

FACTORS INFLUENCING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS
TO LEAVE THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHING
PROFESSION IN OKLAHOMA BETWEEN
THE YEARS 1970-1976

By

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II

Bachelor of Science in Agriculture

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1976

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
December, 1976



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his gratitude for the assistance provided by the former teachers of Vocational Agriculture who helped in completing this study.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the district supervisors, university professors, vocational agriculture instructors, and graduate assistants who aided in the completion of this study.

The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation for the advice and encouragement given by the members of the Department of Agricultural Education, Oklahoma State University. In particular he wishes to thank Dr. Marcus Juby, major thesis adviser, Mr. George Cook, Dr. Robert Terry and Dr. James Key for their guidance, cooperation and consideration during the completion of this study.

Recognition is given to Ms. Betty Grego for her typing efforts concerned with the publication of this thesis.

The writer is especially grateful for the support, encouragement and understanding given by his wife, Nancy, and daughter, Emily. To them this work is dedicated.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Although Oklahoma State University continues to graduate a larger number of agricultural education majors as compared to other universities in the United States, they are rapidly approaching the point of not having enough certified teachers of vocational agriculture to fill positions being created and vacated each year. In years past, only four or five graduates were able to find employment in teaching vocational agriculture in Oklahoma as a result of the small turnover. Many who desired to teach were faced with leaving the state or seeking employment in fields other than teaching vocational agriculture. Today the situation seems to have reversed and Oklahoma is experiencing numerous openings or vacancies each year with new graduates finding employment without any great degree of difficulty.

Numerous reasons can be attributed to causing the present status in Oklahoma. Many schools have implemented multiple teacher departments in an effort to handle an increasing enrollment of students. New departments of vocational agriculture are now opening across the state and placing additional demands on qualified teachers of vocational agriculture. Perhaps the main reason for so many openings occurring is because of the large number of teachers leaving the field and going into other occupations, such as banking, farming, and the agricultural industry.

Teaching vocational agriculture is a demanding and time consuming job. The instructor of vocational agriculture in Oklahoma is required to have a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education along with a standard teaching certificate. In most instances, they have completed their last two years at Oklahoma State University. Due to the rapid changes occurring in agricultural technology they periodically return to Oklahoma State University for professional improvement courses. In a single teacher program they provide four hours of instruction in prescribed vocational agriculture courses. In addition to these activities, the instructor is responsible for supervising activities which are an integral part of the program, involving work with young and/or adult education programs, and playing an active role in community activities. Additionally, the teacher of vocational agriculture must be available for spur of the moment emergencies occurring in his community and respond accordingly. To meet these demands and challenges the instructor must be dedicated, conscientious, and desirous of total involvement in his chosen profession.

Statement of the Problem

For the past few years, the state of Oklahoma has lost a large number of vocational agricultural instructors to other occupational choices. The emphasis of this study was to identify selected factors that have influenced teachers of vocational agriculture in Oklahoma to leave the profession.

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study was to identify selected factors

causing vocational agricultural instructors, who have taught for 19 years or less to leave the teaching profession.

Background and Value of the Study

Oklahoma's vocational agricultural instructors have been leaving the profession at an ever increasing rate. A need to identify factors which cause teachers to leave the profession should be recognized and efforts should be made to correct or solve the problem. By conducting this study, teacher educator's can evaluate and reassess the current programs and implement new ideas and techniques to help overcome the current problems. Prospective candidates for student teaching in vocational agriculture can go out into the field with more ideas about what to observe and will thus be aided in making their decision to enter the field of teaching vocational agriculture. District supervisors of vocational agriculture and administrators of school systems may wish to reconstruct some of the programs and/or requirements for programs which they have employed in the past.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the population will give an accurate description of factors that influence vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession. It is also assumed that the use of a questionnaire will afford the population in this study with the best means of expressing their opinions. It is further assumed that the former teachers of vocational agriculture in this study are representative of all teachers who have left the field.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were established for this study. First, only vocational agriculture instructors who left the profession during the periods 1970-1976 were considered for this study. Second, only vocational agriculture teachers who taught 19 years or less were used in this study.

Definition of Terms

Agricultural Education Majors describes those students who aspire to teach vocational agriculture in a high school.

Vocational Agriculture Instructor is a person who has met the requirements for a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education and is eligible for certification by the state of Oklahoma.

