservice training received and absence at headquarters had no association with thier attitude. It implies that as cadre upgrades the attitude of head towards the research work increases. Total experience and experience as a research head also positively influenced the attitude of heads towards research work.

Off campus situation had negative and non-significant relationship with attitude of the heads. Though the finding was negatively nonsignificant. It indicated that on campus situation increases the attitude of the heads. This might be due to the fact that on campus station/department/project/scheme had more availability of facilities as compared to off campus, which may develop favourable disposition of the heads.

Organizational characteristics : In respect of organizational characteristics it was found that attitude of heads towards research work had positive significant relationship with research experiements to be conducted, inter-personal communication, departmental/station climate and office/research facilities. This might be due to facts that work/physical facilities positively affect the mentality of the person.

Psychological characteristics : In case of psychological characteristics, job involvement and achievement motivation had positive significant relationship with the attitude of heads towards research work. Whereas Job stress had negative and significant relationship with the attitude of heads towards research work. These results are in line with those of Herzberg *et al.* (1959) and England (1971).

The probable reason for this might be that job involved and achievement motivated head considered his research work as an important part of his life and he has affinity with it which resulted in his favourable attitude, whereas the heads experiencing different degrees of job stress fall in depressing condition and take less interest in his research work.

In general majority of the research scientists working as head of department/ station/project/scheme in Gujarat Agricultural University were in the medium level of attitude. Hence, there is a scope to develop favourable attitude of the scientist through improvement in academic qualifications inter personal communication, departmental/station climate, office/research facilities, job involvement, etc.

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