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HANNAH, ROY MICHAEL
A COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT'S ROLE AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY.

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA, ED.D., 1979

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GRADUATE COLLEGE

A COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS OF THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT'S ROLE AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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ROY MICHAEL HANNAH

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1979

A COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PERCEPTIONS
OF THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT'S ROLE AT
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

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DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

DEDICATION

To my wife, Deanna, and
my daughter, Holly, who thought
I could succeed in this endeavor,
and supported me to that end.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to Mr. Edward Gregory, District Director, Oklahoma State University Extension Central District, for allowing the initiation of this endeavor while under his supervision. Also, a special thanks to Mr. J. O. Grantham, Director of University Extension, for his support in allowing the research to be conducted within the boundaries of his supervision. A very special thanks is expressed to those who participated in the survey from which the necessary data for completion of the study was collected.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to Barnard, organizations are purposive; if not, they would cease to exist.[1] Morphet, Johns, and Reller indicated that, since organizations exist for a purpose, all persons who participate in the activities related to that purpose should have their appropriate roles determined.[2] It was also suggested by Backman and Secord that as much consensus as possible, by all concerned regarding the various roles, is important.[3] But these factors are not always well controlled, thus, according to researchers, creating conflict and ambiguity.

Background and Need for the Study

Kahn and his colleagues stated that three kinds of changes pervade American organizations and contribute to ambiguity and conflict. "First, is organizational growth.

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[1]Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, (Cambridge, Mass.: The Harvard Printing Office, 1966), p. 82-89.

[2]Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Organization and Administration, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 91.

[3]Carl W. Backman and Paul F. Secord, Social Psychology, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 480.

Many companies are increasing in size at a rapid rate, and an almost essential companion of growth is reorganization."

"Second, changes in technology require associated changes in the social structure of organizations. New techniques virtually always require revision in role expectations toward those employing them, revisions which often must be learned through a complicated process of testing and retesting."

"Third, many organizations in American industry are characterized by frequent personnel changes. Not only is employee turnover a general problem, but frequent transfer and reassignments within organizations are common."[4]

An organization that has not escaped these changes is the Cooperative Extension Service that operates within the framework of the American land-grant institutions. The Extension Service has traditionally worked through the land-grant universities' Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics.

The United States formalized its cooperative national support program for the Cooperative Extension Service in 1914 amid Congressional hopes that these federal monies

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[4]Robert L. Kahn, D. M. Wolfe, R. P. Quinn, J. D. Snoek and R. A. Rosenthal, Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity, (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), p. 76.

would help keep a large percentage of the population on the farm.[5]

Carlson stated that, "Congress wanted the Cooperative Extension Service to increase agricultural production so the nation would not have to spend its capital abroad to buy food for its fast-growing urban population. It also wanted Extension to help maintain a rural way of life, a sentimentalized pattern of living based on a 20th Century. But instead of maintaining the rural way of life to which it was dedicated, Extension actually assisted in its liquidation."[6]

In 1940, 4 of every 10 Americans lived in 10 metropolitan areas with more than a million population. In the year 2000, it's conservatively projected that more than 8 of every 10 will live in some 28 "urban regions" that will each have more than a million people.[7]

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[5]Robert A Carlson, "Cooperative Extension: A Historical Assessment," Journal of Extension, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Fall, 1970) p. 10.

[6]U. S. Congress, House, Congressional Record, 63rd Congress, 2nd Sess. (1914), LI, Part 2, p. 1932-47. (as cited by) Robert A. Carlson, "Cooperative Extension: A Historical Assessment," Journal of Extension, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Fall, 1970) pp. 10-11.

[7]Belden Paulson, "Urban Dilemma: Contributing Factors," Journal of Extension, Vol. 11, No. 1, (Spring, 1973), p. 16.

Paulson stated that, " The Extension Agricultural Model was designed for a rather scattered population that has similar values and cultural backgrounds, and was highly production oriented." Some felt that the agricultural model had no relevance to urban problems, but others felt it had validity and relevance to the urban milieu.[8]

Oklahoma State University expressed confidence that the Agricultural Model was relevant with modifications, and in 1965 made those changes. Several modifications were made but the present study will only deal with those that related to the creation of the Urban Extension Agent position.

In 1965 a new administrative unit was created at Oklahoma State University called "University Extension". All extension activities were placed under one administrator, the Vice-President for Extension. This brought about a merger of Cooperative Extension and the extension operations of each college on the Stillwater campus. Included in this unit was: Arts and Sciences Extension, Business Extension, Engineering Extension, Continuing Education Division, Education Extension, and the traditional extension entities; Agriculture, Home Economics and 4-H Club work.[9] This

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[8] Belden Paulson, "Status of Extension's Urban Programming," Journal of Extension, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring, 1973), p. 32.

[9] Edd Roberts, History of Oklahoma State University Extension, (Printed by: Omicron, Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, 1965), p. 135.

organizational structure is shown in Appendix A.

In this structure each college was given a Director of Extension and his/her primary purpose was to serve the people of Oklahoma. Each college was not to be all things to all people, but where expertise was present it was to be accessible to the Oklahoma people.

Many of the agriculture and other traditional audiences saw this reorganization as an effort to de-emphasize Agriculture and Home Economics activities.[10]

Paulson in a survey of agriculture agents in urban areas, stated that, "Our professional staff do not recognize the differences in people resulting from various environments, cultures, and social conditions." New people need to be appointed to deal with the clientele in the urban areas.[11]

Ratchford in an address to the National Conference on Public Service and Extension, stated, "the system must have permanent off-campus staff who interact regularly with the comsumers of the extension service. A large number of people who need the services will not come to a campus and, further, the campus is not organized to accommodate their

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[10]Ibid., p. 135.

[11]Paulson, "Status of Extension Urban Programming", Journal of Extension, p. 31.

needs".[12]

In 1969, Oklahoma State University Extension created an Urban Extension Agent position, and placed an individual in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to act as a liaison between the clientele in metropolitan Oklahoma City and the non-traditional extension entities at the Stillwater campus. More specifically the urban agent was to represent the College of Business Extension, Engineering Extension, Education Extension, and Arts and Sciences Extension. (See Appendix B.)

Due to the fact that the urban agent was an emerging role, the responsibilities were not clearly defined. This gave rise annually, on various meeting agendas, to the following questions; "What are the responsibilities of the urban agent?" "What relationship does the urban agent have with respect to the College Director?" These questions implied that consensus was low and conflict was present concerning the urban agent's responsibilities.

The current role expectations for the urban agent are not clearly defined. A comparison of the role expectations held by the community, OSU administrators, and extension workers will help to identify areas of greatest discrepancy and could give some reference point for the resolution of

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[12]C. Brice Ratchford, National Conference on Public Service and Extension in Institutions of Higher Education, "Organizing to Accomplish the Public Service Objective." (The University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, 1974), pp. 80-81.

possible conflicts.

Statement of the Problem

This study was an investigation to determine if any differences existed among three groups of individuals in their perceptions of the job responsibilities of Urban Extension Agents in a land-grant institution. More specifically, the study was a comparison of the importance ratings made by OSU administrators, extension workers, and urban clientele concerning 25 responsibilities assigned to Urban Extension Agents in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Hypotheses Tested in the Study

In order to accomplish the purposes of the study, the following general null hypotheses were tested.

Ho_1 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's preliminary job responsibilities.

Ho_2 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's program execution responsibilities.

Ho_3 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's

post-program responsibilities.

Ho_4 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's ancillary job responsibilities.

Theoretical Framework

Getzels posed two questions in regard to role expectations and behavior in social systems. He asked: "(1) How is it that in some organizations the role expectations seem generally understood and acquiesced in by all, so that role incumbents become aware of their rights and obligations and behave with respect to them with a minimum of strain, and in other organizations this is not the case? and (2) How is it that no matter what the organizational situation, some complementary role incumbents understand and agree at once on their mutual rights and obligations whereas others take a long time in reaching such agreement and quite frequently do not come to terms either with their roles or with each other?"[13]

Getzels indicated that there are two relevant concepts that may shed some light on these questions. One is the concept of role-set, from sociological theory. The

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[13]Jacob W. Getzels, Educational Administration as a Social Process, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), p. 83.

other is the concept of selective perception, from psychological theory.[14]

Merton indicated that the concept of role-set refers to the pattern of role relationships and collaterally connected related expectations which an individual has by virtue of occupying a single position. For example, the position of teacher entails relationships with pupils, colleagues, and administrators. The crosscurrents of expectation goes on and on, besides colleagues, pupils, and administrators, we have local patriotic organizations, Parent-teachers associations, and almost anyone else who wishes to assert pressure.[15]

According to Getzels, selective perception stated simply is, "each individual structures the presumably common objective situation selectively."[16]

"On the one hand, there is the prescribed relationship as perceived idiosyncratically and organized privately by one role incumbent in terms of his own needs, dispositions, and projections; on the other hand, there is the same prescribed relationship as perceived idiosyncratically and organized privately by the other role incumbent in terms of

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[14] Ibid., p. 83.

