

Perceptions of Job Satisfaction and Gender Roles Among Select Florida  
Agricultural Communication Practitioners

**Rebecca L. McGovney**, Graduate Student

Department of Agricultural Education and Communication  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/ University of Florida  
408 Rolfs Hall/ PO Box 110540/ Gainesville, FL 32611-0540  
Tel: 352-392-0502, ext.244/ Fax: 352-392-9585  
Email: RLMcGovney@ifas.ufl.edu

**Dr. Tracy Irani**, Assistant Professor

Department of Agricultural Education and Communication  
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/ University of Florida  
213 Rolfs Hall/ PO Box 110540/ Gainesville, FL 32611-0540  
Tel: 352-392-0502, ext.225/ Fax: 352-392-9585  
Email: Irani@ufl.edu

## **Abstract**

Agricultural communication, at one time exclusively a male domain, is a field that has increasingly come to be dominated by female practitioners. Little is known, however, about how these changing demographics have affected perceptions of job satisfaction and gender relations of those working within the field. To address these issues, a mailed survey designed to assess job satisfaction and gender perceptions was sent to Florida members (n=24) of the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE). Results of this study indicated that Florida members of ACE seem to have moderate to high levels of job satisfaction. They are most satisfied with their present job, agricultural communication as an occupation, their knowledge of agricultural communication and related skills, the freedom and autonomy they have in their current job, and the recognition they receive from current supervisors. Members were less satisfied or dissatisfied with their income as an agricultural communication practitioner, the prestige of working in agricultural communication, opportunities for advancement, and the prospects for their future in agricultural communication. With respect to gender relations, respondents' perceptions of gender roles and relations in agricultural communication showed that while Florida ACE members may perceive some areas of gender inequity, they believe any problems occur more throughout agricultural communication than within their own organization.

**Keywords:** agricultural communication, gender, job satisfaction

## Introduction

Agricultural communication, at one time exclusively a male domain, is a field that has increasingly come to be dominated by female practitioners. Similar to the trend within other media and communications industries, an increasing number of women have moved into the field (Scherler, 2001). Little is known, however, about how these changing demographics have affected perceptions of job satisfaction and gender roles of those working within agricultural communication. Although past studies or discussions have touched on some aspects of this issue, such as the number of women in undergraduate programs, the number of women in the field, or how women moving into the field might be perceived by farmers, there has been no single study on perceptions of gender roles within agricultural communication (Jeffers, 1987; Sprecker & Rudd, 1998; Scherler, 2001; *Women at Work*, 1976).

Interviews with female agricultural communicators, both past and present, show an awareness of the perceived differences between men and women within the field. JoAnn Bell Pierce was one of the first female agriculture writers/editors in the U.S. and has described her first job with *Farm Quarterly* as being an inexpensive investment for the magazine because they could pay her 50% less than another new male employee (Pierce, 1998). In 1973, Colleen Callahan Burns became the first full-time woman farm broadcaster, but only after answering questions like “O.K., let’s say we hire you. What are all these farm men going to think of a woman giving the farm price quotations and talking about production ag—which is traditionally a man’s job?” (Women at Work, 1976). More recently Mila Shah, the American Agricultural Editors’ Association 2001 intern, stated; “I think it is very hard for women starting out because there still is a ‘good old boys’ network” (Sapp, 2002).

## **Purpose/Objectives**

The purpose of this study was to describe perceptions of gender bias and job satisfaction of those currently working in the agricultural communication field, specifically focusing on members of the Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE). Like many other fields, agricultural communication has professional organizations in which its members participate. ACE is the oldest and perhaps largest organization of agricultural communicators, with an approximate 700 members across the United States and the world (Carnahan, 2000; Hilt, 1988).

Members of ACE range in job descriptions from writers and photographers to graphic designers and electronic media producers, as well as marketing, public relations, editors and Web designers representing most, if not all, of the types of jobs within the agricultural communication field (ACE, 2004, Carnahan, 2000; Hilt, 1988). Members work in both the private sector in companies and firms, as well as the public sector within universities, government agencies, and research organizations (ACE, 2004, Carnahan, 2000; Hilt, 1988).

