

PERSONALITY TRAITS OF THE STUDENT TEACHING
PERSONNEL AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY*

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Vocational education in agriculture serves society and individuals through various types of educational programs. It prepares youth for farming and off-farm agricultural occupations. The rapid changes in both production agriculture and agriculture related business have created a demand for a new type of agricultural education in the public school system. This, in turn, has created an increasing awareness among teacher educators of the need to prepare vocational agriculture teachers with an additional emphasis on career development and social competence. It is becoming evident that the effectiveness of vocational agriculture programs depends not only on the technical skills of the vocational agriculture teachers but also on their ability to develop leadership and social skills in the students.

The future of the vocational agriculture teaching profession depends to a great extent upon the quality of the professional character of the cooperating and as well as the student teachers who have been jointly identified as the student teaching personnel for this study. The task of these teaching personnel is not only to transform young human beings into a creative work force, but also, to help in the development of such qualities as poise, self-assurance, maturity, responsibility, self-acceptance, tolerance, and self-control in them. The new dimensions of voca-

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tional Education in agriculture demand high quality teachers with pleasing personalities.

This study was an attempt to measure eighteen personality traits of the student teachers and the cooperating teachers who supervised them during the 1969-1970 school year in Oklahoma and to determine any relationship between these traits and selected professional and socio-economic variables. Eighty student teachers and thirty-eight cooperating teachers were administered the California Psychological Inventory and questionnaires designed to collect the selected professional and socio-economic information. The following are the scales included in the California Psychological Inventory (CPI) and their purposes.

1. Do (Dominance) to assess factors of leadership ability, dominance, persistence, and social initiative.
2. Cs (Capacity for Status) to serve as an index of an individual's capacity for status (not his actual or achieved status). The scale attempts to measure the personal qualities and attributes which underlie and lead to status.
3. Sy (Sociability) to identify persons of outgoing, sociable, participative temperament.
4. Sp (Social Presence) to assess factors such as a poise, spontaneity, and self-confidence in personal and social interaction.
5. Sa (Self-Acceptance) to assess factors such as a sense of personal worth, self-acceptance and capacity for independent thinking and action.
6. Wb (Sense of Well-Being) to identify persons who minimize their worries and complaints, and who are relatively free from self-doubt and disillusionment.
7. Re (Responsibility) to identify persons of conscientious, responsible, and dependable disposition and temperament.

8. So (Socialization) to indicate the degree of social maturity, integrity, and rectitude which the individual has attained.
9. Sc (Self-Control) to assess the degree and adequacy of self-regulation and self-control and freedom from impulsivity and self-centeredness.
10. To (Tolerance) to identify persons with permissive, accepting, and non-judgmental social beliefs and attitudes.
11. Gi (Good Impression) to identify persons capable of creating a favorable impression, and who are concerned about how others react to them.
12. Cm (Communality) to indicate the degree to which an individual's reactions and responses correspond to the modal ("common") pattern established for the inventory.
13. Ac (Achievement via Conformance) to identify those factors of interest and motivation which facilitate achievement in any setting where conformance is a positive behavior.
14. Ai (Achievement via Independence) to identify those factors of interest and motivation which facilitate achievement in any setting where autonomy and independence are positive behaviors.
15. Ie (Intellectual Efficiency) to indicate the degree of personal and intellectual efficiency which the individual has attained.
16. Py (Psychological-Mindedness) to measure the degree to which the individual is interested in, and responsive to, the inner needs, motives, and experiences of others.
17. Fx (Flexibility) to indicate the degree of flexibility and adaptability of a person's thinking and social behavior.

18. Fe (Femininity) to assess the masculinity or femininity of interests. (High scores indicate more feminine interests, low scores more masculine.)