[15] Merton, Robert K., Social Theory and Social Structure, New York: (1957), pp. 369.

[16] Getzels, Educational Administration, (1968), p. 84.

his needs, dispositions, and projections."[17]

When two complementary role incumbents understand or agree with each other, we are stating that their perceptions and private organization of the mutual expectations overlap and are relatively congruent. When they do not understand each other their prescribed complementary expectations do not overlap and are incongruent.[18]

There are many reasons why expectations do or do not overlap. "In a "bureaucratic" institution the relationships are based on segmental functional rather than total emotional ties. The responsibilities and rights of an individual are defined by superordinates. Roles are determined in a formal hierarchy of offices separate and apart from the personality of the incumbent in the position."[19]

Parsons indicated, that once these roles are set, the incumbent begins to play a role, based on his perceptions of the expectations of the system in order to receive rewards and avoid punishment.[20]

After consideration of Getzels' and Parson's thoughts

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[17] Ibid., p.86.

[18] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[19] Ibid., p. 88.

[20] Talcott Parsons, Edward A. Shils, Toward a General Theory of Action, New York: 1965, pp 154-155.

on Selective Perception, it was concluded, that the primary purpose of the present study will be to examine the amount of congruence or incongruence caused by the selective perceptions of those incumbents related to the Urban Extension Agent's role. Results of this study could bring about greater congruence in perceptions of the role of the Urban Extension Agent among the various role incumbents in the Oklahoma State University Extension organization.

The study could also contribute to greater understanding of selective perception, and its relationship to the functioning of organizations.

Procedures

A survey instrument (Appendix D) was developed and was used to have participants indicate their perceptions of the Urban Extension Agent's role at Oklahoma State University.

The ratings made by the various groups and individuals were analyzed by comparing the mean ratings made by each. The mean rating of each opinionnaire item was computed by multiplying the number of ratings made at each rating point by the numerical value assigned to that point, summing the five resulting products, and dividing by the total number of ratings made. This figure, a mean rating index was used as a raw score in the final analysis. Mean ratings were compared for each of the duties included on the opinionnaire. A one-way analysis of variance was used to compare the

three groups' mean importance ratings.

Limitations

Several limitations were placed on the study in order to make it feasible. These limitations were primarily related to the samples of participants, data collection instruments, and design of the study. The most important of these limitations were as follows:

1. The sample of administrators was limited to several Oklahoma State University (OSU) employees during the 1978-79 academic year.
2. The sample of extension workers was limited to the following persons and/or groups:
   (1) Urban Extension Agents from Oklahoma City and Tulsa
   (2) County Extension Directors in Oklahoma State University Extension Division's Central District
   (3) College Extension Directors' Staffs on the Stillwater campus
   (4) Urban Extension Agents' secretaries and staff in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.
3. The sample of clientele was limited to ten (10) persons each from Oklahoma City and Tulsa.
4. The data collected for the study were limited to the continuum ratings of the twenty-five (N=25) areas of job responsibility shown on the opinionnaire presented in Appendix D.

Definition of Terms

In order to avoid multiple interpretations the following definitions of terms are presented.

Role Expectations: The list of possible job duties as expressed for the Urban Extension Agent included on the Opinionnaire of Appendix D.

Urban Extension Agent: The extension agents who are responsible for extension programs within the Oklahoma City and Tulsa regions.

Extension Workers: Those associated with the Oklahoma State University Extension organization in one of the following capacities: (1) County Extension Directors, (2) College Extension Director's Staffs, (3) University Secretaries associated with the extension programs, and (4) the Urban Extension Agents from Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Administrators/Incumbents: This group of participants included several deans and extension directors who were primarily in administrative positions at OSU.

College Extension Directors: Those persons within the college of Oklahoma State University who are responsible for the extension programs associated with their particular college.

Preliminary Job Responsibilities: The general job responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent which precede program execution.

Program Execution Responsibilities: The general job

responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent in conducting extension programs.

Post-Program Responsibilities: The general job responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent related to program evaluation and follow-up activities.

Ancillary Job Responsibilities: The general job responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent.

Organization of the Study

The problem of the study and the hypotheses under investigation was presented in Chapter I. Chapter II contains the review of literature. The design of the study is contained in Chapter III. Chapter IV is composed of the data collected and analysis of that data. Chapter V contains the summary, conclusions and implications for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The present investigation developed as a result of the investigator occupying the role of Urban Agent at Oklahoma State University over a period of years. During this period of time it became obvious to the incumbent that the responsibilities were not clear with regard to the Urban Agent's role, thus creating conflict and ambiguity. There is some evidence that conflict and ambiguity with regard to organizational roles is inevitable; there is also some evidence that role conflict and ambiguity can be decreased if role expectations or role responsibilities are clarified. Thus the major emphasis for this study is to identify the perceptions of various groups in order to bring about more clarity and congruence.

Organizational Role Conflict and Ambiguity

"It is axiomatic that in order to survive as a member of society, a person must be able to locate himself accurately in the role structure. The simplest way to accomplish this is by seeking and finding answers to the question, "Who am I?". Since roles are structured in reciprocal fashion, the answers can also be achieved through locating the

position of the other by implicitly asking the question, "Who are you?". The answers to the latter question are usually phrased in terms of role categories, such as man, teacher, friend, officer, secretary, and clown, In order to establish the position of the other, the actor must pay attention to the behavior emitted by that other, scanning for cues that have reliability and validity. One's behavior must be assessed in light of the given situation as well as the type of behavior exhibited. For instance, aggressive behavior is not only condoned but considered appropriate in a given situation. Physique and figure, length and type of hairstyle, facial adornment, and dress, among other things are personal cues to which the actor may attend in order to locate the other, and reciprocally, the self, in social space. The process of enculturation is heavily weighted with the learning of which emitted behavior are signs or cues for which positions in the social structure. In ambiguous or partially structured situations, the actor may influence the role of the other by casting himself in one rather than another permitted role. His behavior in short serves as a potential constraint on the role enactment of the other, who must locate himself in the social structure."[1]

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[1] David L. Sills, International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, The Macmillan Company and The Free Press, Vol. 13, 1968, pp. 547-548.

Kahn indicated that many observers have focused attention on the unresolved problems of self-identity in contemporary American life. The question of "Who Am I?" has been pursued in an environment that is often unresponsive or in a state of flux. Kahn, et.al., observed that:

> "Conflict and ambiguity are among the major characteristics of our society, and we are marked by them."[2]

The whole person, according to Kahn and his associates, is affected by the characteristics of formal organizations and groups and are major determinants of his behavior.[3]

Although these organizations and groups are the creation of the minds of men, Kahn stated, "they have grown in size and complexity to the point that no single individual can comprehend at a given moment more than a small bit of that which is to be known about it."[4]

He indicated that in small groups or organizations, individuals may be familiar with or knowledgeable of each others' strengths, habits and limitations as well as the requirements of each task and function to be performed for

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[2]R. L. Kahn, Donald M. Wolfe, Robert P. Quinn, J. Diedrick Snoek and Robert A. Rosenthal, Organizational Stress: Studies in Role Conflict and Ambiguity, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1964), p. 3.

[3]Ibid., p. 11.

[4]Ibid., p. 75.

organizational effectiveness. But in larger organizations of even a few hundred members such familiarity is virtually impossible.[5]

The quest for identity is a significant problem for many people, this in combination with other needs leads them to look for certain kinds of satisfactions in the work situations, and the work situation frequently presents conditions of ambiguity and conflict rather than clarity and harmony.[6]

Many organizational studies have been conducted wherein different occupations have been examined concerning the role conflict dilemma. For example, Burchard studied the role conflicts of military chaplains where it was concluded that chaplains experienced role conflict due to unclear or multi-role expectations.[7] Gullahorn investigated the role conflict experienced by labor union leaders and found that expectations from multi-groups created role conflict for the leaders.[8]

Getzels and Guba conducted research focused on role

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[5]Ibid., p. 75

[6]Ibid., p. 7

[7]Waldo W. Burchard, "Role Conflicts of Military Chaplains," American Sociological Review, Vol. 19, No. 5 (1954) p. 528-535.

[8]J. T. Gullahorn, "Measuring Role Conflict," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 61, (1956) pp. 299-303.

conflict experienced by Air Force officers while assuming the multiple positions of officers and instructors. Their study indicated that the extent of role conflict varied as a function of the incompatibility of the role expectations. The study also indicated that the congruence of personality needs and role expectations are related to role effectiveness.[9]

Kahn and his colleagues developed a theory of role dynamics which sees stress resulting from conflicting or incompatible expectations and unclear or vague expectations. Expectations which are in conflict may result in role conflict for the individual, while unclear or vague expectations may cause role ambiguity.[10]

Secord and Backman stated "that satisfaction with one's role is contingent upon the type and amount of consensus, and the particular social system to which the role belongs".[11] Expectations associated with roles in a social system vary in clarity and in the degree of consensus among persons. Clarity is mainly a function of the explicitness and specificity of expectations. Newly developed

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[9] Jacob W. Getzels and E. G. Guba, "Role, Role Conflict, and Effectiveness: An Empirical Study," American Sociological Review, Vol. 19, (1954), pp. 164-165.