The objectives of this study were to:

- 1) Describe the perceptions of job satisfaction among a population comprised of ACE members in the Florida chapter; 2) describe the perceptions of Florida chapter ACE members with respect to gender roles both in individual organizations and throughout the agricultural communication industry; and 3) describe Florida chapter ACE members' perceptions related to their personal experiences of gender issues within agricultural communication

## **Theoretical Framework**

As in many other communications fields, the field of agricultural communication is experiencing a demographic shift towards females representing the majority of practitioners. Researchers have suggested that whenever an occupation becomes “female,” meaning a higher number of female workers than male workers, the value of the work decreases (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Grunig, 1992; Toth & Cline, 1989; Creedon, 1989; Marlane, 1999). Traditional female occupations in which this trend has been documented include nursing, teaching, and clerical work (Kimmel, 2004; Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001). This devaluing process can be seen in many ways, but media researchers focus on the gender-based inequalities that a shift in female numbers brings about. These include, but are not limited to, unequal pay/salary, unequal opportunity for advancement, unequal distribution in areas of work, and perceptions of worker relations and the work itself (Grunig, 1992; Toth & Cline, 1989; Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Creedon, 1989; Gallagher, 1981).

### *Pay/Salary*

Salary differences exist between men and women in many parts of the media, including journalism/news, broadcast (including television and radio), and public relations (Stone, 2000; Creedon, 1989; American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1999; Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes, & Wilhoit, 2003; Marlane, 1999; Toth & Cline, 1989, Grunig, 1992, Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; US Census Bureau, 2004). A look at earnings data from the 2000 United States Census shows differences ranging from \$8,000 to \$20,000 between male and female salaries within media occupational categories (US Census Bureau, 2004). (See Table 1.)

Table 1  
*Average Earnings of Male and Female Media Workers*

Occupation	Salary		Difference
	Male	Female	
News analysts, reporters and correspondents	\$55,000 n=34,530	\$44,000 n=25,340	\$11,000
Public relations specialists	\$65,000 n=39,290	\$46,000 n=56,410	\$19,000
Editors	\$53,000 n=59,560	\$42,000 n=61,320	\$11,000
Technical Writers	\$55,000 n=25,150	\$47,000 n=26,560	\$8,000
Broadcast/sound engineering techs & radio operators	\$46,000 n=49,700	\$36,000 n=6,860	\$10,000
Photographers	\$43,000 n=45,920	\$29,000 n=17,400	\$14,000
Television & video camera operators & editors	\$51,000 n=12,740	\$41,000 n=2,200	\$10,000
Miscellaneous media & communication workers	\$45,000 n=10,070	\$35,000 n=14,020	\$10,000

*Note: based on number of year-round full-time workers (n) according to the 2000 US Census*

It has been argued that any differences between the salaries of men and women in media jobs are due to factors such as level of education, years of experience, age, or work-related training, instead of gender. However, many media studies have shown this to be false, finding differences in male/female salary levels still exist when these variables are held constant (Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Toth & Cline, 1989; Creedon, 1989; Weaver et. al.,

2003). Although this was most likely not done for the 2000 Census data, the size of the sample suggests that these differences between male and female salaries do exist.

### *Position/Advancement*

Another trend seen within media research is unequal opportunity or unequal advancement for men and women. Many studies have shown that men and women do different types of work within the individual media industries. Although described in different ways, such as vertical job segregation or public relations roles, the reality is that women tend to be clustered around the lower level of jobs in an industry while men are more likely to hold high-level decision making positions (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Grunig, 1992; Creedon, 1989; Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2002, Fall, Winter, 2004; American Society of Newspaper Editors, 2004; Arnold & Hendrickson, 2003; Marlane, 1999; Jamieson, 2001). There is a connection from this division of jobs between men and women back to the pay gap discussed earlier. Those who argue against the existence of a gendered pay gap claim that men make more than women because they are in the higher levels of the organization (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001), but these arguments do not take into account the limited movement women have within the media industries.