Standard Teacher Certificate is earned by students who have successfully completed the requirements prescribed by the state of Oklahoma.

Professional Improvement Courses are courses offered to help vocational agriculture instructors in keeping abreast of changes in the field.

Single Teacher Programs are taught by one instructor. Student numbers and curriculum taught are limited in this system.

Multiple Teacher Departments are departments which have more than one instructor. They are designed to offer a broader curriculum and handle a large number of students.

Summary

It was the intention of this chapter to express the problem which gave rise to the need of this study. Factors which express the role

of vocational agriculture instructors were stated to aid the reader in understanding this situation. It is further desired that this study will be of benefit to the most demanding teaching profession in Oklahoma, which is teaching vocational agriculture.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This study took into consideration factors which influenced vocational agriculture teachers to leave the teaching profession during the period of 1970 to 1976. This chapter assisted the author in the exploration of areas which were both beneficial and relevant to the situation being researched.

Similar studies conducted in other states were located and proved beneficial in helping prepare this study. These studies explored other areas, such as teachers continuing to teach (9), quality point averages in high school and location of homes (7). Wallace (20) conducted a study to determine why vocational agriculture teachers left the teaching profession. His conclusion was that limited opportunity for advancement was the primary factor for teachers leaving the profession. Other factors of significant importance were salary not commensurate with work, too many extra-curricular activities, a ceiling in earnings and the desire for a more permanent home.

Almost identical to Wallace, Froehlich (7), concluded that lack of advancement, salary, too many evening responsibilities and long hours were factors influencing teachers to leave the profession.

Similar to Wallace and Froehlich's conclusions, Lamberth (13) found that salary was the primary factor and this response was followed

closely by poor facilities, inadequate supplies, and a lack of support of school administrators.

Vossler's (19) report concluded that limited opportunity for advancement, salary, too many extra-curricular activities, uncertainty of employment, and facilities undesirable for teaching agriculture were the causal factors.

In a study conducted by Miller (15), "First-Year Teacher's Morale and Behavior," teacher rapport with the principal, dissatisfaction with teaching, teacher loads and school facilities were of primary concern.

In a follow up report of non-teaching agricultural education graduates, Miller (14) reported that salary, reporting procedures, working hours, and pressure to work with students who do not have objectives in agriculture were important areas to improve.

Heathcott (11) reported that discipline problems, time required for FFA activities, state reports, little opportunity to specialize, over-emphasis of athletics and failure to adjust to school schedules were factors having some influence on teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession.

Heathcott (11) and Froehlich (7) found that students who enrolled in agricultural education were heavily influenced by their high school vocational agriculture instructor. Froehlich (7) insinuated that vocational agriculture instructors should have a role in selecting teacher candidates.

Vossler's (19) report stated that the teachers surveyed felt so strongly about the experience gained in the teaching profession that they would recommend the profession strongly to students. The abilities to understand people and get along with people contributed the most to

their success.

Thompson (18) and Rudd (18) feel that rigid requirements to qualify teachers have been relaxed. This could be a factor for a large number leaving the profession. If the requirements were more stringent for teacher certification, then the program as a whole stands to improve as far as teacher tenure is concerned. On the other hand, stringent certification requirements could deter teachers with good abilities because of these requirements.

Hash (10) feels that a teacher shortage is evident in part because of states' failures to honor certification standards established by other states. Teachers who are not able to find employment in their own state seek another profession rather than return to school to try and meet the other states' educational requirements.

The National Advisory Council on Agricultural Education (6) feels that a philosophy of agricultural education should be developed, standards for all levels of vocational agriculture education should be established, and public awareness of the many opportunities and occupations available through agriculture should be stimulated. Of the three, it was felt that stimulation of public awareness would be the most difficult to solve. School counselors who are not associated with agriculture were not considered qualified or adequately aware of the fields in agriculture to steer students toward a career in agriculture. One of the major areas of agriculture needing labor is that of education which requires a college degree.

According to Cross (6), the vocational agriculture teaching shortage is the major cause of problems in agriculture. Without qualified teachers, programs will not expand, thus contributing to the already

rapid decline of people entering the teaching field in agriculture. The time in which jobs became available was also said to be a problem, since schools hired in mid- or late summer, leaving many students accepting other professions in an effort to obtain an immediate income.