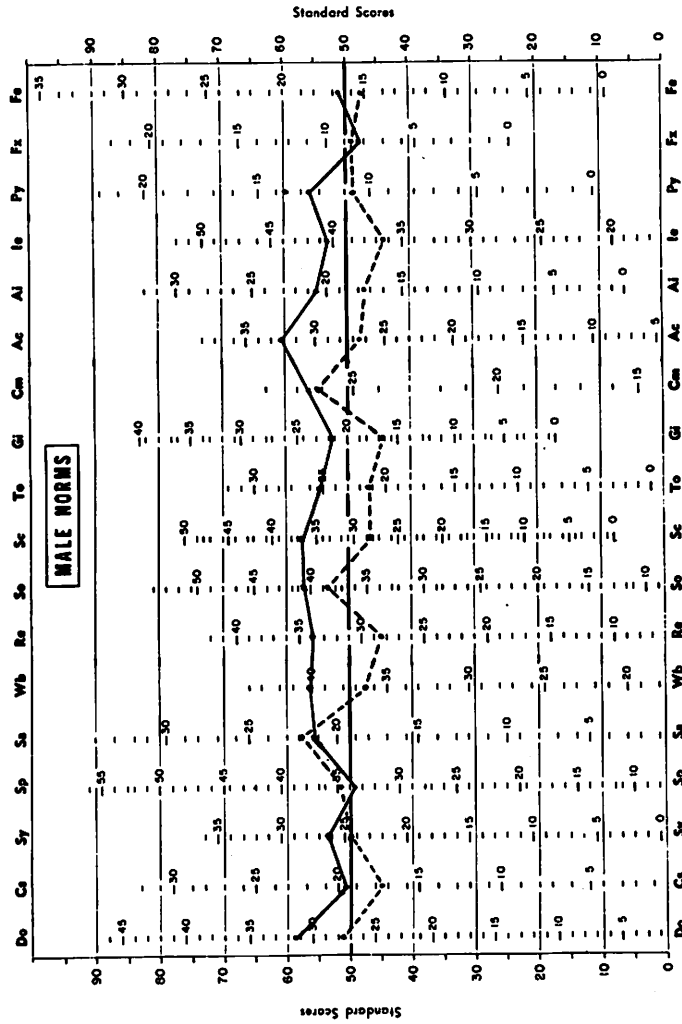
The questionnaires were designed to obtain information about work experience, education, age, family status, high school activities, college activities, professional activities, father's occupation and education, and place of living.

Student Teachers Compared to Cooperating Teachers

The standard mean scores shown in Figure I reveal that the cooperating teachers scored above the established CPI norms for all traits except Social Presence and Flexibility. Student teacher standard mean scores were above the CPI norm only in the traits Dominance, Social Presence, Self-Acceptance, Socialization, and Communality. In comparison to each other, the cooperating teachers scored higher than the student teachers in all traits except Social Presence, Self-Acceptance and Flexibility. The cooperating teachers' mean scores remained within one standard deviation above the CPI norm except for Social Presence and Flexibility, which were very slightly below the norm. Though the student teachers as a group scored lower than the cooperating teachers in almost all traits, their mean score line remained within one-half standard deviation below the established CPI norms.

As a group the cooperating teachers appear to be effective both socially and academically. The total nature of the profile of the cooperating teachers compared to the student teachers indicated superior leadership ability, social maturity, better interpersonal relationships, and higher intellectual efficiency. However, the student teachers profile closely approximated the profile of the cooperating teachers, if somewhat lower, indicating they were functioning somewhat lower but along the same lines as the cooperating teachers. The student teachers were functioning slightly higher in Social Presence, Self-Acceptance and Flexibility. This indicated they were somewhat more flexible, outgoing, ambitious and masculine in character than the cooperating teachers. Considering the

FIGURE I. MEAN PROFILES OF COOPERATING AND STUDENT TEACHERS' PERSONALITY TRAITS ON THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY



KEY

- = Cooperating Teachers
- - - = Student Teachers

mean score line of student teachers in relation to CPI norms, it seemed that they had developed moderate social skills but were somewhat weak in intellectual and academic drives. Conversely, the cooperating teachers appeared to be effective both socially and intellectually. Further, as a group the cooperating teachers were found to be more planful, persuasive, independent and better leaders.

Standard deviations are shown in Table I and indicate the amount of variability within each group for the different traits. The cooperating teachers showed less variability overall than did the student teachers. The cooperating teachers showed the greatest variability in Social Presence, Good Impression, and Flexibility. They showed the least variability in Responsibility, Socialization, Achievement via Conformance, Achievement via Independence and Femininity. This seemed to indicate that the cooperating teachers were more nearly alike as a group than the student teachers and were similar in their functioning on the different personality traits. The student teachers indicated the most variability in the traits Dominance, Social Presence, Sense of Well-Being, Good Impression, Achievement via Conformance and Intellectual Efficiency. They showed least variability in Achievement via Independence, Psychological-Mindedness, Flexibility, and Femininity. It would be expected that student teachers would exhibit more variability than cooperating teachers who had many years teaching experience and were more mature.