Public relations studies have found that women face unique problems within their industry, including a double standard for men and women, unequal advancement opportunity, and discrimination on the basis of sex or gender (Toth & Cline, 1989). Using focus groups of men and women in 1990 and 1995, Grunig, Toth and Hon (2001) found that women feel men get promoted more quickly than women do, and that respondents considered it harder for women to reach the top of an organization than for men. A 2002 *PR Week* survey demonstrated the division of men and women into higher and lower job roles within public relations. While 8%

of the men surveyed were chairmen, presidents or CEOs of their companies, only 3% of the women were (Echo Research Inc., 2002). At the senior vice president level, 7% of the male respondents held the position, while only 2% of the women did. This trend is reversed on the lower position/role of account executive where 27% of the women surveyed work versus 18% of the men (Echo Research Inc., 2002).

Studies in broadcast media, both radio and television, have shown the same scarcity of women in high-ranking positions (Jamieson, 2001; Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2004; Marlane, 1999; Creedon, 1989). While women hold 26.5% of the news director positions in local television news, according to the 2003 Radio and Television News Directors Association Survey, this is only up from the 14% in 1987 (Creedon, 1989). In addition, women only hold 13.9% of general manager positions at television stations (Papper, 2003). Patterns are similar in radio with only 14.4% of news director positions for local radio news being held by women and only 7% of the general manager positions (Papper, 2003). Jamieson (2001) found women hold larger numbers in positions such as anchors (52% local and 44% national) and promotions managers (46% television and 43% radio).

Newspaper studies highlight the gendered division of labor, as well. According to the 2004 American Society of Newspaper Editors survey, 49% of women hold jobs as reporters in newsrooms while women are only among 18% of those who hold titles of president, publisher, or CEO in newspapers (Arnold & Hendrickson, 2003). In addition, only 16% of executive vice presidents and general managers are women (Arnold & Hendrickson, 2003). Women do comprise 63% and 73% of personnel senior vice president/vice president or director of human resource positions and senior vice president/vice president or director of community affairs respectively in newspapers or newspaper groups (Arnold & Hendrickson, 2003). These again

are the positions that are considered female and outside of the “line of succession” (Arnold & Hendrickson, 2003, p. 53).

The reasons for this restriction of women to the lower job categories are rooted in sociological methods and theories that focus on the concept of “gender bias.” Gender bias is defined as “unequal treatment in employment opportunity (such as promotion, pay, benefits and privileges), and expectations due to attitudes on the sex of an employee or a group of employees” (Hill & Hill, 2003). Many researchers have cited the “good old boys” network described by American Agricultural Editors’ Association intern Mila Shah (Sapp, 2002). According to Grunig, Toth and Hon (2001), “Almost all of our interviewees and focus group participants talked about women’s isolation from the inner circle where important business gets done” (p. 293). Female public relations practitioners also stated that this network “shuts them out at the management table as well as on the basketball court or on the golf course” (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001, p. 293-294). Arnold and Hendrickson also found evidence of this male network in their 2003 survey of newspapers and newspaper groups. Jamieson described the media companies in her 2001 study as “innovating in technology, ways of sending and receiving information, and economic models for the 21<sup>st</sup> century—but their executive suites and boardrooms still largely resemble the stereotyped practices of the 1950s” (p. 13).

### *Job Satisfaction*

One way to look at an individual in the workplace is through job satisfaction. This provides a method to determine how a person feels about his or her job, and if factors such as those previously listed have any impact on those feelings. Although variously defined, job satisfaction is simply “the degree to which people like their jobs” (Scherler, 2001, p. 11). A large number of studies have been completed on job satisfaction within the media with varying

