

VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF THE ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND
THE FIRST-YEAR INSERVICE
TRAINING PROGRAM

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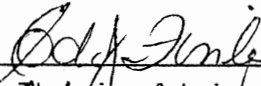
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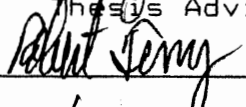
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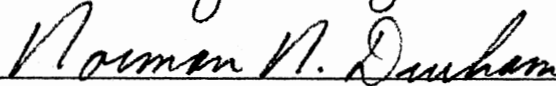
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Entry-Year Assistance Program (EYAP) and the First-Year InService Training Program are orchestratal attempts at improving the quality of vocational agriculture (Vo-Ag) teachers in Oklahoma. The First-Year InService Training Program was set up to enhance the beginning Vo-Ag teacher's capabilities in his/her subject area through workshops and educational sessions. These workshops and sessions are conducted by personnel from departments according to the subject area each teacher is licensed to teach and each licensed teacher is required to attend these sessions.

The EYAP was implemented by the Oklahoma Teacher Reform Act of 1980, House Bill 1706 (Draper, 1980). The act proposed to improve the quality of teachers in accredited schools through incorporating additional licensing and certification requirements.

The licensed teacher must participate in the EYAP during his/her initial year of teaching in an accredited school, as stated in House Bill 1706. The Entry-Year Teacher (EYT) is under the guidance and assistance of an Entry-Year Assistance Committee (EYAC) made up of an administrator, teacher educator and consulting teacher. The

EYAC is to provide guidance and assistance to the EYT in the following areas: classroom management, professionalism, human relations, and teaching and assessment. The EYAC critiques the teaching performance of the EYT and makes recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding certification.

Near the completion of the EYT's first year of teaching, the EYAC is required to make one of the following recommendations:

1. Recommendation for certification
2. Recommendation for second year in the EYAP
3. Recommendation for non-certification at the conclusion of the second year of the EYAP

(Handbook for Entry-Year Assistance Program, 1983)

Statement of the Problem

Since the EYAP and First-Year InService Training Program are aimed at improving new teachers in Oklahoma, it was deemed necessary to collect, analyze, and report data as a part of a longitudinal study which would reflect the nature and extent of success of the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the First-Year vocational agriculture teachers' perceptions of the Oklahoma EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Objectives

To accomplish the purpose it was necessary to accomplish the following:

1. To determine whether or not the Entry-Year Teacher received the needed assistance from the Entry-Year Assistance Committee.

2. To determine who assisted the Entry-Year Teacher the most during the Entry-Year of teaching.

3. To determine how important the Entry-Year Teacher perceived the Entry-Year Assistance Program regarding the teacher's first year of teaching.

4. To determine whether the Entry-Year Assistance Program was or was not important regarding the teacher's first year of teaching.

5. To determine whether or not first year teachers favor the continuance of the Entry-Year Assistance Program.

6. To determine the major strengths and/or problems concerning the Entry-Year Assistance Program.

7. To determine what changes, if any, first year teachers would like to see in the Entry-Year Assistance Program.

8. To determine whether or not the InService Training Program designed for first year teachers of vocational agriculture: is stimulating; is informative; is well organized; is an efficient use of time; offered useful materials and ideas; reflected the teacher's needs and

interests; offered an opportunity for interaction; and presented successful teaching methods and materials.

9. To elicit the perceptions of the first year vocational agriculture teachers relative to whether or not changes need to be made in the InService Training Program.

Assumption of the Study

The questions asked and the responses reported gave an accurate representation of the perceptions of the individual Entry-Year Teachers according to the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Scope of the Study

The population of this study included 72 Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture teachers, all of which were Oklahoma State University graduates (1984-88) currently under contract and residing in the state of Oklahoma.

Definition of Terms

For a better understanding of the facts presented in this study, the following terms were defined.

Entry-Year Assistance Committee: A committee serving in a local school district for the purpose of counseling and observing an Entry-Year Teacher. (Handbook for Entry-Year Assistance Program, 1983).

Entry-Year Teacher: A licensed teacher who has no years of experience as a classroom teacher and is employed for the

first time by an accredited school. (Handbook for Entry-Year Assistance Program, 1983). For this study, there were vocational agriculture teachers who served as beginning teachers under the EYAP.

Teacher Consultant: Any teacher holding a standard certificate employed by a social school district and who has been appointed to serve on a EYAC.

Administrative Representative: A principal, assistant principal, or any other administrative personnel who was designated by the local school board to serve on the EYAC. (Handbook for Entry-Year Assistance Program, 1983).

Teacher Educator: An individual who is employed in a teaching capacity in an institution of higher education for the preparation of educational personnel. (Handbook for Entry-Year Assistance Program, 1983).

Perception: "the awareness of objects or other data through the medium of the senses;" consciousness or awareness (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1957, p. 1085).

Stimulating: "to rouse to action or increased action, as by goading; spur on; excite" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1957, p. 1433).

Dull: "lacking sensitivity; unfeeling, causing boredom; tedious" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1975, p. 449).

Informative: "giving information; educational; instructive" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1957, p. 750).

Interaction: "action on each other; reciprocal action or effect" (Webster's New World Dictionary, 1957, p. 760).

InService Education: Programs set up to provide educational support and guidance to new or returning teachers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present to the reader an overview related specifically to the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program. The five major areas in the review were the history of the EYAP, the history of the First-Year InService Training Program, the beginning teacher, review of related literature, and a summary.

History of the Entry-Year Assistance Program in Oklahoma

The EYAP is a relatively new educational program in the Oklahoma school system, and was introduced through House Bill 1706 in 1980 (Draper et. al., 1980). The EYAP was promoted to establish specific qualifications of teachers through licensing and certification requirements. The intent of the EYAP was to ensure that the education of Oklahoma youth would be provided by instructors of demonstrated ability.

National attention was directed toward teacher preparation and professional growth due to public awareness

("National Commission on Excellence in Education," 1983, p. 22). "Not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that professional working life of teachers is, on the whole, unacceptable, and that a serious shortage of teachers exists in key fields."

Oklahoma public schools are attempting to meet the demands of the public through new reforms and programs. As stated by Shanker (1983, p. 16): "...higher salaries, higher training standards, better working conditions, modifying authority, structure, and solid program development..." House Bill 1706 has centered its efforts surrounding these "higher training standards."

Doyle (1979) suggested that:

...feedback beginning teachers receive is very important in helping them acquire classroom knowledge... In addition, there is a clear possibility of developmental processes involved in learning to be a teacher (p. 15).

Teachers require a great deal of guidance in developing professionally during their first year of teaching. In reference to the EYAC, Stone (1979) stated:

Teacher education in its broadest sense is a shared responsibility in which the College of Education may play a leadership role, but in which many other individuals, agencies and organizations also have a vital role to play (p. 190).

The Oklahoma Teacher Reform Bill mandated "share responsibilities" utilizing the classroom teacher, administrator, and teacher educator from the College of Higher Education.

Teachers are in great need of guidance and support during their initial year of teaching. Through the EYAP, the teacher consultant, the administrator, and the teacher educator have a shared responsibility to ensure that the new teacher meet the requirements sought for according to the standards of the "program."