[10] R. L. Kahn, Organizational Stress, pp. 18-19.

[11] Paul F. Secord and Carl W. Backman, Social Psychology, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974), p. 480.

roles often lack clarity and thereby lead to role strain. Lack of clarity may also result from successive changes in a role.[12]

Secord and Backman indicated that, "A position incumbent and his role partner may disagree in five ways: 1) as to what expectations are included in a given role, 2) as to the range of permitted or prohibited behavior, 3) as to the situations to which the role applies, 4) as to whether the expected behavior is mandatory or simply preferred, and 5) as to which expectation should be honored first. Disagreement on an incumbent's role may occur between two or more of his partners or among persons outside the role set".[13]

According to Keller, individuals in complex organizations are constantly exposed to a variety of expectations from both themselves and others as they carry out their organizational roles. His research showed that employees are significantly more satisfied with their jobs when expectations for performance are made clear and non-conflicting.[14]

Secord and Backman described the institutional structure

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[12] Ibid., p. 479.

[13] Ibid., pp. 479-480.

[14] Robert T. Keller, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity: Correlation with Job Satisfaction and Values," Personnel Psychology, Vol. 28, (1975) p. 63.

and its work as a play. "The role expectations attached to each position are like the lines in the script for each of the parts. Strain is experienced by the actors when the play is written poorly: the lines are not clear, they require an actor to say and do incompatible things."[15]

Backman and Secord also stated that: "(1) Role strain may result when expectations are unclear and consensus is low. (2) Role strain lies in the conflicting or competing expectations that make up a role. (3) Also, discontinuities in the successive positions occupied by an actor are a third source of strain. (4) The simultaneous occupation of two or more positions is a fourth source of role strain. (5) Role strain results from certain organizational aspects of the social system. This condition will lead to efforts to change the system. (6) Strain also occurs where roles are related in such a way that conformity to the expectations of one role interferes with goal achievement by the role partner. (7) Finally, strain may develop when the system permits interpersonal maneuvering to block the goal achievement of one or more members of the system."[16]

"Role strain is inevitable," stated Goode. "It results not from just poorly designed systems, but is inevitable in

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[15]Carl W. Backman and Paul F. Secord, Problems in Social Psychology, Selected Readings, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966) p. 371.

[16]Backman and Secord, Social Psychology, pp. 487-488.

any system because persons are not adequately motivated to carry out all their role obligations." Goode suggested that the crucial problem facing an individual is one of allocating his role performances in a manner which minimizes strain. Each actor does this through a series of bargains with his various role partners. Goode also stated that larger social structures are held in place by role strains.[17] Goode inferred that role strain leads to a loss of efficiency, but a certain amount of strain helps hold the organization together. He did not indicate what degree of strain is necessary to hold organizations together but does state that many conflicting role strains in smaller subsystems may be the cause of their demise.

Almost all researchers either inferred or strongly stated that clarification of roles can reduce role conflict and ambiguity. All the researchers' work previously quoted have been in fields other than education. Baldridge, in his book on power and conflict in the university, stated that we also find these same types of role ambiguity and conflict situations in the university setting. Not only is the Dean caught between the expectations of the local departments and the central administration, but departmental chairmen are similarly caught between the conflicting expectations of the

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[17]Backman and Secord, Problems in Social Psychology, No. 43: "A Theory of Role Strain," William J. Goode, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). pp. 372-382.

Dean and professors within the department.[18]

Carroll in a study examining role conflict within complex academic organizations, particularly as it related to the university department chairman's position, found that stress-inducing role expectations do manifest themselves within the academic environment. He also indicated that individual behavior is influenced a great deal by expectations imposed on members of an organization.[19]

Carroll stated that one of the major difficulties in academic organizations is that role definition and perceptions vary considerably from one person to the next. For example, the faculty member may not consider himself a subordinate of administration, and any attempt to imply or suggest a role of superordination for the departmental chairman or some higher administrator and a role of subordination for the faculty member may likely lead to a conflict situation. The complexities of the educational institution, then become overt.[20]

Six consequences and effects of role conflict were cited by Carroll from prior research studies. These were as

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[18]J. Victor Baldridge, Power and Conflict in the University, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1971), p. 113.

[19]Archie B. Carroll, "Role Conflict in Academic Organizations: An Exploratory Examination of the Department Chairman's Experiences," Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 2 (Spring, 1974), p. 62.

[20]Ibid., p. 53.

follows: "(1) Individuals in professional organizations who are caught between conflicting expectations have been shown to frequently experience stress; (2) Persons reporting role conflict have stated that their trust in the persons who imposed the pressure was reduced; they like them less personally; they held them in lower esteem; they communicated with them less; and that their own effectiveness was decreased; (3) Potential sources of role conflict have resulted in significant decision-making difficulty; (4) Role conflict is associated with decreased satisfaction, coping behavior that would be dysfunctional for the organization, and experiences of stress and anxiety; (5) The emotional costs of role conflict include low job satisfaction, low confidence in the organization, and a high degree of job-related tension; (6) A very frequent behavioral response to role conflict is withdrawal from or avoidance of those who are seen as creating the conflict." [21]

Gellerman once stated that all goal-achieving organizations are made up of people, human assets through which the enterprise seeks to get its work done. These human assets are almost always a cost factor. When properly motivated or treated so that they become responsible, cooperative and creative, they become a profit factor to the

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[21] Ibid., p. 54.

organization or enterprise.[22]

In a study by Hatley and Pennington it was stated "that human beings are the greatest asset and the greatest liability of any organization". Hatley and Pennington also stated the "internal and external circumstances frequently put the human members of the organization in direct conflict with one another". These conflicts often arise out of the issues facing the role set of which the individual is a member and are confounded by the expectations held by others of the particular role incumbent. Therefore, the individual is found with role conflict.[23]

In a study by Wirz, involving Continuing Education Programmers, it was found that these relatively new role incumbents experienced several conflicts due to the way they were perceived by others in the University of Missouri Extension Department. Expectations and responsibilities were vague and ill-defined. Job overlap existed and communication obviously was weak due to ambiguity of roles.[24]

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[22]Saul Gellerman, "Understanding Motivation," BNA Film, Rockville, Maryland: (BNA Films, 1969).

[23]Richard V. Hatley and Buddy R. Pennington, "Role Conflict Resolution Behavior of High School Principals," Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 11, No. 3, (Autumn, 1975), p. 67.

[24]James L. Wirz, "A Study to Determine How Continuing Education Programmers of the University of Missouri Perceive Their Job Roles," Presented to the Department of Extension Education UMC, August 1970.

Almost all of the examined research indicated that external perceptions as well as internal perceptions affected the success and performance of the role incumbents. In a study by Bernard and Blackburn it was inferred that stress and strain resulted more in Higher Education settings from peer perceptions or internal rather than from external perceptions. It was stated that there will never be complete uniformity of agreement on either the organizational goals or the best way to accomplish them. However, reduction in misread expectations can reduce some stress and elevate performance at least for some individuals.[25]

Beidenbach, in an address to the Oklahoma State University Extension Staff (1978), stated that "if an organization can or will solve its people problems, the other problems that exist will seem trivial."[26] "Kahn and associates indicated that perceptions leading to role stress and ambiguity is costly for the person and for the organization in which he works. They also indicated that clarity and predictability are required for effective movement toward achievement of goals, but in complex organizations, even with emphasis on rule and authority, clarity and

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[25]William W. Bernard and Robert T. Blackburn, "Faculty Role Conflicts in a Rapidly Changing Environment," (1972), pp. 10-11.

[26]Joseph M. Beidenbach, presentation to Oklahoma State University Extension Staff, (1978).

predictability are difficult to achieve.[27]

Ambiguity, according to Kahn, is a fact of life, but something that most have learned to cope with in spite of the uncertainty. Data from the national survey of the labor force indicated that ambiguity is a source of stress for a substantial number of people. Following are the findings of that survey:

> "35 percent are disturbed by lack of clarity about the scope and responsibilities of their jobs;
>
> 29 percent are bothered by ambiguity about what their co-workers expect of them;
>
> 39 percent are distressed because they cannot get information required to perform their jobs adequately."[28]

This survey and studies by Kahn indicated that problems of ambiguity in the work situation are widespread and constitute important sources of stress for a great number of people in the American work force.

There is a substantial amount of evidence in the preceding literature in this chapter to indicate that there are several sources that create ambiguity and conflict for individuals and organizations. The following is a list of

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[27]R. L. Kahn, Organizational Stress, (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1964), pp. 72-73.