results (Serini, Toth, Wright, & Emig, 1997). While some studies have shown that gender is related to the job satisfaction of media workers (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001, Barrett, 1984; Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2002, Fall, Winter), others have shown that no such relation exists (Serini et. al., 1997; Stone, 2000). One consistent finding is that both men and women are satisfied with their jobs as a whole (Serini et. al, 1997; Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Selnow & Wilson, 1985; Stone, 2000). The difference lies, then, in certain facets or variables related to a job. “The result of the inquiry into job satisfaction, although frequently contradictory, leads to an overall understanding that there are indeed differences between men’s and women’s levels of satisfaction with a variety of variables related to the work environment” (Serini et. al., 1997, p. 101). These variables include the work itself; job level, job security and promotions; pay; supervision and coworkers; and amount of work (Selnow & Wilson, 1985; Serini et. al, 1997; Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001; Barrett, 1984). Bowling Green State University’s job satisfaction scales are “the most frequently used measure of job satisfaction” (Balzer, Kihm, Smith, Irwin, Bachiochi, Robie, Sinar, & Parra; 1997; p. 8). The Job In General (JIG) scale looks at overall job satisfaction, while the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) looks at five facets of job satisfaction (Balzer et. al, 1997).

Selnow and Wilson (1985) found in their study *Sex Roles and Job Satisfaction in Public Relations* that women were less favorable on their salary satisfaction scores than men. Similar results on salary satisfaction differences between men and women in public relations are presented in studies by Grunig, Toth, and Hon (2001) and Serini et. al. (1997). Another facet of job satisfaction that women are less satisfied with is the amount of work. In a 1990 study, public relations practitioners were questioned if they were asked within their job to do excessive amounts of work. Female respondents agreed that the work they were asked to do was

excessive, while the males did not (Bissland & Rentner, 1990). Women have been found to be less satisfied with their jobs when their supervisor is male, citing exclusion and isolation (Serini et. al., 1997).

Job satisfaction in broadcast media is similar between men and women, according to Stone (2000). Slightly more men are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs in television than women, 79% vs. 74%. In radio, more women than men are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, 78% vs. 72%. However the facets mentioned above such as salary and position were found to have the most influence on job satisfaction of both genders. In addition, 54% of women in television said their current salaries are less than they expected when they entered the field while 67% of women in radio said the same (Stone, 2000).

Women in news/journalism are also less satisfied with these facets of their jobs (Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2002, Fall, Winter). A 2002 study showed that women reported lower job satisfaction with salary and relationships with their bosses, as well as lower satisfaction with salary levels when they held low ranking positions within the newsroom (Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2002, Fall, Winter). In addition, women are four times more likely than men to predict they will leave the newspaper industry to work in another field (Communication Research Associates, Inc., 2002, Fall, Winter). The 2002 American Journalist Survey showed that only 71.7% of female journalists were “fairly” or “very” satisfied with their jobs, while 86.6% of male journalists were (Weaver et. al., 2003). Barrett (1984) studied job satisfaction among newspaperwomen and found high overall job satisfaction levels. However, low job satisfaction was expressed by the women in regards to opportunity to advance and salary.

The literature suggests that the feminization of any field, including agricultural communication, can produce inequalities as demonstrated in public relations, news, radio and television. Although a great number of women work in these fields, men are often in charge. This imbalance can affect pay levels, job satisfaction levels, status of the industry positions, what gets covered and produced by the media organizations, and more.

### **Methods/Procedure**

This study used a descriptive survey distributed to all Florida chapter ACE members (N=24) by traditional mail. The 160-item questionnaire included 18 items based on the Bowling Green Job in General Scale (JIG) and 26 items from the job satisfaction studies of members of the Public Relations Society of America from 1990 and 1995 (Serini et. al., 1997, p. 101) as well as a series of demographic items, and open-ended questions. For the purposes of this study, the job satisfaction and open-ended response items were analyzed. Reliability for the Job in General Scale has been established, with a reported Cronbach's alpha of  $r = .92$  (Balzer et. al, 1997). Reliability for the PRSA survey instrument subscale indices has been reported as follows: for the gender perception scale (relating to inside one's organization),  $r = .73$  and  $r = .56$  (with respect to the industry as a whole) (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2001); for the flextime scale,  $r = .72$  and  $r = .75$ , respectively; and for the job satisfaction scale,  $r = .85$ .