In a thesis completed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Croser (5) established that out of 15 possible reasons for leaving the teaching profession, the top five were all professional. Lack of opportunity for advancement, too many reports, too many hours, inadequate salary and too many meetings accounted for the popular factors influencing teachers to leave the profession.

CHAPTER III

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

In preparing this study, it was necessary to establish a population which would give a recent and up-to-date response which would be of benefit to this study. The design and conduct of this study were dictated by its overall purpose which was to determine factors influencing vocational agriculture teachers in Oklahoma to leave the profession.

In order to obtain information which would aid in the completion of this study, the author had to:

1. Determine a valid population.
2. Develop a suitable instrument for collecting data.
3. Secure names and addresses of population to be used.
4. Determine the method to use in analyzing collected data.

Population

In procuring a potential population for this study, it was necessary for the author to obtain access to the out-of-service teachers files located at the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education. These files had only the teacher's name, the last year they taught and the last school in which they taught. Current addresses were secured by interviewing district supervisors, vocational

agriculture instructors and professors at Oklahoma State University. In order to confirm the present location of the population it was necessary to obtain phone numbers through directory assistance and call those instructors whose present location was questionable. By using this process, a population of 100 former instructors were obtained. All of these instructors left the profession during the periods of 1970 to 1976.

Development of the Instrument

In comprising the statements used in the questionnaire, the author employed the aid of former vocational agriculture instructors, district supervisors and studies which dealt with similar situations. After the rough draft was completed, a copy was distributed to a graduate class for opinions and edification. These copies were collected and suggestions and comments were carefully observed.

Data Collection

It was felt that a standardized questionnaire would receive the best responses from the population. Without certain guidelines it would prove extremely difficult to evaluate the responses from 100 people.

Analysis of Data

The form of analysis which will best describe the data from this study and show if a trend is developing is the use of means and percentages. By revealing the results in this manner, the reader should have little difficulty in understanding what is reported.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the population, the instrument used, how data was to be collected and the statistical method used in analyzing the data collected. It is also hoped that this chapter explained the research and preparation which was conducted to aid in the completion of this study.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to present and identify factors which caused vocational agriculture instructors who taught 19 years or less to leave the profession. To accomplish this purpose, the following specific objectives were formulated:

1. To identify factors which caused vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession in Oklahoma.
2. To determine the relative importance of these factors as they pertain to other teachers in the state.

Population

The population for this study included vocational agriculture instructors who left the profession during the periods 1970 to 1976. Seventy-nine (79) out of one-hundred (100) former vocational agriculture instructors responded to the questionnaires which they received in the mail.

Descriptive Information of the Population

Table I contains a breakdown of the populations participation in regard to the number of years teaching experience and the educational level of these respondents at the time they left the teaching

TABLE I
DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION OF THE POPULATION

Number of Years Teaching Experience	BS		MS	
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent
1-4	24	30.3	2	2.5
5-9	23	29.1	6	7.5
10-14	7	8.8	3	3.7
15-19	4	5.0	10	12.6

profession. Teaching experience ranged from one (1) to nineteen (19) years. However, it was surprising to learn that 69.1% of the respondents had nine years or less of teaching experience upon leaving the profession.

Findings of This Study

The remaining portion of this chapter is an attempt to present and analyze the data collected relative to the responses of the population to factors influencing their decisions to leave the teaching profession. To facilitate presentation of these findings, data will be analyzed under selected major topic headings.

For convenience of explanation and comparisons in reference of each table presented in this chapter, the following scale was used in the assignment of value importance:

Of Extreme Importance	Of High Importance	Of Moderate Importance	Of Little Importance	Of No Importance
5	4	3	2	1

The real limits established for each category were as follows:

- 4.5 to 5.0 of Extreme Importance
- 3.5 to 4.49 of High Importance
- 2.5 to 3.49 of Moderate Importance
- 1.5 to 2.49 of Little Importance
- 1 to 1.49 of No Importance

Administration and Supervision

According to the data presented in Table II, the respondents reported that all statements were of little importance as a cause for leaving the teaching profession with the mean response of all

TABLE II

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA OF
 "ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE
 TEACHING PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Required reports and applications involving activities of chapter and teacher. N-79	4	5.0	12	15.1	18	22.7	21	26.5	24	30.3	2.38
Supervision of Vo-Ag program from local administration. N-79	7	8.8	14	17.7	8	10.1	14	17.7	36	45.5	2.27
District supervisor's role in job placement. N-79	4	5.0	6	7.5	7	8.8	15	18.9	47	59.4	1.80
Other teachers dissention over considerations given Vo-Ag Department. N-79	1	1.2	2	2.5	15	18.9	18	22.7	43	54.4	1.73

statements falling between the limits of 1.5 - 2.49. However, it was interesting to note that 42.8% of the respondents indicated that "required reports and applications involving activities of chapter and teacher" were of moderate or greater importance.