Meeting the challenges set forth by the public, the Oklahoma Public School System along with the Oklahoma colleges and universities of higher education have taken on the responsibility of upgrading our teacher quality. Finley (1984, p. 6) stated: "We are confident, based on what we have observed, that the reform will be highly successful."

The EYAP was targeted at upgrading the standards of teacher quality set up by the public outcry over the past couple of years. Hopefully, the EYAP will meet the necessary fulfillments deemed by the public in years to come.

InService Education Pertaining
To Oklahoma Vocational
Agriculture Teachers

All New and Returning Vocational Agriculture Teachers in Oklahoma are required to attend InService Education programs and workshops. It is the intention to enhance the skills and capabilities of the Vo-Ag teachers across the state.

The teachers are involved with anything from keeping proper records and reports to actual hands-on experience in the livestock skills workshop. Meetings also included cover such items as teacher liability, filling out departmental applications, and the Young Farmers Association of Oklahoma.

InService Education is deemed necessary to further educate the teachers in every educational aspect in our public school systems today. Through proper training and advancement, teachers are bettering themselves through professional development in their individual teaching fields. As to vocational agriculture teachers specifically, literature is somewhat hard to find. However, Claycomb and Petty (1983, p. 33) addressed this subject:

...as the experience of agriculture teachers grow, patterns of InService assistance develop.

...program planners cannot assume that an outstanding preservice program is sufficient nor can they assume that the InService needs for First-Year teachers are the same as the InService needs of second year teachers.

In a final report pertaining to InService Education for Agriculture Teachers (1981, p. 15), Tenney stated:

The success of the project has been beyond any level originally anticipated. Teachers are constantly asking, 'Where will the next workshop be held'? and 'What about next year'?

In 1981, the state of New York employed an InService Training Program to upgrade teachers of vocational agriculture. At the close of each workshop a survey was given to each participant to critique the session just administered to them. Seventy five percent of the teachers

felt that the interaction with each other and sharing of new ideas was more helpful than the other activities. Ninety percent said they would definitely attend this type of workshop again, ten percent said maybe, and only one said no, because of retirement. Ninety eight percent of all teachers attending these workshops felt they would attend workshops of the same nature in the future.

The Beginning Teacher

It can be said that a beginning teacher is left at the mercy of his/her students, faculty members, administration, and community. A beginning teacher will always be under the watchful eye of those they are in contact with. As an Entry-Year Teacher, problems are more difficultly solved, questions are more unpositively answered, and mistakes are more frequently made. Why is this? Lack of Experience. Every "experienced" teacher was once a beginning teacher.

Any educator or member of any community would be unrealistic to expect beginning teachers to be able to be competent in each and every aspect concerning a teacher. We need to find a beginning teacher's strength and build up these areas to promote success. Weaknesses of the First-Year Teacher also need to be attended as early as they are detected.

As stated by Ryan (1979, p. 39), we need a good support system for beginning teachers:

...colleges of education to combine with the schools in their area to provide special support for beginning teachers. Besides the possible impact of First-Year Teachers, the opportunity for university teacher trainers to walk in schools with the kind of problems experienced by First-Year Teachers might help them to make pre-service training more relevant to the needs of beginning teachers.

In 1978, Coates and Thoresen summarized 15 studies done over a 15 year period and reported that beginning teachers self-reported concerns and anxieties coping with the following areas:

1. Ability to maintain discipline
2. Students liking of them
3. Their knowledge of subject matter
4. What to do if they make mistakes or run out of material
5. How to relate personally to other faculty members, the school system, and parents.

Discipline is one of the major concerns of First-Year Teachers. Ryan (1979, p. 42) summarized this common feeling among First-Year Teachers:

...they have had little experience at telling people to do this, to go there, to stop and start that. Most beginning teachers don't know how to confront misbehavior.

Young (1978) emphasized the importance of the way in which the First-Year Teacher meets some of these problems when he stated that the conditions under which a person carries out the first year of teaching have a strong influence on the level of effectiveness which that teacher is able to achieve and to sustain over the years, on the

attitudes which govern teacher behavior over even a 40 year career and on a decision whether or not to continue in the teaching profession.

Most vocational agriculture teachers feel competent with FFA activities, public relations, and pursuing professional improvement. Classroom management and discipline seem to be of greatest threats to the beginning teacher. With proper training and implementation of InService personnel suggestions hopefully the First-Year Teacher can overcome these obstacles.

Review of Related Literature

Colleges and universities across the United States are recognizing the need to reassess the teacher preparation and practicum of their teacher education programs. Many proposals for change have been written. Among these, Denemark and Nutter (1980, p. 17) wrote:

The education of teachers would be considered to begin with admission to college; it continues throughout their professional careers. PreService Education, InService Education, and continuing professional development are essential parts of a unified development process. Each make an important contribution to the professional lives and performance of teachers; designing one in isolation from the others is likely to result in distortions of the career-long process.

The University of Alberta in Alberta, Canada, in 1979, began to take a hard look at teacher preparation and its implications for the quality of teachers in the classroom. Studies concerning the following areas were conducted:

(1) programs, (2) practicum, (3) courses, and (4) skill development. (Ratsoy, et. al., 1979).

The main concern for preparing teacher to teach was well summarized by Blue et. al., (1980), when they wrote:

...there is a critical difference between studying what makes teachers effective and what is involved in teaching teachers to be effective. It is asserted that current research largely investigates the former issue but does little to explicate the latter (p. 3).

Summary

The Entry-Year Assistance Program was implemented to establish new and additional specific qualifications of teachers through licensing and certification requirements (Draper, et. al., 1980) and the First-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher InService Education Program was implemented to enhance the skills and capabilities of the new vocational agriculture teacher. Both of these measures were implemented to meet the challenge set forth of the Oklahoma public who wanted to upgrade teacher quality.

It appeared, as a result of the review of literature, that teachers require a great deal of guidance in developing professionally during their first year of teaching. It further appeared that the Entry-Year Assistance Program objectives include providing the guidance required by the First-Year teacher. And too, there is no doubt that Inservice Education is deemed necessary to further educate the teachers in every educational aspect in the public school system.

In the final analysis, the New or First-Year teacher needs to have their weaknesses attended to early. The "support" team and prescribed InService Education programs certainly are methods to consider when attending to those weaknesses. It is also important to emphasize that the "support" team and the prescribed InService Education programs can provide moral support, a feeling of security in the classroom, and an opportunity for peer interaction.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of Oklahoma Vocational Teachers of the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program. The purpose of this chapter was to: describe the structure of the research, define the population, explain the development of the instrument, explain procedures used in obtaining data, and describe the statistical method used to analyze the data. Information of this study was collected during the Fall of 1988.

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Federal regulations and Oklahoma State University policy require review and approval of all research studies that involve human subjects before investigators can begin their research. The Oklahoma State University Office of University Research Services and the IRB conduct this review to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects involved in biomedical and behavioral research. In compliance with the aforementioned policy, this study received the proper surveillance and was granted permission to continue.