[28]Ibid., p. 74.

some of the sources from the studies cited:

1. Size of organization
2. Complexity of organization
3. The work itself
4. Unclear or vague expectations
5. Multi-role expectations
6. Occupation of multiple positions
7. Degree of consensus concerning role expectations
8. Externally imposed expectations
9. Variations of role definitions
10. External perceptions
11. Internal perceptions

This list does not exhaust all sources of role ambiguity and role conflict, but for the purpose of this present study it is sufficient. Bernard and Blackburn suggested that stress can be reduced and performance elevated if expectations are more congruent.[29]

Sills indicated that survival in society is dependent upon being able to locate one's self accurately in the role structure.[30]

Miles suggested that performance and satisfaction of the individual can increase by controlling ambiguity or clarifying responsibilities.[31]

A "congruent" environment according to Schuler would have lower levels of ambiguity and conflict, whereas

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[29]Bernard and Blackburn, "Faculty Role Conflicts", (1972), p. 10.

[30]Sills, International Encyclopedia, (1968), pp. 547-548.

[31]Robert H. Miles, "How Job Conflicts and Ambiguity Affect R and D Professionals", Research Management, (July, 1975), p. 36.

"incongruent" environment would have present a great deal more ambiguity and conflict.[32]

It is the purpose of the present study to identify those responsibilities, of the Urban Extension Agents, that are perceived most important by those closely related to the incumbent in order to bring about the most congruent environment possible.

Organization of Cooperative Extension Service

In 1914, through the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, the United States formalized its support for the Cooperative Extension Service for the purpose of serving rural America. Congressman Asburg F. Lever believed that the agricultural colleges possessed the knowledge needed to increase farm productivity, and along with others pushed through the Smith-Lever Act which set in motion the organization that is known as the Cooperative Extension Service.[33]

This organization for better than 60 years through the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the land-grant universities, has been actively engaged in continuing

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[32]Randall S. Schuler, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity as a Function of the Task-Structure-Technology Interaction", Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, Vol. 20, (1977) p. 71.

[33]Robert A. Carlson, "Cooperative Extension: A Historical Assessment", Journal of Extension, Vol. 8, No. 3, (1970), pp. 11-12.

education through state extension services.[34]

McDougall and Welden stated that, "these services link the land-grant universities with rural and urban communities through county or area extension offices staffed with professionally trained agents. They constitute America's only national network of continuing education with a unique Federal-State-County cost sharing structure.[35]

Ferguson stated that, "extension in 1914 was a sturdy, young, newly married couple (the U.S.D.A. and the Land Grant institution) who saw a world to conquer and set about it with enthusiasm, imagination, and determination".[36] McDougall and Welden stated that, "Cooperative Extension is best known for its educational programs in agriculture, home economics, 4-H youth activities and community resource development".[37]

Fessler indicated that urbanization created demands that extension agents were poorly prepared or unprepared to meet. He also indicated that the diminishing role of

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[34] Charles W. McDougall and Eugene Welden, "School Bells Ring for Adults Through Life", The Yearbook of Agriculture 1971, pp. 172-176.

[35] Ibid. p. 173.

[36] C. M. Ferguson, "Innovation in Extension", Journal of Extension, Vol. 2, No. 3, (Fall, 1964), p. 152.

[37] Charles W. McDougall and Eugene Welden, "School Bells Ring", p. 173.

farming plus the rapid urbanization of other areas in which Extension has been active in the past demands a rethinking of its entire role in order to better fulfill the needs of all the people.[38]

The Extension Service prepared itself to work with rural people not urban people. It's workers were rural in their thinking and formal training. History of the Service attest to the fact that they were well prepared but according to Paulson, the urban milieu brings with it new problems, new roles and calls for different expertise.[39]

The Extension Service in Oklahoma

Cooperative Extension in Oklahoma prior to the 1960's was generally like cooperative extension throughout the nation. The primary emphasis was on agriculture, home economics and 4-H youth work. In 1965, at Oklahoma State University the extension program was expanded to include the extension of resources, of all the colleges that made up the university, to the people of the State.[40]

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[38]Donald R. Fessler, "Alternative to Extension Future", Journal of Extension, Vol. 2, No. 3, (Fall, 1964), pp. 171-172.

[39]Belden Paulson, "Status of Extension's Urban Programming", Journal of Extension, Vol. 11, No. 1, (Spring, 1973), p. 31.

[40]Edd Roberts, History of Oklahoma State University Extension, (Printed by:Omicron, Chapter of Epsilon Sigma Phi, 1965), p. 135.

There was an atmosphere or desire to relate to the needs of the urban areas of the State of Oklahoma. With this concept in mind a new unit was formulated to accomplish that goal. See Appendix A.

A few years prior to the Oklahoma State University's reorganization designed to serve the urban populace, Oklahoma University, with the aid of a Ford Foundation grant, began a project designed for a similiar purpose, called "Programs in Urban Science".[41] The "Program in Urban Science", according to Roberts, was disappointing in some respects, but it provided a foundation for a new project called "Professors-of-the-City".[42]

This program included a consortium of four universities, Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma University, Tulsa University, and Langston University and was located in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to provide professional assistance, aid, study, and counsel to the city of Tulsa in the following areas: (1) communications; (2) leadership training; (3) housing; (4) youth opportunities; and (5) health.[43]

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[41] C. J. Roberts, Eugene F. Cates, Alvin Bielefeld, and Herbert Spear, A Case Study of the Professors of the City, (1975), p. 2.

[42] Ibid. p. 3.

[43] Ibid. pp. 5-6.

Cates indicated that, the Professors-of-the-City project did render a public service, and caused Higher Education, at least those institutions involved, to focus attention on public service that had "lacked measurable implementation before 1966".[44]

In 1969 about the close of the "Professors-of-the-City" project, Oklahoma State University appointed an Urban Extension Agent in Oklahoma City and in Tulsa in 1970. In 1970 a job description was written for the Extension Agent-Urban Programs with contributions from the incumbent as well as other entities. The general job description is shown in the appendices.

In 1975, the traditional organization (Cooperative Extension) was separated from the non-traditional (General Extension) each having its own head and separate structure. Appendix C shows how the urban agent's position is arranged in a de-centralized structure with regard to programs but centralized with regard to administrative accountability.

Under the previous organizational structure (Appendix A) the College Directors for Extension were not in a line position with regard to the urban agent. The same arrangement exists in the present structure. This seems to be the greatest source of role conflict since the urban agent works directly with these incumbents in programmatic areas.

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[44]Ibid. p. vi.

An effort has been made to clarify role expectations and responsibilities for the urban agent, but there appears to be some degree of ambiguity and conflict still present. The problem of this study is to determine the amount of congruence or incongruence present concerning the Urban Extension Agent's responsibilities as percieved by individuals directly or indirectly related to the Oklahoma State University Extension program. It is also the purpose of the present study to identify those responsibilities, of the Urban Extension Agents, that are perceived most important by those closely related to the incumbents in order to bring about the most congruent environment possible.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In the present study, sixty-six (N=66) extension administrators, extension workers, and extension program clientele were asked to respond to an opinionnaire concerning the job responsibilities assigned the Urban Extension Agents in Oklahoma City and Tulsa in order to determine if there were any discrepancies among the ways these three groups perceived the Urban Agent's responsibilities.

This chapter contains a detailed explanation of the methods and procedures to be used in conducting the study. These methods and procedures were divided into three phases or time orientations--pre-survey procedures, survey procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Selection of Population and Samples

Two criteria were taken into consideration when choosing the groups of participants; (1) participants were chosen who could give an accurate perception of the Urban Agent's role from individual perspectives. For example, the Urban Agent's superiors should be able to provide information concerning the agent's role which cannot be

supplied by either of the other groups. Likewise, the Urban Agents and clientele should be able to add information concerning the Urban Agent's role which would not be included in the administrators' responses. (2) Participants were also chosen who would most likely reflect any perceptual discrepancies which may exist concerning the Urban Agent's role. Using these two criteria, the participants shown in Figure 1 were included in the original study population. Group A and B in Figure 1 were chosen because of their relationship to the Urban Agent and their position at Oklahoma State University. Group C was chosen at random from a select group of individuals that have worked closely or very little with the urban agents over the past nine (9) years. Group D was chosen after research indicated that these out-of-state institutions were among a select few that operated their extension activities with the aid of an urban representative.

Development of a Data Collection Instrument

It was necessary to develop a data collection instrument for the study. This instrument was developed by asking the college extension directors, urban agents, and the district extension directors to list several possible duties which they felt were appropriate for the urban extension agent. In addition, a previous job description for the urban extension agent was utilized.