Family Situation

The presentation of data in Table III indicated that the factor "free time for family activities was insufficient" was of moderate importance as a reason for leaving. However, 70.7% of the respondents considered this factor to be of moderate or greater importance for leaving the profession. All other factors in this category were considered of little importance and fell in the range limits of 1.5 - 2.49.

Salary

All factors in this category (see Table IV) were considered to be of moderate or greater importance as reasons influencing teachers to leave the profession. The factor which received the highest mean response (3.73) was in reference to the salary being too low compared to job responsibilities. It is also of interest to note that "current inflation level exceeded pay raises" and "\$100/year increments for experience was unsatisfactory" were considered to be of moderate importance in the mean response category. However, 48% of the respondents considered current inflation levels to be of high or greater importance and 54.4% considered the \$100/year increments for experience to be of high or greater importance when they left the profession. "No reimbursement for lodging and travel expenses", received the lowest mean response in this category (2.65) but was still considered of

TABLE III

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA
OF "FAMILY" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE TEACHING
PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Requirements for family to be in- volved in community activities. N-79	5	6.3	8	10.1	12	15.1	20	25.3	34	43.0	2.11
Health status of family. N-79	2	2.5	6	7.5	3	3.7	10	12.6	58	73.4	1.53
Free time for family activities in- sufficient. N-79	22	27.8	19	24.0	15	18.9	4	5.0	19	24.0	3.27
Community expectations restricted social life. N-79	4	5.0	7	8.8	14	17.7	15	18.9	39	49.3	2.01
Absent from family to continue educa- tional requirements. N-79	3	3.7	4	5.0	10	12.6	19	24.0	43	54.4	1.80
Education/employment opportunities for spouse. N-79	4	5.0	3	3.7	8	10.1	6	7.5	58	73.4	1.59

TABLE IV

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA
OF "SALARY" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE TEACHING
PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Too low compared to job responsibilities. N-70	29	36.7	20	25.3	17	21.5	6	7.5	7	8.8	3.73
Current inflation level exceeded pay raises. N-79	23	29.1	15	18.9	19	24.0	12	15.1	10	12.6	3.37
\$100/year increments for experience was unsatisfactory. N-79	29	36.7	14	17.7	14	17.7	8	10.1	14	17.7	3.46
Payment of professional dues without reimbursement. N-79	18	22.7	9	11.3	11	13.9	15	18.9	26	32.9	2.72
No reimbursement for lodging and travel expenses. N-79	18	22.7	12	15.1	8	10.1	6	7.5	35	44.3	2.65

moderate importance.

Teaching Situation

Data collected in Table V indicates that most teachers were satisfied with their teaching environment as a whole. "School discipline too relaxed" was considered of moderate importance or greater by 46.6% of the respondents. Although all of the other responses were considered to be of little or no importance in the mean response section, "travel requirements in performance of duties" was considered to be of moderate or greater importance by 44.1% of the respondents.

Community Situation

According to the data presented in Table VI, the respondents reported that all statements were of little importance as a cause for leaving the teaching profession with the mean response of all statements falling between the limits of 1.5 - 2.49. It is interesting to note that over 50% of the respondents considered each statement to be of no importance in their leaving the profession.

Advancement and Security

Table VII indicates the mean response (3.62) pertaining to "promotions in other agriculture areas more promising" as only being considered of high importance. However, it is interesting to note that 46.8% considered this issue to be of extreme importance. "Opportunities for promotion limited in school" and "retirement plan was inadequate" were both considered to be of moderate importance for leaving the profession. It is interesting to note that 58.2% of the