Choice of Research Design

Descriptive research was used in this study for the research design. As stated by Best (1970, p. 116),

Descriptive research describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of view, or attitudes that are held; processes that are going on, effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing. The process of descriptive research goes beyond the mere gathering and tabulating of the data. It involves an element of analysis and interpretation of the meaning or significance of what is described.

Since dealing with teachers' perceptions, descriptive research was chosen for this study.

Population

To accomplish the purpose of this study, vocational agriculture teachers who started teaching in the academic years of 1984-85, 1985-86, 1986-87 and 1987-88 were surveyed. Also, only those new teachers who received their teaching degree from Oklahoma State University were questioned. The population of this study included 72 Entry-Year vocational agriculture teachers. Fifty two of the 72 (72.22%) responded to the questionnaire. Refer to TABLE I.

Development of Instrument

In the preparation of an instrument (Appendix B), the objectives were given close attention. The instrument contained questions seeking qualitative information to

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF ENTRY-YEAR VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS WHO RESPONDED
TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Category	<u>Distribution of Respondents</u>	
	N	%
Respondents	52	72.22%
Non Respondents	<u>20</u>	<u>27.78%</u>
TOTAL	72	100.00%

elicit the perceptions of agriculture teachers according to the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

The major concern was how to present the instrument in order to receive a high percentage of responses. Due to the nature of the questions, and relationships with the vocational agriculture teachers, a questionnaire was used to collect the data of the study.

According to Orlich, Clark, Fagan, and Rust (1975), "...When designed in this manner, questionnaires can be an efficient means by which to gather data."

A questionnaire has many advantages to be looked at when trying to collect data:

1. Individuals can be contacted at virtually the same time, usually through the mail.
2. A questionnaire is less expensive than an interview.
3. Each respondent receives identical questions, leaving out bias.
4. Responses are easily tabulated.
5. People answer at their own convenience.
6. There is no need to select and train interviewers.
7. People in remote or distant areas are reached.
8. It provides a vehicle for written response without fear of embarrassment to the respondent.

A total of 17 questions were asked in the questionnaire. Thirteen questions covered the EYAP and four dealt with the InService Training Program.

A pretest questionnaire was given to a small number of graduate students who were enrolled in a Research and Design class. Upon receiving the results of the pretest, the questionnaire was revised by the faculty of the Oklahoma State University Department of Agricultural Education.

Upon initial mailing of the questionnaire, a period of two weeks was given for the Entry-Year Teachers to respond. After the end of the second week, a second questionnaire was mailed. A telephone call was implemented to reach any other teachers after another two week period, in order to try to get remaining questionnaires not completed.

Collection of Data

An informal introductory statement was used on the cover sheet of the questionnaire. (Appendix) Complete confidentiality was ensured to all teacher respondents on their responses.

Information obtained from the questionnaire provided the perceptions of teachers according to the EYAP and the InService Training Program. The questionnaire was divided into two parts with Part I pertaining to the EYAP and Part II pertaining to the InService Training Program.

Part I contained twelve multiple choice questions offering anywhere from two to five responses. Another question, completing Part I, revealed the written perceptions of those questioned regarding the EYAP.

Part II, addressed the InService Training Program. Part II contained not only two multiple choice questions, but also an open-ended question. The question regarded the perceptions of those questioned as to whether the InService Training Program was positive or negative in many manners as such: were the programs stimulating, organized, informative, or dull, unorganized or uninformative.

The final question of Part II sought whether the respondent perceived a need for any changes in the InService Training Program.

Analysis of Data

The statistical treatment for all responses consisted of frequency distribution and percentages. The responses to questions on the instrument were of qualitative type. The questions requested such responses as: definitely yes, probably yes, uncertain, probably not, or definitely not. It also asked for given descriptive answers pertaining to the perceptions of those questioned according to the workshops and programs that were studied.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program in the state of Oklahoma as perceived by the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher. The chapter describes data for future research efforts, analyzes the data and presents and interprets the results.

Data collected in this study were derived from the total population Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers in the state of Oklahoma during the academic years 1984-85 through 1987-88. In the first section, the characteristics of the respondents regarding the EYAP are reported in frequency distributions. In the second section, frequency distributions of responses to each question pertaining to the First-Year Teacher InService Program are presented. In the final section, responses to the question "What changes would you like to see in the present EYAP and the First-Year Teacher InService Program?" in their respective parts of the study.

Background of Population

The population of this study included 72 Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers, all of which were Oklahoma State University graduates currently under contract and residing in the state of Oklahoma. Fifty two of the 72 Entry-Year Teachers cooperated by responding to the 17 question study. The 52 respondents constituted 72.22% of the 72 total population.

General Characteristics of Respondents

The mailed survey instrument contained 13 questions designed to obtain personal information from those questioned according to the EYAP and four questions soliciting the perceptions regarding the First-Year Teacher InService Training Program.

In TABLE II, the number (N) and the percentage (%) by academic year of entry teaching in public schools is presented. Of the 52 respondents, 19 (36.54%) indicated that they began teaching vocational agriculture in the academic year of 1984-85. Of the remaining 33, 14 (26.92%) began teaching in the academic year of 1985-86, nine (17.31%) teachers began in 1986-87, and finally, ten (19.23%) began in the academic year 1987-88.

TABLE II
FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS'
ACADEMIC YEAR OF TEACHING ENTRY

Academic Year of Teaching	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
1984-85	19	36.54%
1985-86	14	26.92%
1986-87	9	17.31%
1987-88	<u>10</u>	<u>19.23%</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00%

Responses to Questions Pertaining to
Respondents' Perceptions of the
Entry-Year Assistance Program

In order to determine the perceptions of the respondents pertaining to the EYAP, several related questions were developed and included as part of the survey questionnaire.

In TABLE III, the frequency distribution is reported for the following question: "From whom do you feel that you received the most assistance during your Entry-Year of teaching?" Twenty three (44.23%) indicated that most of the assistance was provided by the "Teacher Consultant". Twenty two (42.31%) indicated that the most assistance was received by the "Teacher Educator" and the "Administrator". Only seven (13.46%) received most assistance from an experienced teacher other than their teacher consultant.

In TABLE IV, a Frequency Distribution is reported for the number of times the Entry-Year Teacher asked their committee for assistance. It was indicated by 11 (21.15%) that they never asked their committee for assistance. On the other hand, 24 (46.15%) asked for assistance "one to five" times. Ten (19.23%) asked for assistance "five to fifteen" times. Finally, seven (13.47%) required "more than fifteen" times of assistance rendered.