Figure 1

A.	ADMINISTRATORS (Internal)		
	1. Vice-President for Extension	1	
	2. Director of University Extension	1	
	3. Deans of Colleges	5	
	4. College Extension Directors	5	
	5. District Extension Directors	5	
	6. County Extension Directors	15	
			32
B.	PEER GROUPS AND SUBORDINATES		
	1. College Extension Director's Staff	5	
	2. Secretaries	2	
	3. Urban Agents	2	
			9
C.	CLIENTELE (External)		
	1. Tulsa		
	a. 5 persons exposed to Urban Agents		
	b. 5 persons with little exposure to Urban Agent	10	
	2. Oklahoma City		
	a. 5 persons exposed to Urban Agent		
	b. 5 persons with little exposure to Urban Agents	10	
			20
D.	OUT OF STATE EXTENSION ORGANIZATIONS		
	1. University of Missouri		
	a. Urban Representatives	2	
	b. Directors	1	
	2. Florida International University		
	a. Director of Continuing Educ.		
	b. Assistant Director	2	
			5
Total Number of Participants			66

The list of possible job responsibilities were then item analyzed to determine possible underlying factors or factors common to certain groups of responsibilities. This was accomplished by performing a factor analysis on the lists of possible responsibilities and the responsibilities included on the Urban Agent's job description. The varimax rotation system of factor analysis assigns numerical values to each responsibility based on its degree of commonality with all other responsibilities. For instance, those job responsibilities which were most related (correlated) to each other tended to be assigned values of common size, simply because they were measuring the same general areas of responsibility. The actual grouping of responsibilities by area or category is then accomplished by computing the arithmetic differences between the factor loadings assigned each responsibility. Once these differences have been computed, obvious groupings begin to appear. There is no established rule for the amount of difference needed between factor loadings to be considered significant, but the general rule is that difference between two factor loadings which is equal to or greater than three (3) times the previous difference indicates factor loadings which belong to a different category.

Results of the varimax-rotation factor analysis procedures isolated three relatively well-defined groups of

responsibilities, while a fourth area showed several subgroupings and had to be regarded simply as a "general" category. The themes identified for the four areas of responsibility were as follows:

(1) Area of preliminary job responsibilities
(2) Area of program execution responsibilities
(3) Area of post-program job responsibilities
(4) Area of ancillary job responsibilities

The job responsibilities identified in each of the four categories are shown in Figure 2.

The second step taken in development of the instrument was to submit the results of the statistical analysis to members of the dissertation committee, college extension directors, and district extension directors to determine whether they felt the areas of job responsibility were adequate to specify the Urban Extension Agent's role. Eleven participants responded with very few changes suggested. After making the changes suggested the final opinionnaire, presented in Appendix D, was developed.

Instrument Validity

Part of the instrument development procedures was to establish the validity of the resulting opinionnaire. The jury method of establishing such validity was employed.[1]

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[1]Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 444-462.

Figure 2

PRELIMINARY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	1. Assist in the preplanning of extension courses 2. Conduct survey of clientele needs 3. Convey clientele needs to O.S.U. College Extension Directors 4. Assist in planning extension courses to meet clients' needs 5. Review competitive programs 6. Establish inquiry procedures concerning resources and programs
PROGRAM EXECUTION RESPONSIBILITIES	1. Identify potential program participants 2. Be responsible for procuring a location, supplies, equipment, etc. 3. Provide transportation for program participants 4. Assist in selection of instructors, speakers, etc. 5. Establish program budgets 6. Assist in selection of coordinator/moderator 7. Assume primary responsibility for program advertising 8. Be present at the beginning of each program
POST-PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES	1. Assist in program evaluation 2. Conduct post-program evaluation 3. Prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual programs' report
ANCILLARY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	1. Promote programs offered by Oklahoma State University Extension 2. Serve as liaison between the public and O.S.U. representatives 3. Make periodic reports to Director of University Extension 4. State behavioral objectives pertaining to job on a yearly basis 5. Assist in developing and maintaining the image of O.S.U. 6. Evaluate and revise job responsibilities annually in conjunction with O.S.U. Extension Directors 7. Frequently visit the O.S.U. campus 8. Visit industry, business, schools, etc., on behalf of the College Directors

In this method a jury of "experts" in the area was asked to determine the appropriateness (validity) of certain data collection instruments, procedures, or methods. The issue to be resolved was, "Do the areas of job responsibility presented on the opinionnaire of Appendix D give an accurate and comprehensive representation of the job responsibilities assigned the Urban Extension Agent?".

Again, the college extension directors, district extension directors, and extension workers made continuum ratings of each category and each job responsibility within the category. These ratings were then used to compute a coefficient of concordance among the various participants' ratings of the areas and individual job responsibilities.

The results of computing the coefficients of concordance showed values ranging from C=0.622 to C=0.931. However, the overall consensus validity of the opinionnaire was determined to be C=0.813. This coefficient was significant beyond the .05 level.

Instrument Reliability

The reliability of the data collection instrument was established by comparing the pretest and posttest ratings made by a sample of six randomly-selected urban agents, county extension agents, and extension workers. The test-retest reliability of the instrument was

determined to be r = 0.911. This was significant beyond the .01 level.

Data Collection Procedures

The second stage of the procedures was to collect the data from selected participants. The opinionnaire shown in Appendix D was sent to the participants along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study. The cover letter is presented in Appendix E.

One week after the initial mailing, a reminder was sent to the non-respondents. This mailing included a second cover letter (Appendix F), a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a copy of the Urban Agent's Job Responsibilities Opinionnaire.

A final effort was made to collect unreturned opinionnaires by calling and/or visiting the non-respondents. However, most of the instruments had been returned and after five weeks from the time of initial mailing, it became apparent that there would be no further responses. Fifty-three (N=53) of the 66 participants chosen for the study responded to the opinionnaire for a response rate of 80.3 percent. This was more than sufficient to complete the data analysis procedure.[2]

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[2]Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research, p. 414.

Statistical Analysis

The ratings made by the various groups and individuals were analyzed by comparing the mean ratings made by each. A mean rating of each opinionnaire item was computed by multiplying the number of ratings made at each rating point by the numerical value assigned to that point, summing the five resulting products, and dividing by the total number of ratings made. This figure, a mean rating index, was used as a raw score in the final analysis. Mean ratings were compared for each of the duties included on the opinionnaire.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the three groups' mean importance ratings and to test the four general null hypotheses stated in the study.

Popham indicated that the ANOVA is a statistical procedure that can tell the researcher in a single operation whether any significant differences exist between the means of many groups, thus avoiding the calculation of a host of individual t tests.[3]

The null hypotheses were tested for significance at the .05 level. This particular level of significance was chosen because of the numbers contained within the comparison groups and the information being sought in the

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[3] James E. Popham, Educational Statistics, Use and Interpretation, (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1967) p. 165.

hypotheses.[4] Bridges indicates that when it is more important to avoid a Type II error than a Type I error, the experimenter should work at the .05 level instead of the .01.[5] The size of the three comparison groups made it necessary to work at the .05 level, since the power of the analysis would have been greatly reduced if the experimenter had worked at a more stringent level.[6]

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[4]Woodrow W. Wyatt and Charles M. Bridges, Jr., Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1966), p. 97.

[5]Ibid., p. 98.

[6]Ibid., p. 98.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Opinionnaire ratings made by fifty-three (N=53) extension administrators, extension workers, and extension program clientele were made to determine any possible discrepancies among the ratings made by the three groups. Importance ratings were made of job responsibilities assigned the Urban Extension Agents in Oklahoma City and Tulsa. Job responsibilities were limited to twenty-five general duties over four categories of responsibility. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the three groups' mean importance ratings and to test the four general null hypotheses stated in the study.

Chapter IV contains the results of all data analysis. In each case, the general null hypothesis is restated and the results of testing the hypothesis are presented.

Results of Testing Null Hypothesis Number One

The null form of the first general hypothesis was stated and tested as follows:

Ho_1 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators',

extensions workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's preliminary job responsibilities.

The first null hypothesis was tested by comparing the mean index ratings made by the administrators (N=14), extension workers (N=21), and clientele (N=18) of six job responsibilities in the first category. The results presented in Table 1 show the three groups' mean importance ratings and the analysis of variance results.

The data presented in Table 1 show that there were significant differences among the three groups' ratings on three of the six areas of responsibility. The first job responsibility, "assist in the preplanning of extension courses", was rated significantly more important by the clientele than by the administrators ($F=4.22$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The second job responsibility, "conduct survey of clientele's needs", was rated significantly more important by the clientele than by the extension workers ($F=4.10$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The fourth job responsibility, "assist in planning extension courses that meet clientele needs", was rated significantly more important by the clientele and extension workers than the administrators ($F=4.87$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The results presented in Table 1 show that the first general null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE 1

RESULTS OF COMPARING THE THREE GROUPS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF SIX PRELIMINARY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED THE URBAN AGENT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	Mean Importance Ratings: Admin. (N=14)	Extension Workers (N=21)	Clientele (N=18)	Calculated F-Value*	Significance Level
1. Assist in the preplanning of extension courses	4.00	4.13	4.52	4.22	<.05
2. Conduct survey of clientele needs	4.66	4.28	4.76	4.10	<.05
3. Convey clientele needs to O.S.U. College Extension Directors	5.00	4.75	4.88	2.17	>.05
4. Assist in planning extension courses to meet clients' needs	4.04	4.62	4.58	4.87	<.05
5. Review competitive programs	3.42	3.63	3.86	3.02	>.05
6. Establish inquiry procedures concerning resources and programs	3.57	3.76	3.85	2.39	>.05

*All Calculated F-values had 2 and 50 Degrees of Freedom

**The Three Groups Were Composed In The Following Manner:

Administrators -included items 1-5 in group A, and all of Group D. (See Figure 1)
Extension Workers -included item 6 in Group A, and all of Group B.
Clientele -included all of Group C.

