

A STUDY ON THE SALARY STRUCTURE OF AND INCENTIVES FOR THE AGRICULTURAL GRADUATES OF BANGLADESH

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Agriculture in Bangladesh still remains at the subsistence level with illiterate farmers engaged in agriculture who are not familiar with the modern techniques of farming. It is, therefore, essential that agricultural graduates are attracted to this sector so that maximum utilization of land and human resources can be made to bring about optimum production in agriculture.

The present study was undertaken in order to investigate into the causes of lack of efficiency, if any, from the human resources engaged in agriculture, i.e. the trained and highly skilled manpower engaged in agriculture. This study was the first attempt and hence a pioneer one in identifying the salary structure and other conditions of service of agriculture graduates in Bangladesh.

Objectives of the Study

The following were the stated objectives of the study on the salary structure and incentives for the Agricultural graduates of Bangladesh:

1. To identify and determine the salary structure of the Agricultural graduates of Bangladesh.
2. To identify the material and psychological incentives for the agricultural graduates in order to measure their job satisfaction.
3. To find out the extent of unemployment and underemployment of agricultural graduates and its possible reasons.
4. To determine the degree of optimum utilization of the agricultural graduates' knowledge, training and skills.
5. To find out the salary differentials of agricultural graduates employed in the public and private sectors.
6. To review the trends in the employment pattern of agricultural graduates during the last 21 years since 1947.
7. To recommend specific measures to ensure efficient and maximum utilization of qualified and trained personnel in Agriculture.

Methods and Procedures of the Study

Four different studies within the framework of a unified plan were designed and conducted in order to find answers to the relevant questions raised. These were:

- (a) a survey of documents concerning the status of agriculture graduates in Bangladesh;
- (b) a survey of agricultural graduates of the then East Pakistan for the period 1947-1968 who were employed in agriculture or were without employment;
- (c) a survey of agricultural experts and/or employers of agricultural graduates in the then East Pakistan; and
- (d) a survey of organizations/offices in Bangladesh concerned with agriculture.

A review of related materials in agriculture was undertaken in order to provide a logical background for the present study. The materials reviewed included documents concerning agricultural activities in the then Pakistan. The documents comprised mostly of research and other relevant publications.

For the survey of agricultural graduates factual information was collected from the records maintained by the Agricultural University, Institute of Agriculture, and the University of Dacca; records and membership list of Agricultural Graduates' Association of the then East Pakistan and records of agricultural graduates maintained by the offices/organizations in the then East Pakistan. In addition, a questionnaire prepared for the agricultural graduates was sent to the 940 graduates by mail. A questionnaire for specialists and employers of agricultural graduates was administered at personal interviews by the researchers to a sample of eleven in this category.

The survey of major organizations and offices concerned with various aspects of agricultural development or activities in the then East Pakistan was conducted in order to obtain data regarding salary scales, benefits given, future plans, etc. The data gathering instrument used for this purpose was a Schedule. This instrument was administered through personal interview to the heads of the eleven offices/organizations to which the specialists/experts also belonged.

Major Findings of the Study

The data collected through the data gathering instruments already briefly described, resulted in the following findings about the salary and incentives for the agricultural graduates:

1. Fifty-two per cent of the graduates held degrees in agriculture, and forty-eight per cent of the graduates held degrees in veterinary medicine.
2. In respect of universities of graduation of the agricultural graduates, one observable trend was that the higher the level of education the more was the number of graduates produced by foreign universities. All the doctorates in agriculture were obtained from foreign universities. This

might be due to the fact that there is very little opportunity in Bangladesh for respondents to pursue any doctoral programmes in agriculture.

3. It was found that the period of unemployment, on the average for all categories of agricultural graduates was three months. The trend was that the higher the respondents academic qualification the less was the likelihood of their remaining unemployed. No category of respondents remained unemployed for more than four months. This indicates that there is a great demand for agricultural graduates.

4. In respect of job experience, it was found that a majority of the respondents had less than five years experience in agricultural work. The data also revealed that the more experienced employees had to suffer less in respect of unemployment.

5. The data revealed that the salary of the group appeared to be less than Tk. 400 per month (in 1968-69). The data also revealed that in the higher salary ranges the number of employees was very few, while the bulk of the employees were in the lower salary brackets. A high positive correlation was found between the salary drawn and the period of service. Compared to government and semi-government agencies the scope of promotion for agricultural graduates in private service was very limited. The prospect of promotion for agricultural graduate employees was the brightest in teaching and most dismal in supervision.

6. The prospect of getting confirmation in service was most dismal under the government and relatively much better in either semi-government or private service. The prospect of permanent job status, which is a factor of job security for all employees, was connected with higher educational qualifications.

7. Regarding salary and benefits, a higher percentage of agricultural graduates with lower educational qualifications than those with higher educational qualifications felt that they were getting less salary and other benefits. Salaries in government employment were less than the private and semi-government employment.

8. In respect of job security, agricultural graduates with doctorate degrees and a minority of others felt that they had job security. A marginal majority of the government employees, a very small minority of the semi-government employees and none of the private employees felt that they had job security.

9. Regarding satisfaction with service conditions, it was found that on the average, agricultural graduate employees are dissatisfied with their present salary. Employees with doctorate degrees appeared to be more satisfied with their salary than the Masters and Bachelor degree holders. Private employees were more satisfied than the semi-government employees and the latter were more satisfied than the government employees with their present salary.

10. Benefits other than salary, service conditions related to present position, housing accommodation or house allowance, medical facilities, and facilities available for education of children were considered unsatisfactory by agricultural graduates. In general, though, the extent of satisfaction varied with the educational qualification of the employees.

The higher the qualification the more satisfied was the employee.

11. Adequate provision for incentives to agricultural graduate employees has been made by the employing agencies.

12. Specialists/employers rejected the statement that the prevailing agricultural education in the country was producing graduates aspiring more for high ranking offices than for the actual improvement of agriculture.