TABLE V presents the frequency distribution and percentage of responses elicited from the respondents on how important they perceived the EYAP to be regarding the

TABLE III

INDIVIDUALS WHO PROVIDED MOST ASSISTANCE DURING
ENTRY-YEAR OF TEACHING AS PERCEIVED BY ENTRY-
YEAR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Response	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Teacher Consultant	23	44.23
Teacher Educator	12	23.08
Administrator	10	19.23
Another First Year Teacher in your School	-	-
An Experience Teacher other than your Teacher Consultant	7	13.46
Other	-	-
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE IV
 DISTRIBUTION OF TIMES EYAP COMMITTEE MEMBERS
 WERE ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE BY ENTRY-YEAR
 VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Number of Times	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Never	11	21.15
1 - 5	24	46.15
6 - 10	6	11.54
11 - 15	4	7.69
More than 15 times	7	13.47
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE V
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF
 ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM REGARDING
 ENTRY-YEAR VO-AG TEACHERS FIRST YEAR
 OF TEACHING

Level of Importance	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Very Important	16	30.76
Important	29	55.77
Less than Important	5	9.61
Unimportant	<u>2</u>	<u>3.86</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers First-Year of teaching. It was clearly evident that 45 (86.53%) of the 52 respondents felt that the EYAP was either "Very Important" or "Important" regarding the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers' First-Year of teaching. The remaining seven (13.47%) respondents announced the EYAP was less than "Important or Unimportant".

When asked why the respondents felt that the EYAP was important regarding the teacher's First-Year of teaching, in TABLE VI, it was clearly indicated that 21 (46.67%) of the 52 respondents felt that "It provides information to the Entry-Year Teacher on his/her weaknesses and strengths" was the one major reason that the EYAP was "Important". Eight (17.78%) revealed that "It provides the assistance needed to improve classroom management," while ten (22.22%) saw that "It creates a feeling of security on the part of the Entry-Year Teacher." On the other hand, 4 (8.89%) implied that "It provides the opportunity to improve teaching methods." Two (4.44%) were in the "other" category and could not be categorized in any way to make an impact on a specific reason for why the EYAP was important.

Those who felt that the EYAP was not important are presented in TABLE VII. Of the 52 respondents, only seven (13.46%) felt the EYAP was not "Important". Of the seven who responded, four (57.14%) believed it "Does not provide the assistance needed to improve classroom management," while the remaining three (42.86%) indicated a "Lack of

TABLE VI

RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR FEELING THAT ENTRY-YEAR
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS IMPORTANT REGARDING
TEACHERS' FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

Reason EYAP is Important	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Provide assistance needed to improve classroom management	8	17.78
Creates feeling of security on part of Entry-Year Teacher	10	22.22
Provides opportunity to improve teaching methods	4	8.89
Provides information to teachers on his/her weaknesses and strengths	21	46.67
Other	<u>2</u>	<u>4.44</u>
TOTALS	45	100.00

TABLE VII
 RESPONDENTS' REASONS FOR FEELING THE EYAP WAS
 NOT IMPORTANT REGARDING THE TEACHERS
 FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

Reason EYAP is not Important	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Does not provide the assistance to improve classroom management	4	57.14
Creates a feeling of apprehension on part of Entry-Year Teacher	-	-
Look of Importance as viewed by the teacher	-	-
Lack of importance as viewed by the Entry-Year Assistance Committee	3	42.86
Other	-	-
TOTALS	7	100.00

importance as viewed by the Entry-Year Assistance Committee".

Presented in TABLE VIII are responses to the question: "Do you believe the evaluation/observation instrument used to evaluate the Vocational Agriculture Teacher's performance provides a fair assessment of his/her abilities?" Of the 52 respondents, a decisive 36 (69.23%) indicated that "Definitely Yes" and "Probably Yes" in reference to the instrument being fair. Six (11.54%) were undecided, while ten (19.23%) felt the instrument did not give a fair assessment on the teacher's abilities.

TABLE IX presents the distribution of respondents as to whether or not they favor the continuance of the EYAP. Forty three (82.70%) of the 52 respondents clearly indicate in favor of the EYAP continuation. Six (11.54%) were undecided, while only three (5.76%) opposed the continuation of the EYAP.

Presented in TABLE X is the distribution of respondents as to whether or not they believe the EYAC members provided reasonable opportunity for the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers to adjust and improve as the year progressed. Forty Four (89.62%) indicated the opportunity to adjust and improve was provided by the EYAC members. Five (9.62%) were left undecided as to whether or not they were provided the opportunity to adjust and improve through the year, while three (5.76%) felt that they were

TABLE VIII

RESPONDENTS' REASONS AS TO WHETHER OR NOT EVALUATION/
OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT USED TO EVALUATE VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHER'S PERFORMANCE PROVIDES A
FAIR ASSESSMENT OF HIS/HER ABILITIES

Observation Instrument Assesses Performance	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Definitely Yes	12	23.08
Probably Yes	24	46.15
Uncertain	6	11.54
Probably Not	6	11.54
Definitely Not	<u>4</u>	<u>7.69</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE IX
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO WHETHER
 OR NOT THEY FAVOR THE CONTINUANCE OF
 THE ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Favor Continuance of EYAP	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Strong Favor	25	48.08
Tend to Favor	18	34.62
Uncertain	6	11.54
Tend to Oppose	1	1.92
Strongly Oppose	<u>2</u>	<u>3.84</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY WHETHER OR NOT THEY
 BELIEVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PROVIDED REASONABLE
 OPPORTUNITY FOR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
 TEACHERS TO ADJUST AND IMPROVE AS
 YEAR PROGRESSED

Committee Members Provided Opportunities	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Definitely Yes	31	59.62
Probably Yes	13	25.00
Uncertain	5	9.62
Probably Not	-	-
Definitely Not	<u>3</u>	<u>5.76</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

"Definitely Not" given the opportunity to adjust and improve by the EYAC members.

In TABLE XI the respondents indicated their perceptions of the major strengths of the EYAP. Of the 52 respondents, 36 (69.23%) respondents indicated the major strengths to be: (1) Assistance from the Teacher Consultant; 19 (36.54%), (2) Assistance from the Teacher Educator; 10 (19.23%), (3) Assistance from the Administrator; 7 (13.46%). Ten (19.23%) felt "Guidance in making Decisions" was the one major strength, while three (5.77%) reported that the "Moral support that is offered by the committee" was the major strength. Three (5.77%) respondents recorded "Other" responses of no major proportion in regarding to major strengths of the EYAP.

The number and percentage of respondents based on their perception of the major problems with the EYAP is presented in TABLE XII. Twenty five (48.08%) respondents indicated that they did not perceive any major problems with the EYAP. Three (5.77%) indicated that there was insufficient assistance from either the teacher consultant or teacher educator and seven (13.46%) believed there was insufficient assistance from the administrator. Eight (15.38%) respondents indicated that "Overall assistance was insufficient." Six (11.54%) cited "Other" problems they perceived with the EYAP such as: (1) Not enough meetings with committee, (2) Not enough teacher educator visits, (3)

TABLE XI
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MAJOR STRENGTHS
 OF THE ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Major Strengths of the EYAP	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Assistance from teacher consultant	19	36.54
Assistance from teacher educator	10	19.23
Assistance from administrator	7	13.46
Guidance in making decisions	10	19.23
Moral support that is offered by committee	3	5.77
Did not perceive any major strengths	-	-
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>5.77</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE XII
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MAJOR PROBLEMS
 WITH ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Major Problem with EYAP	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Insufficient assistance from the teacher consultant	3	5.77
Insufficient assistance from the teacher educator	3	5.77
Insufficient assistance from the administrator	7	13.46
Overall assistance was insufficient	8	15.38
Did not perceive any major problems	25	48.08
Other	<u>6</u>	<u>11.54</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

Too many meetings with EYAC members, and (4) Lack of concern on teacher consultants part.