Relationships of Personality Scores to Professional and Socio-Economic Variables

As indicated by their CPI scores, the student teaching personnel in general, as advanced in age and earned higher academic degrees, tended to be more planful and confident in their work. The teaching personnel with previous leadership experience, tended to be more independent and persuasive in character. The married personnel were found to have more poise and self-confidence in personal and social interactions. Cooperating teachers and those teachers who had graduate work experience, and also those who had mostly lived in small cities, tended to be

TABLE I
STANDARD SCORE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR OKLAHOMA STUDENT TEACHERS AND COOPER-
ATING TEACHERS ON THE DIFFERENT TRAITS OF
THE CALIFORNIA PSYCHOLOGICAL INVENTORY

CPI Traits	Student Teachers		Cooperating Teachers	
	Mean	S. D.	Mean	S. D.
Dominance	51.68	11.07	58.53	8.71
Capacity for Status	44.69	9.64	50.53	8.57
Sociability	49.53	9.01	53.26	7.46
Social Presence	51.33	10.79	49.16	10.64
Self-Acceptance	57.51	9.89	55.24	7.71
Sense of Well-Being	47.44	12.16	56.29	7.59
Responsibility	44.36	9.35	55.95	6.48
Socialization	53.60	9.54	56.68	6.09
Self-Control	46.98	9.53	56.97	8.38
Tolerance	46.49	9.39	54.61	8.96
Good Impression	44.81	10.32	53.13	9.78
Communality	54.10	9.40	56.47	7.94
Achievement via Conformance	48.03	10.50	59.89	6.47
Achievement via Independence	47.45	8.11	54.71	7.10
Intellectual Efficiency	43.75	10.07	52.32	7.63
Psychological-Mindedness	49.23	8.02	56.00	7.93
Flexibility	49.18	8.53	47.63	11.03
Femininity	46.68	7.25	51.55	7.10

more ambitious, enterprising and free from self-doubts. A strongly positive correlation was found to exist between age and Sense of Well-Being. Similar correlation was found between age and responsibility.

The student teaching personnel who had mostly lived on rural farms or ranches, tended to be more alert to ethical and moral issues. Teachers who had higher academic performance, tended to be the persons creating more favorable impressions in social interaction. Teachers with previous leadership experience and higher formal education tended to be more effective in intellectual affairs and also more interested and responsive to the inner needs and motives of others. The student teachers were found to be more outgoing, aggressive and masculine in interests than the cooperating teachers. The student teaching personnel who had high grade point averages in their undergraduate study programs, were found to score higher on the CPI traits, Responsibility, Socialization, Achievement via Conformance and Achievement via Independence. This indicated that the student teaching personnel who had high grade point averages tended to be more planful, conscientious, responsible, sociable, cooperative, intelligent, insightful and organized.

The professional and socio-economic variables which showed the greatest relationship to the personality traits were college extracurricular activity, educational level attained, age, marital status, size of family, and place lived. Age, marital status, and educational level attained are related to the greatest number of the variables indicating that perhaps these three factors might have the greatest influence on the trait scores. College extracurricular activities, size of family and place lived were related to a lesser number of variables but still indicated an influence.

Summary

What do these findings say to us as teacher educators and teachers of agriculture? Perhaps it indicates there may be some personality traits which are important for teachers of agriculture to possess. We look at our coop-

erating teachers as our "model" teachers after which we would like our student teachers to pattern themselves. This study has been an attempt to measure certain personality traits of these cooperating teachers and compare the same traits in our student teachers to them. The similar functioning at a lower level on most of the traits might indicate that even during student teaching these traits begin to show and might be measured at that time as an indication of the future functioning on these traits as a teacher.

The relationship between the personality traits and the professional and socio-economic variables could perhaps be an indication of factors related to personality development and factors to be looked for in the background of effective teachers. The factors considered in this study may not be the important factors to consider but perhaps they give us an indication of other factors we should consider.

Some of the questions left unanswered are whether personality trait scores can be used as a predictor of teacher effectiveness; how stable personality trait scores are and how aging affects them; what the associated professional and socio-economic variables are that correlate highly with these personality traits.

This study is but a glimpse of light in the still dark forest of the unknown. What importance measures of personality traits and their related variables can have in teacher education remains to be accomplished through further studies and the use of the information in this study.

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