To conduct the present study, Dillman's Tailored Design (2000) survey procedures were utilized. The instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts for content and face validity. The first wave included a cover letter, an informed consent statement for the participants to sign and return, the instrument and an answer sheet, and a postage-paid, self-addressed return envelope and was sent on August 26, 2004. Each mailed questionnaire and answer sheet was coded to identify non-respondents. A second wave via email was sent on September 2, 2004, to remind

participants of the survey due date and to thank them for their participation. A third wave containing the original survey packet was sent to nonrespondents on September 16, 2004.

Data collected from this survey was analyzed using Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS). Both descriptive and correlational statistics were analyzed.

## **Results/Findings**

Thirteen Florida ACE members responded to this survey, for an overall response rate of 54.2%. All respondents stated they work for a land-grant university--the University of Florida. Gender breakdown for the thirteen respondents was seven male (53.8%) and six female (46.2%).

Objective one was to describe the perceptions of job satisfaction among Florida ACE members. Overall job satisfaction was measured by averaging the participants' responses to 18 items on the JIG on a weighted scale where 1=yes, 2=no and 3=cannot decide. The resulting grand mean for job satisfaction was  $M=26.53$ , where zero is the lowest possible score and 54 is the highest. According to Balzer et. al (1997) scores well above the midpoint of this scale ( $M=32$  or above) indicate satisfaction while those well below the midpoint ( $M=22$ ) indicate dissatisfaction. The mean for this study is slightly below the midpoint of  $M=27$ , which indicates a somewhat neutral response for overall job satisfaction.

The other set of job satisfaction items, consisting of 14 questions, came from the PRSA surveys mentioned above. Means of the respondents' answers indicated they were least satisfied with their income ( $M=3.25$ ), the prestige of working in agricultural communication ( $M=3.67$ ), prospects for their future in agricultural communication ( $M=3.92$ ), and opportunities for advancement with their present employer ( $M=3.00$ ). (See Table 2.) For these items, respondents were most satisfied with their knowledge of agricultural communication ( $M=4.33$ ) and related

skills (M=4.42), the freedom and autonomy they have in their current jobs (M=4.75), and the recognition they receive from superiors (M=4.25).

Table 2  
*Perceptions of Job Satisfaction of Agricultural Communication Practitioners*

How satisfied are you with...	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Your present job in agricultural communication?	4.08	.90	12
Agricultural communication as an occupation?	4.25	.86	12
Your income as an agricultural communication practitioner?	3.25	1.14	12
The prestige of working in agricultural communication?	3.67	.65	12
Your knowledge of agricultural communication skills?	4.42	.51	12
Your overall knowledge of agricultural communication?	4.33	.49	12
Prospects for your future with your present employer?	4.08	1.24	12
The value of your job to society?	4.17	.83	12
The freedom and autonomy you have in your present job?	4.75	.45	12
Prospects for your future in agricultural communication?	3.92	1.08	12
Opportunities for advancement with your present employer?	3.00	1.04	12
Job security in your present position?	4.08	.99	12
Recognition you get from superiors?	4.25	.75	12
How your family and/or friends feel about you working in agricultural communication?	3.67	.89	12

*Note: based on a Likert scale with 1=extremely dissatisfied and 5=extremely satisfied.*

Objective two was to describe the perceptions of Florida ACE members with respect to gender roles both in individual organizations and throughout the agricultural communication field. Twelve questions adapted from the PRSA survey asked for respondents' opinions on gender and gender-related situations, such as pay and promotion, both within their organization and throughout agricultural communication as a field. (See Table 3.) Respondents expressed

strongest agreement that women are more likely than men to be hired for staff positions involving mainly communications skills throughout agricultural communication (M=3.5), there is less sexual harassment today than there was five years ago in their organization (M=3.42); as well as throughout agricultural communication (M=3.42), and there are more women than men in agricultural communication (M=3.33). The strongest levels of disagreement from respondents were that women are more likely than men to be hired for management positions involving problem-solving and decision-making in my organization (M=2.5), and if an equally capable women and man applied for the same job, the woman would be hired in my organization (M=2.42); as well as throughout agricultural communication (M=2.58).