TABLE XIII presents whether or not the teacher consultant spent the required 72 hours of his/her time, about the observation and committee time, in providing assistance to the Entry-Year Teacher. Thirty seven (71.15%) indicated "Yes" that their teacher consultant spent the 72 hours required above observation and committee time to provide assistance. On the other hand, 15 (28.85%) respondents reported "No" that their teacher consultant did not spend the 72 hours assistance above and beyond the committee and observation time.

Changes Needed in the Entry-Year Assistance
Program as Perceived by the Entry-Year
Assistance Program Respondents

In order to determine what the respondents of the EYAP perceived as needed changes, question number 13, on the questionnaire, was developed. In fairness to all respondents and to ensure reported opinions, it was necessary to include responses to the open-ended question regarding "What changes would you like to see in the present Entry-Year Assistance Program?" The researcher was able to group like responses by the number of respondents who chose to dwell on the open question. The detailed responses are as follows:

TABLE XIII

TIME SPENT BY TEACHER CONSULTANT (ABOVE OBSERVATION
AND COMMITTEE TIME) IN PROVIDING ASSISTANCE AS
PERCEIVED BY THE ENTRY-YEAR VOCATIONAL
AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

Responses	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Yes (Did spend at least 72 hours of his/her time)	37	71.15
No (Did not spend at least 72 hours of his/her time)	<u>15</u>	<u>28.85</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

1. Twenty eight respondents indicated that no changes are needed in the present EYAP.

2. Fourteen respondents indicated that the teacher consultant should be someone with a vocational background or a teacher on staff with a personal interest in the vocational agriculture program.

3. According to seven of the respondents, the teacher consultant should be another Vocational Agriculture Teacher with "Some" experience from a neighboring school, if possible.

4. As reported by three respondents, the 72 hour requirement should be greatly reduced or completely withdrawn due to negative feelings toward the vocational agriculture program from the teacher consultant.

Respondents' Perceptions of First-Year Teachers' InService Training Program

In order to determine the perceptions of the respondents pertaining to the First-Year Teacher InService Training Program, four questions were developed and included as part of the 17 question survey. Those four questions were numbered 14 through 17. In cooperation with the State Department of Vocational-Technical Education, the Agricultural Education Department of Oklahoma State University provides the InService program to First-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers.

The number and distribution of respondents based on their perceptions as to whether the First-Year InService Program had a "positive" or "negative" impact is presented in TABLE XIV. Thirty six (69.23%) indicated the InService Program to be "stimulating", while 16 (30.77%) saw it as being "dull". Forty (76.92%) respondents reported the InService Program to be "informative" as compared to 12 (23.08%) respondents viewing the InService Program as "uninformative". When asked was the InService Program "well organized" or "unorganized", 42 (80.77%) indicated the InService Program to be "well organized" while ten (19.23%) respondents opposed and reported the program as being "unorganized." Forty (70.92%) respondents indicated that the program was an "efficient use of time," compared to 12 (23.08%) respondents feeling that the program was an "inefficient use of time." When asked if the program "offered useful ideas," 44 (88.62%) concurred, while eight (15.38%) respondents suggested that the InService Program "did not offer useful ideas." Thirty eight (73.08%) respondents felt that the program "addressed your needs and interests," while at the same time, 14 (26.92%) respondents indicated that the program "did not address your needs and interests." Forty six (88.46%) respondents revealed that the program "offered an opportunity for interaction," compared to six (11.52%) respondents who indicated that the program "did not offer opportunity for interaction." The final comparison was whether or not the respondents

TABLE XIV
 PERCEPTIONS OF RESPONDENTS AS TO WHETHER
 OR NOT THE FIRST-YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM
 HAD A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE IMPACT

Impact of First-Year InService Program	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Stimulating	36	69.23
Dull	<u>16</u>	<u>30.77</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Informative	40	76.92
Uninformative	<u>12</u>	<u>23.08</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Well Organized	42	80.77
Unorganized	<u>10</u>	<u>19.23</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Efficient Use of Time	40	76.92
Inefficient Use of Time	<u>12</u>	<u>23.08</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Offered Useful Ideas	44	84.62
Did Not Offer Useful Ideas	<u>8</u>	<u>15.38</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Addressed Your Needs and Interests	38	73.08
Did Not Address Your Needs and Interests	<u>14</u>	<u>26.92</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Offered an Opportunity for Interaction	46	88.46
Did Not Offer an Opportunity for Interaction	<u>6</u>	<u>11.52</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00
Offered Successful Teaching Methods and Materials	42	80.77
Did Not Offer Successful Teaching Methods and Materials	<u>10</u>	<u>19.23</u>
TOTAL	52	100.00

perceived the InService Program as offering successful teaching methods and materials. Forty two (80.77%) of the 52 respondents indicated that the program "offered successful teaching methods and materials," while ten (19.23%) respondents revealed that the program "did not offer successful teaching methods and materials."

TABLE XV presents the frequency distribution and percentage of responses elicited from the respondents on how important they perceived the First-Year InService Program to be regarding the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers' first year of teaching.

Fifteen (28.85%) respondents indicated that the First-Year InService Program was "very important" regarding their first year of teaching. Twenty three (44.23%) revealed the program as being "important" regarding their first year of teaching. On the other hand, 14 (26.92%) respondents indicated that the program was "less than important" or "unimportant" regarding their first year of teaching.

TABLE XVI presents the distribution of the respondents as to whether or not they favor the continuance of the First-Year InService Program. Nineteen (36.53%) respondents indicated that they strongly favored the continuance of the InService Program, while 20 (38.47%) respondents reported that they tended to favor the program. Of the 52 respondents, six (11.54%) cited they were "uncertain" of the whether or not they were in favor of the

TABLE XV
 RESPONDENTS' PERCEIVED LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF
 FIRST-YEAR INSERVICE PROGRAM REGARDING
 ENTRY YEAR VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
 TEACHERS FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

Level of Importance	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Very Important	15	28.85
Important	23	44.23
Less than Important	9	17.31
Unimportant	<u>5</u>	<u>9.61</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

TABLE XVI
 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS AS TO WHETHER
 OR NOT THEY FAVOR CONTINUANCE OF
 FIRST-YEAR INSERVICE PROGRAM

Responses	Frequency Distribution	
	N	%
Strongly Favor	19	36.53
Tend to Favor	20	38.47
Uncertain	6	11.54
Tend to Oppose	5	9.61
Strongly Oppose	<u>2</u>	<u>3.85</u>
TOTALS	52	100.00

programs continuation. Seven (13.46%) respondents opposed the continuation of the InService Program.