Results of Testing the Second General Null Hypothesis

The null form of the second general hypothesis was stated and tested as follows:

> Ho_2 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's program execution responsibilities.

The second null hypothesis was tested by comparing the three groups' importance ratings of the eight job responsibilities included in category 2. The results of making the comparisons are presented in Table 2 along with each group's mean index ratings.

The results presented in Table 2 show that there were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings on four of the eight areas of program-execution responsibilities.

The second responsibility, "be responsible for procuring a location, supplies, equipment, etc.", was rated significantly less important by the clientele than by the administrators ($F=4.30$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The fourth responsibility, "assist in the selection of speakers, instructors, etc.", was rated significantly more important by the clientele than either the extension workers or administrators ($F=6.47$; $df=2/50$; $P < .01$).

The fifth responsibility, "establish program budgets", was rated significantly more important by the clientele than

TABLE 2

RESULTS OF COMPARING THE THREE GROUPS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF EIGHT PROGRAM-EXECUTION RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS				
	Admin. (N=14)	Extension Workers (N=21)	Clientele (N=18)	Calculated F-Value*	Significance Level
1. Identify potential program participants	4.66	4.53	4.41	2.19	$>.05$
2. Be responsible for procuring a location, supplies, equipment, etc.	4.77	4.68	4.24	4.30	$<.05$
3. Provide transportation for program participants	1.68	1.76	1.70	1.03	$>.05$
4. Assist in selection of instructors, speakers, etc.	3.40	3.57	4.15	6.47	$<.01$
5. Establish program budgets	3.60	3.19	4.11	6.11	$<.01$
6. Assist in selection of coordinator/moderator	3.40	3.55	3.64	2.09	$>.05$
7. Assume primary responsibility for program advertising	4.33	4.04	4.40	2.84	$>.05$
8. Be present at the beginning of each program	3.66	4.42	4.33	5.93	$<.01$

*All calculated F-Values had 2 and 50 Degrees of Freedom.

either the extension workers or administrators (F=6.11; df=2/50; P $<$ .01).

The eighth responsibility, "be present at the beginning of each program", was rated significantly more important by the clientele and extension workers than by the administrators (F=5.93; df=2/50; P $<$.01).

The results presented in Table 2 indicated rejection of the second general null hypothesis.

Results of Testing the Third General Null Hypothesis

The null form of the third general hypothesis was stated and tested as follows:

> Ho_3 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's post-program job responsibilities.

The third null hypothesis was tested by comparing the three groups' importance ratings of the three job responsibilities included in category 3. The results of making the comparisons are presented in Table 3 along with each group's mean index ratings.

The results presented in Table 3 show that there were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of all three job responsibilities.

The first responsibility, "assist in program evaluation", was rated significantly more important by the clientele and administrators than by the extension workers (F=4.89;

TABLE 3

RESULTS OF COMPARING THE THREE GROUPS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF THREE POST-PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS			Calculated F-Value	Significance Level
	Admin. (N=14)	Extension Workers (N=21)	Clientele (N=18)		
1. Assist in program Evaluation	4.53	4.00	4.58	4.89	$< .05$
2. Conduct post-program followups	4.53	3.97	4.33	4.25	$< .05$
3. Prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual programs' report	4.35	2.72	3.71	11.19	$< .01$

*All calculated F-Values had 2 and 50 degrees of freedom.

df=2/50; $P < .05$).

The second responsibility, "conduct post-program followups", was rated significantly higher by the administrators than by the extension workers ($F=4.25$; df=2/50; $P < .05$).

The third responsibility, "prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual programs' report", was rated significantly less important by the clientele and extension workers than by the administrators ($F=11.19$; df=2/50; $P < .01$).

The results presented in Table 3 indicated rejection of the third general null hypothesis.

Results of Testing the Fourth General Null Hypothesis

The null form of the fourth general hypothesis was stated and tested as follows:

> Ho_4 There are no statistically significant differences among the administrators', extension workers', and clientele's importance ratings of the urban agent's ancillary job responsibilities.

The fourth null hypothesis was tested by comparing the three groups' importance ratings of the eight job responsibilities included in category 4. Results of making the comparisons are presented in Table 4, along with each group's mean index ratings.

The results presented in Table 4 show that there were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings on four of the eight areas of ancillary job

TABLE 4

RESULTS OF COMPARING THE THREE GROUPS' IMPORTANCE RATINGS OF EIGHT ANCILLARY JOB RESPONSIBILITIES ASSIGNED THE URBAN EXTENSION AGENT

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES	MEAN IMPORTANCE RATINGS			Calculated F-Value	Significance Level
	Admin. (N=14)	Extension Workers (N=21)	Clientele (N=18)		
1. Promote programs offered by Oklahoma State University Extension	4.60	4.62	4.64	1.17	>.05
2. Serve as liaison between the public and OSU representatives	4.37	4.41	4.22	1.03	>.05
3. Make periodic reports to the Director of Extension	4.37	3.91	4.16	3.44	<.05
4. State job behavioral objectives on a yearly basis	3.91	3.86	3.53	3.21	<.05
5. Help develop and maintain the image of OSU	4.66	4.63	4.02	2.62	>.05
6. Evaluate and revise job responsibilities annually in conjunction with OSU Extension Directors	4.13	3.51	4.03	6.13	<.01
7. Visit the OSU campus frequently	3.96	3.66	3.72	3.27	<.05
8. Visit industry, businesses, schools, etc. on behalf of the OSU college Directors	4.42	4.47	4.31	0.94	>.05

*All calculated F-Values had 2 and 50 degrees of freedom.

responsibilities.

The third job responsibility, "make periodic reports to the Director of University Extension", was rated significantly more important by the administrators than by the extension workers ($F=3.44$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The fourth job responsibility, "state behavioral objectives pertaining to the Urban Agent's job on a yearly basis", was rated significantly more important by the administrators than by the clientele ($F=3.21$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The sixth responsibility, "evaluate and revise job responsibilities annually in conjunction with OSU Extension Directors", was rated significantly more important by the administrators than by the clientele and extension workers ($F=6.13$; $df=2/50$; $P < .01$).

The seventh responsibility, "visit the OSU campus frequently", was rated significantly more important by the administrators than by the clientele and extension workers ($F=3.27$; $df=2/50$; $P < .05$).

The results presented in Table 4 indicated rejection of the fourth general null hypothesis.

Secondary Findings

Several secondary findings were noted during the data analysis procedures. Testing the hypotheses showed the areas of major discrepancy among the three groups' importance ratings. However, these comparisons did not show the overall

importance the total population of participants placed on the individual job responsibilities. These composite importance ratings are shown in Table 5. The opinionnaire items are placed in descending order.

The data presented in Table 5 indicated that the five most important job responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent were as follows:

1. Relay client needs to O.S.U. College Extension Directors
2. Promote programs offered by Oklahoma State University Extension
3. Assume responsibility for the logistics of extension courses such as procuring a location, supplies, equipment, and any other arrangements
4. Conduct survey of clientele needs
5. Identify potential participants

The five least important job responsibilities assigned the Urban Agent were as follows:

1. Review competitive programs
2. Establish program budgets
3. Assist in selection of coordinator/moderator
4. Prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual report
5. Provide transportation for participants

The five job responsibilities which the three groups felt were most important were related primarily to a public relations/liaison function between the O.S.U. Extension

Table 5

RANK ORDER OF COMPOSITE MEAN RATINGS OF ITEMS

Item Number		Opinionaire Items	Composite Mean Rating
1.	(5)	Relay client needs to O.S.U. College Extension Directors	4.860
2.	(4)	Promote programs offered by Okla. State University Extension	4.622
3.	(8)	Assume responsibility for the logistics of extension courses such as procuring a location, supplies, equipment, and any other arrangements	4.554
4.	(2)	Conduct survey of clientele needs	4.543
5.	(3)	Identify potential participants	4.524
6.	(14)	Further develop and maintain the image of Okla. State University	4.522
7.	(6)	Assist in planning extension courses to meet client needs	4.453
8.	(24)	Visit industry, business, schools, etc., on behalf of College Directors	4.402
9.	(19)	Assist in program evaluation	4.337
10.	(7)	Serve as liaison between the public and O.S.U. representatives	4.335
11.	(20)	Conduct post-program follow-up	4.240
12.	(17)	Assume primary responsibility for program advertising i.e. press releases	4.239
13.	(1)	Assist in the preplanning of Extension Courses	4.228
14.	(25)	Be present at the beginning of each program	4.189
15.	(12)	Make periodic reports to Director of University Extension	4.116
16.	(22)	Evaluate and revise job responsibilities annually in conjunction with Director of University Extension and College Extension Directors	3.850
17.	(13)	State behavioral objectives pertaining to job on a yearly basis	3.761
18.	(23)	Frequently visit campus	3.760
19.	(18)	Establish and conduct inquiry procedures concerning O.S.U. resources and programs	3.740
20.	(11)	Assist in selection of instructors, speakers, etc.	3.722
21.	(10)	Review competitive programs	3.653
22.	(15)	Establish program budgets	3.611
23.	(16)	Assist in selection of coordinator/moderator	3.541
24.	(21)	Prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual report	3.487
25.	(9)	Provide transportation for participants	1.718

Department and the public.