Table 3  
*Perceptions of Gender Relations and Roles in Agricultural Communication*

Statement	In your organization		Throughout Agricultural Communication		N
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Generally women receive lower salaries than men for doing comparable work	2.58	.99	3.25	.62	12
Women are more likely than men to be hired for staff positions involving mainly communication skills (writing, editing, graphics, etc.)	3.17	1.11	3.50	1.00	12
Women are more likely than men to be hired for management positions involving problem-solving and decision-making	2.50	.67	2.67	.49	12
Men are promoted more quickly than women in most employment situations	2.92	.90	3.25	.75	12
Men are more apt than women to back down or seek compromises in office conflict situations	2.83	.72	2.92	.67	12
If an equally capable woman and man applied for the same job, the woman would be hired	2.42	.90	2.58	.90	12
Women often are hired as a result of affirmative action policies	2.67	.78	2.75	.96	12
There is less sexual harassment today than there was five years ago	3.42	.67	3.42	.67	12

It is more difficult for women than it is for men to reach the top	3.25	.96	3.25	.96	12
Women in management positions are paid less than men in comparable jobs	2.92	.67	3.00	.60	12
There are more women than men in agricultural communication	3.25	1.01	3.33	.95	12
Members of my audience prefer to work with males	2.75	1.05	2.83	1.19	12

*Note: based on a Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree.*

Objective three was to describe Florida ACE members perceptions related to their personal experiences of gender inequality within agricultural communication. Seven of the thirteen participants gave responses to the following open-ended questions.

Have you ever experienced any situations within your work in agricultural communication in which you felt your gender was a factor in the last five years? If so, please describe this situation.

Have you experienced any form of inequality due to gender or sexual harassment within your work in agricultural communication in the last five years? If so, please describe the situation.

Do you feel gender is a factor within agricultural communication? Please elaborate.

In response to the first two questions, one participant stated that there is a “certain amount of favoritism with male leadership” and that they “have noted several harassment situations that have been dealt with as a supervisor” in the last five years. All but two of the respondents agreed that gender is a factor within agricultural communication, but gave varying reasons for this. One respondent wrote that gender is “not as great a factor as it has been in past years, but still not where we should be” while another said “Of course it is. As in any field, gender is a factor in our day-to-day interactions as human beings. However, I believe the situation has improved in recent decades. I think U.F. is more progressive in this area, compared to other Southern universities.” A third respondent cited the number of women in the field, saying gender is an issue “only that there are more women in ag comm than men, but this is

commonplace in communications, in general (in my opinion) to have more women than men.” Similar to this, another respondent replied that “demographic and cultural trends have affected and are affecting the profession. Not too much overt discrimination, but probably inadvertent discrimination for sure.” The final participant who stated gender is an issue within the field stated, “With more than 30 years of service in agricultural communication, I have seen a dramatic change in attitudes about women in this field. In some of the more traditional, conservative agricultural communication programs, women and minority men have experienced discrimination.”

Of the participants who did not consider gender to be an issue within agricultural communication, one stated “people are hired, promoted and given raises based on importance of work, competency and success.” The second person said, “I find our clientele does not differentiate based on gender--a healthy sign.”

### **Discussion/Conclusion**

Results of this study indicate that Florida members of ACE seem to have moderate to high levels of job satisfaction. They are most satisfied with their present job, agricultural communication as an occupation, their knowledge of agricultural communication and related skills, the freedom and autonomy they have in their current job, and the recognition they receive from current supervisors. The results also showed Florida ACE members are less or dissatisfied with their income as an agricultural communication practitioner, the prestige of working in agricultural communication, opportunities for advancement, and the prospects for their future in agricultural communication. This dissatisfaction could result in people leaving their current positions or even leaving agricultural communication completely. Results from the JIG index

are not conclusive; limitations of this study include the small size of the population and the fact that it is not possible to generalize these results to other ACE chapters.

Respondents' perceptions of gender roles and relations in agricultural communication showed that while Florida ACE members may perceive some areas of gender inequity, they believe any problems occur more throughout agricultural communication than within their own organization. This too was addressed by the literature review discussion of the 1990 and 1995 PRSA studies where the authors also found this trend.