Changes Needed in the First-Year InService
Program as Perceived by the First-Year
InService Program Participants

In order to see what the respondents of the First-Year InService Program perceived as needed changes, question number 17 was developed and included on the questionnaire. In fairness to all respondents and to ensure that their opinions would be reported, it was deemed necessary to include responses to the open-ended question regarding "What changes would you like to see in the present Entry-Year Teacher InService Program?" The researcher was able to group similar or like responses by the number of respondents who chose to indicate needed changes. The groupings are reported as follows:

1. According to 36 of the 52 respondents, no changes are needed in the present Entry-Year Teacher InService Program.

2. According to ten respondents, more in-depth record keeping should be taught and summarized during the First Year Teachers' tenure as a first year teacher. Five of these ten respondents felt this could be done coinciding with Mid-Winter Conference in the month of January.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The intent of this chapter was to present concise summaries of the following topics: statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, assumption of the study, scope of the study, and major findings of the research. Through a thorough analysis of these topics, conclusions and recommendations were presented based on the inspection of the data.

Statement of the Problem

Since the EYAP and First-Year InService Program are aimed at improving new teachers in Oklahoma, it was deemed necessary to collect, analyze, and report data as a part of a longitudinal study which would reflect the nature and extent of success of the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the Vocational Agriculture Teachers' perceptions of the Oklahoma EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Objectives of the Study

To accomplish the purpose it was necessary to accomplish the following:

1. To determine whether or not the Entry-Year Teacher received the needed assistance from the EYAC.
2. To determine who assisted the Entry-Year Teacher the most during the Entry-Year of teaching.
3. To determine how important the Entry-Year Teacher perceived the EYAP regarding the teacher's first year of teaching.
4. To determine whether the EYAP was or was not important regarding the teacher's first year of teaching.
5. To determine whether or not First-Year Teachers favor the continuance of the Entry-Year Assistance Program.
6. To determine the major strengths and/or problems concerning the EYAP.
7. To determine what changes, if any, First-Year Teachers would like to see in the Entry-Year Assistance Program.
8. To determine whether or not the InService Training Program designed for the First-Year Teachers of Vocational Agriculture: is stimulating, is informative, is well organized, is an efficient use of time, offered useful ideas and materials, reflected the teacher's needs and interests, offered an opportunity for interaction, and presented successful teaching methods and materials.

9. To elicit the perceptions of the first year Vocational Agriculture Teachers relative to whether or not changes need to be made in the InService Program.

Assumption of the Study

The questions asked and the responses reported gave an accurate representation of the perceptions of the individual Entry-Year Teachers according to the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program.

Scope of the Study

The population of this study was composed of the following:

1. All 72 Vocational Agriculture Teachers who have served under the EYAP and the First-Year InService Training Program for the four year period (1984-85, 1985-86, 1986-87, and 1987-88) were surveyed. Of the 72, 52 (72.22%) responded to the survey.

2. Only those Vocational Agriculture Teachers who graduated from Oklahoma State University were questioned.

3. Only those Vocational Agriculture Teachers currently under contract were questioned.

Major Findings of the Study

The major findings of this study were divided into seven sections. They are as follows:

1. Respondents' perception of assistance provided by the EYAP.
2. Respondents' perception of importance of the EYAP.
3. Respondents' perception of the evaluation/ observation instrument.
4. Respondents' perceptions pertaining to major strengths and problems of the EYAP.
5. Respondents' perceptions of changes needed for the EYAP.
6. Respondents' perceptions of the First-Year InService Training Program.
7. Respondents' perceptions of changes needed in the First-Year InService Training Program.

Respondents' Perceptions of Assistance
Provided by the Entry-Year
Assistance Program

A summary of the responses pertaining to assistance (or lack of) provided by the Entry Year Assistance Program were presented in TABLE XVII. It was clearly evident that the "teacher consultant" and the "teacher educator" provided the most assistance (67.31%) to the First-Year Teacher during their initial year of teaching. According to ten (19.23%) respondents, the "administrator" gave them the most assistance during their first year of teaching. Seven (13.46%) respondents revealed that "another experienced teacher other than their teacher consultant" provided the

TABLE XVII

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTIONS RELATIVE TO ASSISTANCE EITHER PROVIDED BY OR NOT PROVIDED BY ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Perception of Assistance N = 52	<u>Frequency Distribution of Responses</u> N(%)				
Teachers' perceptions of whom they received the most assistance from during initial year of teaching	Teacher Consultant 23(44.23%)	Teacher Educator 2(23.08%)	Administrator 10(19.23%)	Another First Year Teacher other than teacher consultant Experienced teacher other than Teacher consultant 7(13.46%) 52(100.00)	
Teachers' perceptions of numbers of times they asked EYAC for assistance	none 11(21.15%)	1-5 24(46.15%)	6-10 6(11.54%)	11-15 4(7.68%)	15 7(13.46)

most assistance while in the EYAP. These seven respondents indicated that this "experienced teacher" was another Vocational Agriculture Teacher in a nearby neighboring community. Not one respondent indicated that he/she received assistance from "another First-Year Teacher in your school."

Also reported in TABLE XVII, were the distribution of responses according to the respondents number of times they asked for assistance. Amazingly enough, 11 (21.15%) indicated that they "never" asked for assistance by the EYAC member during their initial year of teaching.

Almost one-half (24, 46.15%), asked for assistance "1-5" times from the EYAC members. Ten (19.23%) respondents asked for assistance either "6-10" or "11-15" times during their first year of teaching. Seven (13.46%) respondents required assistance "16 or more times" during their Entry-Year of teaching from the Entry-Year Assistance Committee members. Upon analyzation of this question, the researcher understood that there was a wide distribution of responses to the number of times the Entry-Year Teacher asked committee members for assistance.

Respondents' Perceptions of Importance of the Entry-Year Assistance Program

When asked "How important do you perceive the EYAP to be regarding the teacher's first year of teaching?" staggering results were found. Forty five (86.53%)

respondents indicated the EYAP to be important regarding the first year of teaching. On the other hand, a minority seven (13.46%) found the EYAP to be "less than important" or "unimportant".

Twenty one (46.67%) of the 45 (86.53%) respondents indicated that the major reason they found the EYAP to be important was because "it provides information to the Entry-Year Teacher on his/her strengths and weakness." Eighteen (40.00%) of the 45 respondents who indicated the EYAP to be "important" regarding their first year of teaching responded that the EYAP "provides needed assistance in classroom management" and "it creates a feeling of security on the part of the First-Year Teacher." Four (8.89%) respondents revealed the importance of EYAP to be that "it provides opportunity to improve teaching methods." Only two (4.44%) of the 45 (86.53%) respondents viewing the EYAP as "important" quoted "other" reasons the EYAP is important and those quotes were of no substantial information for this study.

Only seven (13.46%) respondents revealed the EYAP as not being important regarding their first year of teaching. Four (56.14%) of the seven respondents indicated the EYAP "does not provide the needed assistance to improve classroom management." Three (42.86%) agreeing that the EYAP is less than important, respondents felt that "lack of importance as viewed by the EYAC" was a major concern.

Respondents' Perceptions of the
Evaluation/Observation
Instrument

Thirty six (69.23%), or slightly over two-thirds, respondents indicated that the evaluation/observation instrument did give fair assessment of the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher's abilities. Six (11.54%) respondents were "uncertain" as to whether or not the instrument was fair in assessing the teacher's abilities. Ten (19.23%) respondents indicated that the evaluation/observation instrument was not fair in assessing the First Year Teacher's abilities.