TABLE V

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA OF
 "TEACHING SITUATION" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE TEACHING
 PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Responsibilities associated with girls in classroom activities. N-79	0	00.0	2	2.5	2	2.5	17	21.5	58	73.4	1.34
Responsibilities associated with girls out of class activities. N-79	1	1.2	2	2.5	3	3.7	16	20.2	57	72.1	1.41
Lack of money for purchasing equip- ment. N-79	10	12.6	4	5.0	15	18.9	9	11.3	41	51.8	2.15
Disciplinary students being placed in class without consultation. N-79	5	6.3	8	10.1	8	10.1	19	24.0	39	49.3	2.00
School discipline too relaxed. N-79	15	18.9	7	8.8	15	18.9	12	15.1	30	37.9	2.55
Agricultural technology changed too rapidly. N-79	3	3.7	2	2.5	3	3.7	14	17.7	57	72.1	1.48
Disliked working with adult groups. N-79	1	1.2	4	5.0	5	6.3	12	15.1	57	72.1	1.48
Too many professional meetings. N-79	7	8.8	1	1.2	10	12.6	17	21.5	44	55.6	1.86
Travel requirements in performance of duties. N-79	6	7.5	11	13.9	18	22.7	11	13.9	33	41.7	2.31
Pressures from increased demands of the job. N-79	14	17.7	8	10.1	8	10.1	16	20.2	33	41.7	2.42
Poor rapport with administration. N-79	6	7.5	5	6.3	7	8.8	12	15.1	49	62.0	1.82

TABLE VI

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA
OF "COMMUNITY SITUATION" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE
TEACHING PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Too much emphasis placed on winning. N-79	8	10.1	5	6.3	12	15.1	13	16.4	41	51.8	2.06
Pressure from community to expand activities. N-79	3	3.7	5	6.3	9	11.3	11	13.9	51	64.5	1.70
Disliked double standards expected of teachers. N-79	3	3.7	11	13.9	13	16.4	10	12.6	42	53.1	2.30
Efforts for promoting agriculture not rewarded. N-79	4	5.0	10	12.6	7	8.8	15	18.9	43	54.4	1.95
Required participation in com- munity organizations. N-79	7	8.8	5	6.3	10	12.6	12	15.1	45	56.9	1.95

TABLE VII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA
OF "ADVANCEMENT AND SECURITY" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE
TEACHING PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Opportunities for promotion limited in school. N-79	29	36.7	11	21.5	10	12.6	6	7.5	17	21.5	3.13
Promotions in other ag areas more promising. N-79	37	46.8	12	51.1	9	11.3	5	6.3	16	20.2	3.62
Retirement plan was inadequate. N-79	22	27.8	13	16.4	14	17.7	13	16.4	17	21.5	3.12
Graduate credit requirement to main- tain teacher certification. N-79	4	5.0	7	8.8	15	18.9	14	17.7	39	49.3	2.03

respondents considered "opportunities for promotion limited in school" to be of high or greater importance and 44.2% of the respondents considered "retirement plan was inadequate" as being of high or greater importance.

Personal Views

Although Table VIII shows the statement "desired more independence" only to be of moderate importance, 46.7% of the population considered this statement to be of high or greater importance for leaving the profession. The other statements were considered to be of little or no importance. It is interesting to note that 77.2% of the respondents considered "wanted an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job" to be of no importance.

Major Categories

Table IX indicates that the categories "salary" and "advancement and security" were of greatest influence in causing teachers to leave the profession. The mean response indicated that they were both considered of moderate importance falling in the range 2.5 - 3.49. All other categories fell in the range 1.5 - 2.49 and were considered to be of little importance.

TABLE VIII

RESPONSES REGARDING THE AMOUNT OF IMPORTANCE PLACED UPON THE AREA
OF "PERSONAL VIEWS" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING THE TEACHING
PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

Statement	Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	Num- ber	Per- cent	
Desired more independence. N-79	24	30.3	13	16.4	13	16.4	5	6.3	24	30.3	3.10
Taught school as long as had anticipated prior to entering teaching profession. N-79	2	2.5	6	7.5	8	10.1	8	10.1	55	69.6	1.63
Wanted an 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job. N-79	4	5.0	1	1.2	2	2.5	11	13.9	61	77.2	1.43

TABLE IX

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES REGARDING "MAJOR CATEGORIES" AS REASONS FOR LEAVING
THE TEACHING PROFESSION OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE

		Of Extreme Importance		Of High Importance		Of Moderate Importance		Of Little Importance		Of No Importance		Mean Response
		Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent	
Administration and Supervision	N-316	16	5.0	34	10.7	48	15.1	68	21.5	150	47.4	2.04
Family Situation	N-474	40	8.4	47	9.9	62	13.0	74	15.6	251	52.9	2.05
Salary	N-395	117	29.6	70	17.7	69	17.4	47	11.8	92	23.2	3.18
Teaching Situation	N-869	68	7.8	54	6.2	94	10.8	155	17.8	498	57.3	1.78
Community Situation	N-395	25	6.3	36	9.1	51	12.9	61	15.4	222	56.2	1.94
Advancement and Security	N-316	92	29.1	49	15.5	48	15.1	38	12.0	89	28.1	3.05
Personal Views	N-237	30	12.6	20	8.4	23	9.7	24	10.1	140	59.0	2.05

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the study which was conducted to determine if a trend or trends were developing which influenced vocational agriculture instructors in Oklahoma to leave the profession. Also presented are conclusions and recommendations which are based upon the analysis of data collected by the author during the conduct of this study.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to identify factors influencing vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession.

Specific Objectives of the Study

The following specific objectives were set forth to accomplish the primary purpose of this study:

- (1) To identify factors which caused vocational agriculture teachers to leave the profession in Oklahoma.
- (2) To determine the relative importance of these factors as they pertain to other teachers in the state.

Need for the Study

A large number of vocational agriculture teachers in Oklahoma have been leaving the teaching profession to seek occupations in other fields. It was the intent of this study to determine if a trend or trends were developing which are causing teachers of vocational agriculture to leave the profession. As a result of this study, it is hoped that suggestions or solutions to the existing situation could be implemented and assist in solving the problem of teacher shortage.

Procedure Used in the Study

Following a review of selected literature and research writing compiled in this area, the following procedure was implemented to aid in the collection and analysis of data in order to satisfy the purpose and objectives of this study: (1) determination of the population, (2) development of instrument for collection of data, (3) collection of the data, and (4) analysis of the results.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The major areas of concern to be investigated in this study were identified by teachers, district supervisors, graduate students and faculty members of Oklahoma State University. A questionnaire was mailed to the population and former teachers were asked to respond to those categories which he felt were important as factors influencing him to leave the vocational agriculture teaching field. The research findings in summary form are presented for each of the major areas of concern.

Selected Characteristics of the Teachers Participating in the Study

The study population was 79 former vocational agriculture teachers who left the vocational agriculture teaching profession during the periods 1970 to 1976. Each of these responded to a questionnaire.

Sixty nine percent of the teachers had taught nine years or less before leaving the profession and 59% of those who left had taught nine years or less and held a Bachelor of Science degree.

Thirty percent of the respondents left the profession with 10 to 19 years teaching experience and 16% of this year group had completed their Master of Science degree.

Administration and Supervision

All questions in this area were considered to be of little importance as was indicated by the mean response which fell between 1.5 and 2.49. Of the population, 42.8% considered "required reports and applications involving activities of chapter and teacher" to be of moderate or greater importance.

Family Situation

The factor "free time for family activities was insufficient" was considered to be of moderate importance. All other questions in this category fell within the range 1.5 and 2.49 and were considered to be of little importance.

Salary

The factor with the highest mean response (3.73) was "salary too

low compared to job responsibilities." All other factors considered to be of moderate importance were:

- (1) Current inflation level exceeded pay raises.
- (2) \$100/year increments for experience was unsatisfactory.
- (3) Payment of professional dues without reimbursement.
- (4) No reimbursement for lodging and travel expenses.

Teaching Situation

The only factor considered to be of moderate importance in this category was "school discipline too relaxed." All other factors in this category were considered to be of little importance.

Community Situation

All statements in this category were considered to be of little importance. Over 50% of the respondents considered each statement to be of no importance for leaving the profession.

Advancement and Security

"Promotions in other agriculture areas more promising" was considered the most important factor in this category and received a mean response (3.62) of high importance. "Opportunities for promotion limited in school" and "retirement plan was inadequate" were considered to be of moderate importance.

Personal Views

The factor "desired more independence" was considered to be of moderate importance as a factor for leaving the profession. All other

factors in this category were considered to be of little or no importance for quitting the teaching profession.

Conclusions

Although many factors are responsible for influencing teachers of vocational agriculture to leave the profession, many of them may not have been revealed in this study due to limited areas included in the questionnaire.

Several factors were reported and identified as influencing teachers of vocational agriculture in Oklahoma to discontinue teaching.