The five areas which the three groups felt were the least important were related to the actual mechanics of conducting extension programs.

Summary of Results

The results of testing the four general null hypotheses may be summarized as follows:

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of six preliminary job responsibilities. The clientele rated three areas significantly more important than the administrators.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of eight program-execution responsibilities. Clientele and extension workers tended to see Urban Agent's role as significantly less important in program-execution than did the administrators.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of three post-program job responsibilities. Administrators felt that it was very important Urban Agents should conduct post-program follow-ups and submit an annual program evaluation, while clientele and extension workers rated these activities less important.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of eight ancillary job responsibilities. Administrators felt that it was very important

that Urban Agents make periodic reports, state behavioral objectives, be evaluated annually, and visit the OSU campus frequently while the clientele and extension workers viewed these activities as being much less important.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to determine any differences which may have existed among three groups of individuals concerning the job responsibilities of Urban Extension Agents from a land-grant institution. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to compare the importance ratings made by OSU administrators, extension workers, and urban clientele concerning 25 responsibilities assigned to Urban Extension Agents in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Opinionnaire ratings made by fifty-three (N=53) extension administrators, extension workers, and extension program clientele were made to determine any possible discrepancies among the ratings made by the three groups. Job responsibilities were limited to twenty-five general duties over four categories of responsibility. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the three groups' mean importance ratings and to test the four general null hypotheses stated in the study.

Findings

The results of testing the four general null hypotheses may be summarized as follows:

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of six preliminary job responsibilities. The clientele rated three areas significantly more important than the administrators.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of eight program-execution responsibilities. Clientele and extension workers tended to see the Urban Agent's role as significantly less important in program-execution than did the administrators.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of three post-program job responsibilities. Administrators felt that it was very important that Urban Agents should conduct post-program follow ups and submit an annual program evaluation, while clientele and extension workers rated these activities less important.

There were significant differences among the three groups' importance ratings of eight ancillary job responsibilities.

Conclusions

In this study the major emphasis was to identify any perceptual differences that existed among three groups of individuals concerning the job responsibilities of Urban

Agents at Oklahoma State University. It was assumed from the beginning of the study, (based on the theory of selective perception), that each group selectively perceived the Urban Agents role responsibilities, and that those perceived responsibilities could be identified through the use of the developed survey instrument. It was further assumed that once the perceived responsibilities were identified, importance could be determined with regard to the expectations held by the three groups that participated in the study. Finally, it was assumed that once importance ratings were compared a determination could be made with regard to whether or not the Urban Agents perceived role responsibilities were congruent.

Subject to the limitations of the study, the following conclusions seemed justified:

1. The perceived important role responsibilities for the Urban Agent can be identified by utilizing the developed survey instrument.

2. Certain job responsibilities were perceived to be more important than others.

3. There was more congruence among the off-campus participants than among the on-campus participants with regard to perceived responsibilities for the Urban Agent.

4. The study supported previous research indicating that expectations relating to roles in a social system vary in clarity and degree of consensus among persons. Also, supported is the

statement that disagreement on a role incumbent's role may occur between two or more of his co-workers or among persons outside the role set.

5. Also supported was the idea that one of the major difficulties in academic organizations is that role definitions and perceptions vary considerably from one person to the next.

6. The results of the study also supported the statement that individuals in complex organizations are constantly exposed to a number of expectations from both themselves and others as they carry out their organizational roles.

Implications for Further Research

This study was designed to determine the amount of congruence with regard to the perceived importance of the various job responsibilities of the urban program agent at Oklahoma State University. The major emphasis was placed on surveying the perceptions of those internally and externally related to that role in order to determine the importance of each identified job responsibility.

(1) The investigator was able to identify only a few land-grant institutions that have a similar role incumbent. It would seem appropriate, should others be identified that have similar roles in their organizational structure, to replicate the study in order to permit a wider generalization of the results.

(2) It seems likely that perhaps other responsibilities would be identified, if the sample were expanded to

include participants who have not experienced or come in contact with an urban agent. The present study included only those participants who have worked closely with or fairly close with the urban agents.

(3) The results of the study seemed to imply that a measure of role conflict existed. It seemed likely that role strain would also be present. A study to determine if role strain is present might be productive.

(4) The present study could be revised to determine whether or not role strain, due to role conflict, comes from internal or external perceptions.

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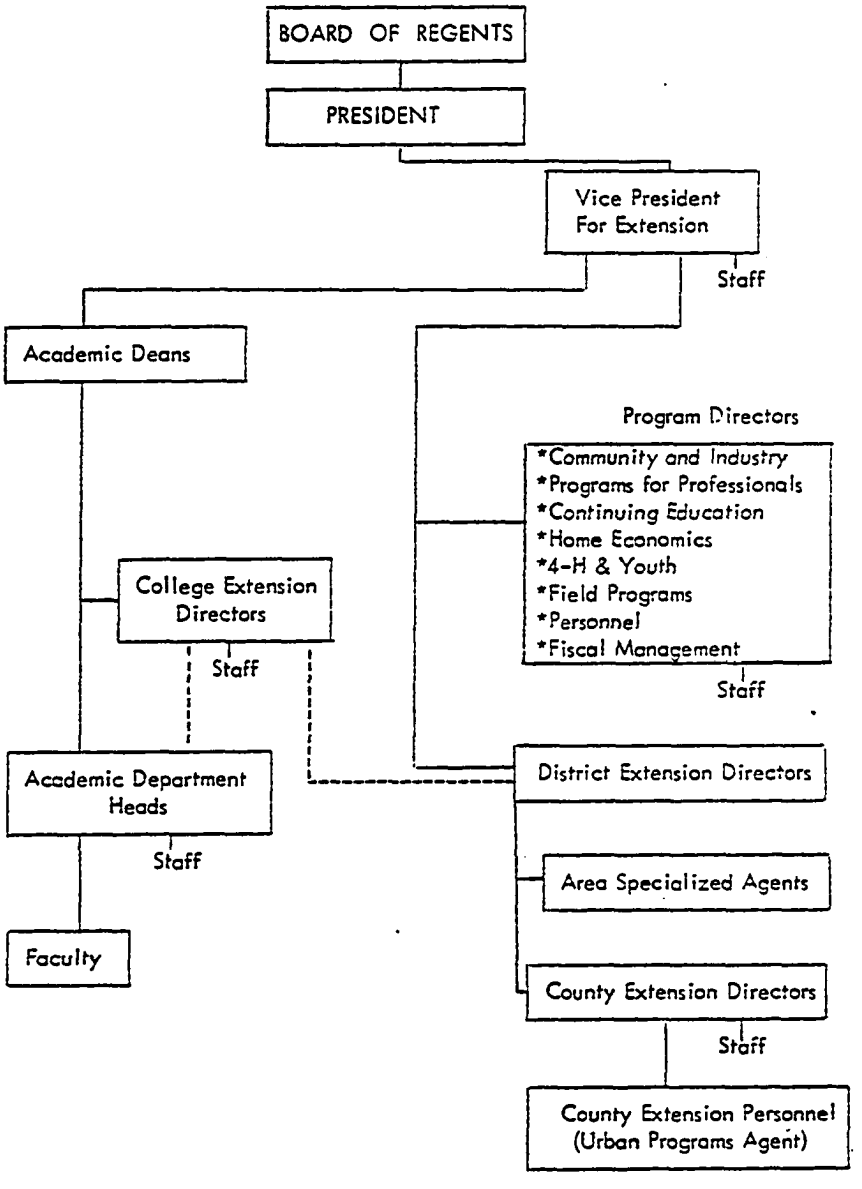
APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
1965

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION



APPENDIX B

GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION

GENERAL JOB DESCRIPTION

I. Title - Extension Agent - Urban Programs

II. Working Authority - Oklahoma State University Extension

III. Nature and Purpose - To provide and implement educational programs for persons in industry, business, schools, government agencies, and any interested group in order to assist the citizens of Oklahoma in advancing culturally, educationally, socially, and economically.

IV. Major Responsibilities

a. To act as liaison between interested groups, industrial employees, business employees, agency employees, and Oklahoma State University. Whenever a need is present, and it is possible, educational programs will be conducted through the County Extension Director's office utilizing the resources of Oklahoma State University. When University resources are inadequate to meet the specific needs of the above mentioned groups, ways and means will be sought to obtain the necessary resources from outside the University Community.

b. To work closely with the County, District and College Directors in offering continuing education opportunities to the citizens of Oklahoma.

c. To inform and educate the citizens of Oklahoma the role of Extension in the University structure.

d. To conduct himself in a manner that would enhance the image of Oklahoma State University, and provide a service for the citizens of Oklahoma.

V. Administrative Accountability

a. To the County Extension Director

b. To the District Extension Director

c. To the Vice-President of University Extension

d. To the Board of Regents, Oklahoma State University

VI. Relationships

a. Should have the confidence and respect of co-workers, and in turn, should have confidence and respect for co-workers.

b. Should practice loyalty, professional and personal ethics at all times.

c. Should establish proper rapport with citizens of the community, and also with other educational institutions in the state and community.