Respondents' Perceptions Pertaining
to Major Strengths and
Problems of the EYAP

In summarizing the responses of the respondents pertaining to the major strengths and problems of the Entry-Year Assistance Program, the researcher was able to report the following. Thirty six (69.23%) respondents indicated the major strength of the EYAP was assistance from the EYAC members as a whole. Nineteen (36.54%) respondents revealed the assistance from the teacher consultant to be the major strength, while ten (19.23%) responded that the teacher educator's assistance provided was the major strength. Seven (13.46%) respondents felt that the assistance received from the administrator was the major strength of the EYAP.

Furthermore, another ten (19.23%) indicated that "guidance in decision making" was the major strength in the Entry-Year Assistance Program. Three (5.77%) revealed that "moral support offered by the EYAC members" was the major strength. Only the remaining three (5.77%) did not see any major strengths in the EYAP.

When summarizing problems with the Entry-Year Assistance Program, it was found that almost one half (25 48.08%) of the respondents saw no major problems with the EYAP. On the other hand, 13 (25.00%) respondents indicated that "insufficient assistance from the EYAC members as a whole was the major problem. Eight (15.38%) respondents felt that the overall assistance, in general, was insufficient. Six (11.54%) respondents quoted "other" responses on the spaces provided. They are as follows:

1. Lack of guidance in decision making.
2. If we were properly instructed in college, no EYAP would be needed.
3. Wastes of precious, valuable time.
4. It creates problems within problems.
5. Just one more hassle.

Respondents' Perceptions of the Changes Needed in the EYAP

Upon summarizing the changes needed, if any, in the Entry-Year Assistance Program, it was found that 28 (53.85%) of the respondents saw no needed changes in the present

Entry-Year Assistance Program. Fourteen (26.92%) of the respondents urged that the teacher consultant should be someone with a vocational background or a teacher with a personal interest in the local Vocational Agriculture Program. Seven (13.46%) respondents felt that the teacher consultant should be another experienced vocational agriculture from a nearby neighboring school, if possible. The remaining three (5.77%) respondents strongly indicated that the 72 hour requirements of teacher consultant observation should be greatly reduced or completely withdrawn. Two of these three respondents indicated this due to negative feelings by the teacher consultant toward his/her Vocational Agriculture Program.

Respondents' Perceptions of the First-Year InService Training Program

Thirty six (69.23%) respondents found the program to be "stimulating," while 16 (30.77%) respondents saw it as being "dull". When asked was the First-Year InService Program "informative", 40 (76.52%) replied that it was informative, while 12 (23.08%) indicated the program to be "uninformative." Upon questioning the organization of the program, 42 (80.77%) respondents revealed it to be "well organized", while ten (19.23%) stated that the program was "unorganized." Forty (76.92%) of the respondents indicated the First-Year InService Program to be an "efficient use of time", as compared to 12 (23.08%) respondents indicated that

the program was an "inefficient use of time." As to whether or not the program offered useful ideas, 44 (84.62%) allowed that the program did indeed "offer useful ideas," while at the same time, eight (15.38%) respondents denied that the program offered useful ideas.

Thirty eight (73.08%) of the respondents indicated that the First-Year InService Training Program did address their needs and interests as a first year teacher, while 14 (26.92%) argued that the program did not address their needs and interests as a beginning teacher. As to whether or not the program "offered an opportunity for interaction," 46 (88.46%) or almost nine of ten, announced that the program did in fact offer an opportunity for interaction. Only six (11.52%) respondents revealed that the program did not offer opportunity for interaction. Finally, 42 (80.77%) respondents indicated that the program offered successful teaching methods and materials, as opposed by ten (19.23%) respondents feeling that the program did not offer successful teaching methods and materials.

Respondents' Perceptions of Changes
Needed in the First-Year InService
Training Program

In summarizing the respondents' perceptions to changes needed in the program, the following changes were proposed:

1. Thirty six of 52 respondents saw no need for any change.

2. Ten respondents felt the need for more elaborate, in depth coverage on the method of teaching records in their Vo-Ag Programs. One such respondent even went as far to say that, "One complete semester of college is needed to teach this. How do they expect us to teach it when they go over it in three days?"

3. Six respondents revealed very general, very insignificant changes that would be of no advantage or any substantial meaning to the present Entry-Year InService Program.

Conclusions

The analysis of data and subsequent findings were the basis for the following conclusions:

1. Since an overwhelming majority (86.54%) of the Entry-Year Teachers indicated that the EYAC members helped them most, it was concluded that the Entry-Year Teacher was provided adequate assistance.

2. Based on perceptions of the Entry-Year Teacher, it was concluded that the EYAP was important regarding the teacher's first year of teaching.

3. After reviewing the findings, it was concluded that a majority of the respondents questioned believed the evaluation/observation instrument used to evaluate the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher did give a fair assessment of his/her teaching ability.

4. Due to the responses elicited from the respondents, it was concluded that the major strengths of the EYAP were:

- a. assistance from the EYAP as a whole
- b. moral support
- c. guidance in decision making

5. Since over 80% of all respondents indicated that the committee members provided reasonable opportunity for the Entry-Year Teacher to adjust and improve, it was concluded that Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers were definitely provided reasonable opportunity to adjust and improve as the year progressed.

6. Since 71.15% of the respondents indicated that the teacher consultant did spend the required 72 hours of his/her time in providing assistance, it was concluded that many teacher consultants did provide the assistance required by House Bill 1706.

7. It was concluded that the EYAP should be continued, based on the opinion of 84.62% of the respondents.

8. Based upon at least 70% or more giving positive responses, it was concluded that the First-Year InService Program was; stimulating, informative, well organized, an efficient use of time, offered useful ideas, addressed needs and interests, offered an opportunity for interaction, and offered successful teaching methods and materials.

9. It was further concluded, based on the findings, that the First-Year InService Training Program was

important regarding the Entry-Year Teacher's first year of teaching.

10. It was further concluded, based on the findings, that the First-Year InService Training Program be continued.

Recommendations

1. Based on the conclusions that a majority of the Entry-Year Teachers were provided adequate assistance from the EYAC, it is recommended that a high level of assistance be continued.

2. Based on the conclusion of importance by respondents, it is recommended that the EYAP definitely be continued.

3. Based on the conclusion that the evaluation/ observation instrument provided a fair assessment of the Entry-Year abilities, it is recommended that the use of the instrument be continued.

4. Based on the apparent conclusion that the Entry-Year Teachers were provided reasonable opportunity to adjust and improve as the year progressed, it is recommended that the EYAC members continue providing this opportunity to the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher.

5. Even though it was indicated that many of the teacher consultants did spend the required 72 hours of his/her time in providing assistance to the Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher, 28.85% revealed they were

not assisted for the 72 hour period, therefore, it is recommended that future efforts in this endeavor should be greatly emphasized in order to get every teacher consultant involved at a higher intensity with his/her Entry-Year Vo-Ag Teacher. It is further recommended that teacher consultants be allowed release time to perform duties, as mandated by House Bill 1706.

Recommendations for Additional Research

The following recommendations are made in regard to additional research. These recommendations are based on the examination of the findings of the study.

