

SCALE TO MEASURE ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR AGRICULTURAL PERSONNEL

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to develop a reliable and valid scale, to measure oral communication skills for agricultural personnel. Appropriate statistical methods 'Scale product method' was used, which combines Thurston and Likert techniques. Thirty-three (33) statements were selected for judgment; a panel of 50 judges was requested to assign the score for each statement on a five-point continuum. Based on the scale (median) and Q values, ten (10) statements were finally selected to constitute oral communication skills for agricultural personnel.

Keywords: agricultural personnel, scale product method, oral communication skill

INTRODUCTION

Oral communication skills are a very important factor for any person to create an impression in the mind of other people or audiences either positively or negatively. Oral communication plays a very crucial role in the transfer of technology. Communication skills are important to transfer an innovation, an idea, an object or a message from the source to the intended audience. Some personnel are very effective and confident in communicating with other people whereas some people are not. Communication is a conscious attempt to establish commonality over some idea, fact, feelings and the like or dislike with others. To find out the potentiality of agricultural personnel in communicating with others the study was undertaken to measure the oral communication skills of agricultural personnel.

OBJECTIVE

To know the scale to measure oral communication skills for agricultural personnel

METHODOLOGY

Among the techniques available 'Scale product method' which combines Thurstone's technique (1928) of equal appearing interval scale for the selection of items and Likert's technique (1932) of summated rating for ascertaining the response on the scale as proposed by Eysenck and Crown (1949) was used.

Statement collection

The items of the attitude scale are called statements. In the initial stage, 33 (thirty-three) statements reflecting the feelings of the agricultural personnel towards oral communication were collected from relevant literature and discussion with experts of extension discipline. The collected

statements were edited according to the criteria laid down by Edward (1957) and then 33 (thirty-three) statements were selected as they were found to be unambiguous.

Statement analysis

To judge the degree of "Unfavorableness" to 'Favorableness' of each statement on the five-point equal appearing interval continuum, a panel of judges was selected. Fifty slips of the selected statements were handed over to the experts connected with extensive educational work. The judges were requested to judge each statement in terms of their most agreement or most disagreement with the statements with the five equal appearing intervals continuing. Out of these experts, all the experts returned the statements after duly recording their judgments and were considered for the analysis.

Determination of scale values

Based on judgment, the median value of the distribution and the S value for the statement concerned were calculated with the help of

$$S = L + \frac{0.50 - \sum P_b}{P_w} \times I$$

The interquartile range (Q3 - Q1) for each statement was also worked out. Only those statements were selected whose median values were greater than Q value. When a few statements had the same scale values, the statements having the lowest Q Values were selected. Thurstone and Chave (Edwards 1957) described another criterion in addition to Q as a basis for rejecting statements in scales constructed by the method of the equal appearing interval. Accordingly, when a few items had the same scale values, the item having the lowest Q Values was selected. The attitude scale thus constructed is given in Table 1.

Table: 1 Final selected statement to measure oral communication skills for Agricultural personnel.

Sr. No.	Statements	Scale Value	Q Value
1	At the time when I stand up for giving a speech my mind becomes blank (-)	4.23	1.70
2	I am sure that my body language shows a positive combination with my words (+)	1.17	1.13
3	My body temperature suddenly rises at the time communicating with others (-)	4.13	2.08
4	I can communicate with other people very confidently (+)	3.02	1.84
5	I always feel one type of unwanted tension arise inside me during communicating with others (-)	2.09	1.35
6	Even though I am in tension I can communicate with other people properly(+)	2.36	1.63
7	I experienced considerable nervousness while communicating with other (-)	3.48	1.97
8	I always show a positive attitude while communicating (+)	2.80	1.77
9	My body trembles during communication (-)	1.90	1.62
10	I am confident that I can pay proper attention during communication (+)	3.78	2.44

Reliability of the scale

To know the consistency of the scale, reliability was worked out. The split-half technique was used to measure the reliability of the scale. Selected 10 attitudinal statements were divided into two halves with 5 (five) odd and 5 (five) even numbered statements Each of the two sets was treated as separate scales having obtained two scores, for each of the 20 respondents. The coefficient of reliability between the two sets of scores was calculated by Rulon’s formula (Guilford 1954), which was 0.77.

Validity of the scale

The validity of the content of the scale was examined by discussing with specialists in extension and statistics. Specialists examined and realized appropriateness of the each statement to measure oral communication skills for agricultural personnel and finally scale was developed.

Administration of the scale (Scoring technique)

For the application of the scale, the researcher can collect information against every 10 statements in a five-point continuum viz. ‘Strongly agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Undecided’, ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly disagree’ with a weighted score of 5,4,3,2 and 1 for positive and reverse to negative statements

CONCLUSION

From the various methods available for constructing the attitude scale, the scale product method’ combines Thrustone’s technique of equal appearing interval scale. For the selection of items and Likert’s technique of summated rating for ascertaining the response on the scale as proposed

by Eysenck and Crown was used to measure the oral communication skills of agricultural personnel

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This is to declare that there is “No conflict of interest” among researcher.

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