In the present study, Florida ACE members agreed most strongly with the statement "Women are more likely than men to be hired for staff positions involving mainly communications skills." Looking at the media industries previously reviewed, the categorization of women into lower roles within any organization is commonplace. While men are more likely to be producers, supervisors, and chairmen, women in communications are usually writers, editors, and other roles with little supervisory control. This is also seen in respondents' disagreement with the statement "Women are more likely than men to be hired for management positions involving problem solving and decision-making." In addition, Florida ACE members tended to disagree that "If an equally capable women and man applied for the same job, the woman would be hired."

Of those participants who did respond to the qualitative portion of the survey, all but two of the seven stated that gender is a factor within agricultural communication. Many different reasons and explanations were given, but the fact that so many people agreed gender is an issue is important to note and discuss. Just as job satisfaction can have an effect on an agricultural communication practitioners' desire to leave a job or the industry, so too can gender relations within an organization and its related field. This is an important trend for managers and leaders

within agricultural communication to see and understand. In addition, many mass communication theories state that those who produce communication messages and images can influence not only the content but also the reception and then perception of these messages (Gallagher, 1981; Bandura, 2001; Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Fiske, 1995; Dines & Humez, 2003). When communication industry practitioners of any type perceive gender issues and inequities, this could result in messages and images that reinforce that imbalance in audience members (Gallagher, 1981; Bandura, 2001; Entman & Rojecki, 2001; Fiske, 1995; Dines & Humez, 2003).

Future research recommendations include addressing limitations of this pilot study to achieve better and more complete results. Currently, a nationwide survey of all ACE members nationwide is underway, in an attempt to develop a more accurate understanding of how job satisfaction and gender are perceived by this group of agricultural communication practitioners. Exploring the issues of job satisfaction and gender relations within the field of agricultural communication will assist its leadership in developing ways to insure its health and growth for a long time to come.

## **References**

- Arnold, M. & Hendrickson, M. (2003). *Women in Newspapers 2003 Challenging the Status Quo*. Retrieved June 20, 2004 from <http://www.mediamanagementcenter.org/center/web/publications/win2003.htm>
- American Society of Newspaper Editors. (2004, April). *Newsroom Employment Census 2003*. Retrieved June 12, 2004 from <http://www.asne.org/indes.cfm?id=1138>
- Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences (ACE). Retrieved June 26, 2004, from <http://www.aceweb.org>
- Balzer, W., Kihm, J., Smith, P., Iriwn, J., Bachiochi, P., Robie, C., Sinar, E., & Parra, L. (1997). *User's Manual for the Job Descriptive Index (JDI; 1997 Revision) and the Job in General (JIG) Scales*. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University.
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication. *Media Psychology*, 3, 265-299.
- Barrett, G. (1984, Autumn). Job Satisfaction Among Newspaperwomen. *Journalism Quarterly*, 61(3), 593-599.
- Bissland, J.H., & Rentner, T.L. (1990, Winter). Job satisfaction and its correlates among public relations workers. *Journalism Quarterly*, 67(4), 950-955.
- Carnahan, W. (2000). A Brief History of ACE. *Journal of Applied Communications*, 84(3): 7-19. Obtained July 10, 2004 from Agricultural Communications Documentation Center.
- Communication Research Associates, Inc. (2002, Fall). Women Pessimistic About Moving Up At Newspapers, Plan Fresh Starts. *Media Report to Women*, 30(4), 1-3.
- Communication Research Associates, Inc. (2002, Winter). Progress Stalled for Newspaper Women; Greater Numbers But Not Greater Advancement. *Media Report to Women*, 30(1), 1, 3-4.
- Communication Research Associates, Inc. (2004, Spring). U.S. Newsroom Employment Falls; Small Gains for Women, Minorities. *Media Report to Women*, 32(2), 1-2.
- Creedon, P. (Ed.). (1989). *Women in Mass Communication Challenging Gender Values*. Newbury Park, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Dillman, D. (2000). *Mail and Internet Surveys, The Tailored Design*. New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Dines, G. & Humez, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Gender, Race, and Class in Media*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Echo Research Inc. (2002, March). *PR Week Salary Survey 2002*. New York, New York: Echo Research Inc. Retrieved October 2004 from <http://www.fpra-orlando.org/PRWeek%202002%20Survey.pdf>
- Entman, R. & Rojecki, A. (2001). *The Black Image in the White Mind: Media and Race in America*. Chicago, Illinois: Chicago University Press.
- Fiske, S. Social Cognition. In Abraham Tesser (Ed.), (1995). *Advanced Social Psychology* (pp. 148-193). New York, New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Gallagher, M. (1981). *Unequal Opportunities The Case of Women and The Media*. Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Grunig, J. (Ed.). (1992). *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Grunig, L., Toth, E. & Hon, L. (2001). *Women in Public Relations*. New York, New York: The Guilford Press.
- Hill, G & Hill, K. *Law.com Dictionary*. Obtained December 12, 2003, from the world wide web: [www.law.com](http://www.law.com).
- Hilt, M. (1988, April). *Agricultural Communicators in Educatin (ACE) to celebrate 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday*. United States Department of Agriculture News Division. Obtained July 10, 2004 from the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center.
- Jamieson, K. (2001). *Progress or No Room at the Top? The Role of Women in Telecommunications, Broadcast, Cable and E-Companies*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from [http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/02\\_reports\\_releases/report\\_2001.htm](http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/02_reports_releases/report_2001.htm)
- Jeffers, D. (1987, August). A descriptive study of perceived impact of gender on employment status, type of work, industry relationships, working environment and job satisfaction in livestock industry magazines. *Presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication*. San Antonio, Texas.
- Kimmel, M. (2004). *The Gendered Society*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Marlane, J. (1999). *Women in Television News Revisited*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Papper, B. (2003, July/August). Women and Minorities One Step Forward and Two Steps Back. *Communicator*, 21-25.