VII. Qualifications

a. M.S. Degree and a desire to learn and grow.

b. Training in administration, supervision, public relations, sociology, psychology, and particularly educational principles and methods.

c. Initiative to seek out and identify educational needs of those groups seeking educational programs.

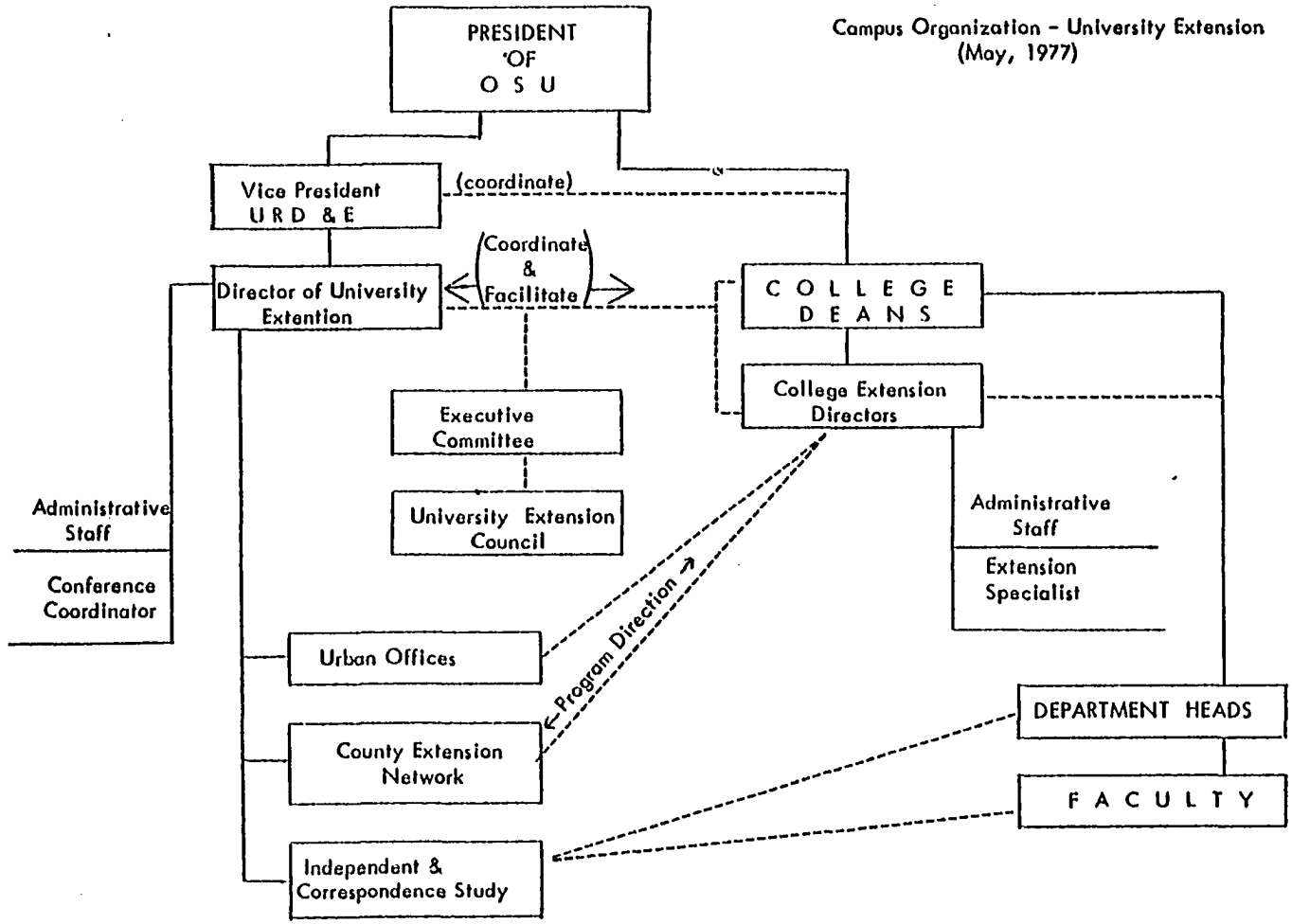
d. A will to provide a service for the people of Oklahoma, and enhance the image of Oklahoma State University.

VIII. Professional Improvement

The individual should have a desire to follow a deliberate and continuous program of improvement, so that his performance on the job will compliment the objectives of the Oklahoma State University Extension Program. Such a program should include participation in graduate study, seminars, independent study, travel, consultations with colleagues in other geographic locations, and reading of professional writings.

APPENDIX C

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
AFTER 1965


PRESIDENT OF O S U
Campus Organization - University Extension
(May, 1977)
Vice President U R D & E
(coordinate)
Coordinate & Facilitate
Director of University Extention
C O L L E G E D E A N S
College Extension Directors
Executive Committee
University Extension Council
Administrative Staff
Conference Coordinator
Administrative Staff
Extension Specialist
Urban Offices
Program Direction
County Extension Network
DEPARTMENT HEADS
F A C U L T Y
Independent & Correspondence Study

APPENDIX D

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
OPINIONNAIRE

Opinionnaire

Assessment of the Urban Extension Agent's Role

Directions: The following is a list of possible duties to be performed by the Urban Extension Agent. Using the rating codes provided rate the importance of each of the duties listed. Also, list other duties which you feel should be part of the Urban Extension Agent's responsibilities.

5=Very Important
4=Somewhat Important
3=Not Sure or No Opinion
2=Unimportant
1=Very Unimportant

1.	Assist in the preplanning of Extension Courses	5 4 3 2 1
2.	Conduct survey of clientel needs	5 4 3 2 1
3.	Identify potential participants	5 4 3 2 1
4.	Promote programs offered by Okla. State Univ. Ext.	5 4 3 2 1
5.	Relay client needs to O.S.U. College Ext. Directors	5 4 3 2 1
6.	Assist in planning extension courses to meet client needs	5 4 3 2 1
7.	Serve as liaison between the public and O.S.U. representatives	5 4 3 2 1
8.	Assume responsibility for the logistics of extension courses such as procuring a location, supplies, equipment, and any other arrangements.	5 4 3 2 1
9.	Provide transportation for participants	5 4 3 2 1
10.	Review competitive programs	5 4 3 2 1
11.	Assist in selection of instructors, speakers, etc.	5 4 3 2 1
12.	Make periodic reports to Director of Univ. Extension	5 4 3 2 1
13.	State behavioral objectives pertaining to job on a yearly basis.	5 4 3 2 1
14.	Further develop and maintain the image of Okla. State University	5 4 3 2 1
15.	Establish program budgets .	5 4 3 2 1
16.	Assist in selection of coordinator/moderator	5 4 3 2 1
17.	Assume primary responsibility for program advertising i.e. press releases, etc.	5 4 3 2 1
18.	Establish and conduct inquiry procedures concerning O.S.U. resources and programs	5 4 3 2 1
19.	Assist in program evaluation	5 4 3 2 1
20.	Conduct post-program follow-up	5 4 3 2 1
21.	Prepare and distribute a comprehensive annual report	5 4 3 2 1
22.	Evaluate and revise job responsibilities annually in conjunction with Director of University Extension and College Extension Directors	5 4 3 2 1
23.	Frequently visit campus	5 4 3 2 1
24.	Visit industry, business, schools, etc., on behalf of College Directors	5 4 3 2 1
25.	Be present at the beginning of each program	5 4 3 2 1

APPENDIX E

COVER LETTER SENT WITH THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Dear _____:

It is my sincere hope that you will consider this research worthy of your thought and time and participate through the completion of the enclosed opinionnaire. It is very important that you be included in the study. Please be assured that your answers will be kept completely confidential. No one outside myself will be able to identify specific persons. All findings will be reported in aggregate form.

This is a small and selective sampling, therefore your response is critical if this study is to have any meaning. Please return the opinionnaire at your earliest convenience, but prior to _____.

This study is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate in Education at the University of Oklahoma. Your help and co-operation in making this study a success will be greatly appreciated.

Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope for forwarding this opinionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

R. Michael Hannah
8133 N. W. 28th Terrace
Bethany, Oklahoma 73008

APPENDIX F

FOLLOWUP LETTER SENT TO NON-RESPONDENTS

Dear _____:

A few days ago you were mailed a copy of an opinionnaire which you were asked to complete and return by _____. As was stated it was my sincere hope that you would consider this research worthy of your thought and time. If for some reason you did not receive the opinionnaire please use the enclosed copy to respond.

This is a small and selective sampling, therefore, your response is critical if this study is to have meaning. Please return the opinionnaire at your earliest convenience.

This study is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate in Education at the University of Oklahoma. Your help and co-operation in making this study a success will be greatly appreciated.

Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope for forwarding this opinionnaire.

Sincerely yours,

R. Michael Hannah
8133 N.W. 28th Terrace
Bethany, Oklahoma 73008