1. There should be similar studies done in other teaching areas and compared with the findings of this study.

2. A follow-up study should be conducted, in the future, with Entry-Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers and the results compared to the findings of this study.

3. More specific research should be conducted to determine what assistance is needed by the Entry-Year Vo-Ag Teacher.

4. It is recommended that additional research be conducted to assess the usefulness of the evaluation/observation instrument.

5. Additional research should be conducted to determine the kinds of assistance the Entry-Year Assistance Committee provided.

6. Additional research should be conducted with emphasis on determine major problems within the EYAP.
7. Specific research should be conducted in order to determine obstacles which hinder assistance to Entry-Year Teachers by the EYAC.
8. Specific research should be done to emphasize the roles of the EYAC members.
9. Teacher training institutions should be surveyed to determine the nature and extent of undergraduate orientation to the EYAP.
10. Specific research should be done to determine how the First Year InService Training Program can be of greater assistance to First Year Vocational Agriculture Teachers.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER



FFA THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
FOR STUDENTS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

FLETCHER FFA
Box 489
Fletcher, Oklahoma 73541
RANDY SMITH, Advisor

June 30, 1983

Dear Fellow Vocational Agriculture Teacher:

Please take 10 minutes of your time to complete the enclosed instrument. Due to the nature of the study, it is deemed necessary that the instrument be returned as quickly as possible.

This study is designed to evaluate your perceptions of the Vocational Agriculture Teacher Entry-Year Assistance Program and the First-Year In-Service Training Program.

Your response will be strictly anonymous, and should provide sufficient data to Oklahoma State University on whether or not to implement any changes. Your cooperation in my endeavor will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Randy Smith
Vocational Agriculture Teacher

Dr. Eddy Finley, Associate Professor
Department of Agricultural Education
448 Ag Hall - OSU
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
(405) 744-8139

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I

1. Please indicate the academic year in which you were an Entry Year Vocational Agriculture Teacher. (Check One)

1984-85 1985-86
 1986-87 1987-88

2. From whom do you feel that you received the most assistance during your Entry Year of teaching? (Check One)

Teacher Consultant The Administrator
 The Teacher Educator Other: _____
 Another First Year Teacher in your school
 An Experienced Teacher other than your Teacher Consultant

3. How many times did you ask your committee members for assistance? (Check One)

Never 1 to 5 times
 6 to 10 times 11 to 15 times
 more than 15 times

4. How important do you perceive the Entry Year Assistance Program to be regarding the teacher's first year of teaching? (Check One)

Very Important Answer question #5
 Important (Skip #6)
 Less than Important Answer question #6
 Unimportant (Skip #5)

5. For which ONE MAJOR REASON do you feel that the Entry Year Assistance Program is "important" regarding the teacher's first year of teaching? (Check One)

It provides the assistance needed to improve classroom management.
 It creates a feeling of security on the part of the Entry Year Teacher.
 It provides the opportunity to improve teaching methods.
 It provides information to the Entry Year Teacher on his/her weaknesses and strengths.
 Other: _____

6. For which ONE MAJOR REASON do you feel that the Entry Year Assistance Program is not important regarding the teacher's first year of teaching? (Check One)
- Does not provide the assistance needed to improve classroom management.
- Creates a feeling of apprehension on the part of the Entry Year Teacher.
- Lack of importance as viewed by the Entry Year Teacher.
- Lack of importance as viewed by the Entry Year Assistance Committee.
- Other: _____

7. Do you believe the evaluation/observation instrument used to evaluate the Vocational Agriculture teacher's performance provides a fair assesment of his/her abilities? (Check One)
- Definitely Yes Probably Yes
- Uncertain Probably Not
- Definitely Not

8. Do you favor continuance of the Entry Year Assistance Program? (Check One)
- Strongly Favor Tend to Favor
- Uncertain Tend to Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

9. Do you believe the committee members provided reasonable opportunity for YOU to adjust and improve as the year progressed? (Check One)
- Definitely Yes Probably Yes
- Uncertain Probably Not
- Definitely Not

(If you do not believe the committee members provided you reasonable opportunity to adjust and improve, please write a brief statement as to why you believe they did not...)

10. What do you perceive to be the ONE MAJOR STRENGTH of the Entry Year Assistance Program? (Check One)
- Assistance from the teacher consultant
- Assistance from the teacher educator
- Assistance from the administrator
- Guidance in making decisions

Moral support that is offered by the committee

I do not perceive any major strengths

Other: _____

11. What do you perceive to be the ONE MAJOR PROBLEM with the Entry Year Assistance Program? (Check One)

Insufficient assistance from the teacher consultant

Insufficient assistance from the teacher educator

Insufficient assistance from the administrator

Overall assistance was insufficient

I do not perceive any major problems

Other: _____

12. Did the teacher consultant spend the required 72 hours of his/her time, above the observation and committee time, in providing assistance to you as an Entry Year Teacher? (Check One)

Yes

No

13. What changes would you like to see in the present Entry Year Assistance Program?

PART II

THE SECOND PART OF THIS QUESTIONNAIRE DEALS WITH THE FIRST YEAR TEACHER IN-SERVICE PROGRAM PROVIDED BY THE AGED DEPT. IN COOPERATION WITH THE STATE DEPT. OF VO-TECH. Please indicate whether you viewed the "total in-service program" either positively or negatively...

14. The First Year Teacher Inservice Program was....

- | POSITIVE RESPONSE | (Check One) | NEGATIVE RESPONSE |
|--|-------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stimulating | | <input type="checkbox"/> Dull |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informative | | <input type="checkbox"/> Uninformative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Well Organized | | <input type="checkbox"/> Unorganized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient Use of Time | | <input type="checkbox"/> Inefficient Use of Time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered Useful Ideas | | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not Offer Useful Ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addressed Your Needs and Interests | | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not Address Your Needs and Interests |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered and Opportunity for Interaction | | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not Offer Opportunity for Interaction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered Successful Teaching Methods and Materials | | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not Offer Successful Teaching Method |

15. How important do you perceive the Entry Year Teacher In-Service Program to be regarding the teacher's first year of teaching? (Check One)

- Very Important
 Important
 Less than Important
 Unimportant

16. Do you favor continuance of the Entry Year Teacher In-Service Program?

- Strongly Favor (Check One) Tend to Favor
 Uncertain Tend to Oppose
 Strongly Oppose

17. What changes would you like to see in the present Entry Year Teacher In-Service Program?

VITA

Larry Randall Smith

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: PERCEPTIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
ACCORDING TO THE ENTRY-YEAR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND
THE FIRST-YEAR INSERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

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1988.

Professional Experience: Vocational Agriculture
Teacher, Fletcher, Oklahoma, July 1, 1985 to
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Professional Organizations: Oklahoma Vocational
Agriculture Teachers Association, National
Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association,
Oklahoma Education Association, Member: Board of
Directors, Oklahoma Vocational Agriculture
Teachers Association, 1988-89, Fletcher Lions Club
of America, "Comanche Co. Cattlemen's
Association", "Comanche Co. Saddle and Sirloin".