Some of the more important factors were:

- (1) Salary too low as compared to job responsibilities.
- (2) Promotional opportunities in other agricultural areas were more promising.
- (3) The increment increases of \$100 per year for each year of experience was too low.
- (4) The current inflation level exceeding the raises in salary.
- (5) Insufficient free time for family.
- (6) Opportunities for promotion limited in school.
- (7) Retirement plan was inadequate.
- (8) The desire for more independence.

Recommendations

When an individual feels that the work he is performing becomes too demanding for the monetary support received, he may become interested in seeking employment else where. Thus, the responsibilities of a teacher

of vocational agriculture should be well defined with guidelines established to aid the teacher in performing his duties prior to entering the profession. The increments paid to teachers on a yearly basis should be examined and concerted efforts made toward improving the present situation.

Perhaps a master's degree program which doesn't require a written research paper for completion would encourage more teachers to get a masters degree and thus raise their base salary scale. Another alternative to increasing the teachers salary would be to analyze and project the feasibility of increasing the vocational reimbursement program from the present monthly allowance of \$125 dollars to a figure more inline with today's current inflation rate.

Emphasis should be placed upon in-service and professional improvement programs to assist teachers of vocational agriculture in assessing their daily schedule and establishing priorities in their chosen profession.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. What is your present occupation? _____
2. Number of years teaching experience. _____
3. Number of graduate hours completed to date. _____
4. The highest degree held at time you left the teaching profession? _____
5. How many years did you plan to teach upon entering the teaching profession? _____

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS AS TO THEIR IMPORTANCE IN RELATION TO YOUR LEAVING THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

	Of Extreme Impt.	Of High Impt.	Of Moderate Impt.	Of Little Impt.	Of No Impt.
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ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION:

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Required reports and applications involving activities of chapter and teacher. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Supervision of vo-ag program from local administration. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. District supervisor's role in job placement. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Other teachers dissention over considerations given vo-ag dept. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

FAMILY SITUATION:

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Requirements for family to be involved in community activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Health status of family. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Free time for family activities insufficient. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Community expectations restricted social life. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Absent from family to continue educational requirements. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Education/employment opportunities for spouse. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

SALARY:

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Too low compared to job responsibilities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Current inflation level exceeded pay raises. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 3. \$100/yr. increments for experience was unsatisfactory. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Payment of professional dues without reimbursement. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. No reimbursement for lodging and travel expenses. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

TEACHING SITUATION:

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Responsibilities associated with girls in classroom activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Responsibilities associated with girls in out of class activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Lack of money for purchasing equipment. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Disciplinary students being placed in class without consultation. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. School discipline too relaxed. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Agricultural technology changed too rapidly. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Disliked working with adult groups. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Too many professional meetings. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Travel requirements in performance of duties. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Pressures from increased demands on the job. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Poor rapport with administration. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

COMMUNITY SITUATION:

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Too much emphasis placed on winning. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Pressure from community to expand activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Disliked double standards expected of teachers. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Efforts for promoting agriculture not rewarded. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Required participation in community organizations. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

ADVANCEMENT AND SECURITY:

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Opportunities for promotion limited in school. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Promotions in other ag areas more promising. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 3. Retirement plan was inadequate. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Graduate credit requirement to
maintain teacher certification. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
-
-

PERSONAL VIEWS:

- | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Desired more independence. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Taught school as long as had
anticipated prior to entering
teaching profession. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Wanted an 8am to 5pm job. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. OTHER FACTORS (Please Indicate) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
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APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER

July 16, 1976

Dear Sir:

Oklahoma has produced a surplus of vocational agriculture teachers for many years. Although Oklahoma State continues to certify a large number of students for teaching positions, the demand is slowly exceeding the supply.

One of the more prominent reasons for vacancies occurring has been that good teachers such as yourself have left the profession for other employment opportunities. It is for this reason that we solicit your help in identifying those factors which caused you to leave the teaching profession.

Please respond to the enclosed questionnaire and return as soon as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Respectfully yours,

Disney H. Reece

VITA²

Disney Harold Reece

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: FACTORS INFLUENCING VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS TO LEAVE
THE VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE TEACHING PROFESSION IN OKLAHOMA
BETWEEN THE YEARS 1970-1976

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Education: Graduated from Haskell High School, Haskell, Oklahoma,
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Professional Organizations: Member of the Oklahoma Vocational Agri-
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