- Peirce, J. (1998, February). Personal correspondence obtained March 8, 2004 from the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center.
- Sapp, M. (2002, February). Are there equal opportunities for female journalists? *The ByLine*. Obtained March 8, 2004 from the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center.
- Scherler, C. (2001). *Job satisfaction of University of Florida agricultural communication alumni*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Selnow, G.W. & Wilson, S. (1985). Sex roles and job satisfaction in public relations. *American Psychologist*, 11(4), 38-47.
- Serini, S., Toth, E., Wright, D. & Emig, A. (1997). Watch for Falling Glass... Women, Men, and Job Satisfaction in Public Relations: A Preliminary Analysis. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 9(2), 99-118.
- Sprecker, K. & Rudd, R. (1998). Opinions of practitioners concerning curricula Requirements of agricultural communication students of the University of Florida. *Journal of Applied Communications*, 82(1), 31-41.
- Stone, V. (2000). *Gender Gaps and Factors in Radio News Salaries*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.missouri.edu/~jourvs/>
- Stone, V. (2000). *Gender Gaps and Factors in Television News Salaries*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.missouri.edu/~jourvs/>
- Stone, V. (2000). *Job Satisfaction in Radio News*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.missouri.edu/~jourvs/>
- Stone, V. (2000). *Job Satisfaction in TV News*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.missouri.edu/~jourvs/>
- Toth, E. & Cline, C. (Eds.). (1989). *Beyond the Velvet Ghetto*. San Francisco, California: IABC Research Foundation.
- United States Census Bureau. (2004, June). *Earnings Distribution of Female U.S. Year-Round Full-Time Workers by Occupation: 1999*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t33.html>
- United States Census Bureau. (2004, June). *Earnings Distribution of Male U.S. Year-Round Full-Time Workers by Occupation: 1999*. Retrieved July 10, 2004 from <http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/phc-t33.html>

Weaver, D., Beam, R., Brownlee, B., Voakes, P., & Wilhoit, G. (2003, April). *Indiana University School of Journalism American Journalist Survey*. Retrieved June 20, 2004 from [http://www.poynter.org/content/content\\_view.asp?id=28235](http://www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=28235)

Women at Work. (1976, September). *AgriMarketing*, 17. Obtained March 8, 2004 from the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center.