

HIGH LIGHTS OF 2nd NATIONAL EXTENSION EDUCATION CONGRESS

The 2nd National Extension Education Congress was organized by the Society of Extension Education, Agra, U.P in Collaboration with Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur (Rajasthan) dated May 22 - 24, 2004. This Congress was organized on the auspicious occasion of the 464th Maharana Pratap Jayanti.

The congress was inaugurated by Sh. Gulab Chand Kataria, Hon'ble Home Minister, Govt. of Rajasthan. Prof. R.P. Singh, Vice Chancellor, MPUA &T, Udaipur, presided over the function. Sh. Kanakmal Katara, Hon'ble State Minister of Tribal Development, Govt. of Rajasthan was the Chief guest of the valedictory function of the congress. Dr. P. Das, DDG (Extension), ICAR, New Delhi, Dr. Pramatama Singh, Vice Chancellor, RAU, Bikaner, Dr. Nagendra Sharma, Director, NDRI, Karnal, Dr. A.G. Sawant, Member, ASRB (ICAR), New Delhi, Padam Sri Dr. J.S.P. Yadav, Former Chairman, ASRB (ICAR), New Delhi, Dr. Panjab Singh, Director, School of Agriculture, IGNOU, New Delhi (Former DG, ICAR, New Delhi), Dr. C. Prasad, Former DDG (Extension), ICAR, New Delhi and Shri M.K. Khanna (IAS), Principal Secretary, Dept. of Rural Development & Panchayat Raj, Govt. of Rajasthan, Jaipur were kind enough to grace and bless this congress.

Dr. O.S. Rathore, (Former Director, DEE, MPUA&T, Udaipur), Dr. S.L. Mathur, (Former Director, DEE, MPUA&T, Udaipur), Dr. J.S. Panwar, (Former Director, DEE, MPUA&T, Udaipur), Dr. P. N. Kalla, Professor & Incharge, APEX Centre, Jaipur Campus, RAU, Bikaner, Dr. P.K. Jain, Director, College of Management Studies, MLS University, Udaipur, Dr. H.P.S. Arya, Joint Director, Extension Education, IVRI, Izatnagar, Dr. S. K. Sharma, Dy. Director, DEE, RAU, Bikaner, and Dr. Sakila Khan, Associate Director Extension, (Fisheries), NDUAT, Faizabad and were among the other dignitaries who graced the congress.

The issues selected for the national congress have direct relevance to the farming communities: *Technology Application* Education, the national extension systems, application of IT and electronic extension for rural development, integrated farming, and gender concerns and perspectives.

The Compendium (2004) published on this occasion included summaries of the research papers (198 papers) on diverse areas of Extension Education plus some more learned papers appeared in the Souvenir brought out during the Congress. The leading papers were presented and discussed, whereas four groups examined these papers on various themes as follows and points of views in depth.

Group - I : Themes Covered

1. Alternative Approaches in Extension Education,
2. Sociological Aspects and Participatory Approaches in Agricultural Development, and
3. Participatory Approaches for Natural Resources Management and Energy Saving.

Group - II : Themes Covered

1. Integrated Farming System and Entrepreneurship Development
2. National Extension System and Emerging Challenges in relation to WTO and Globalization.
3. Re-orientation of Extension System to Compliment efforts of input Industry.

Group - III : Themes Covered

1. Agricultural Communication,
2. Indigenous Technological Knowledge,
3. Inputs Support to Extension Programmes.
4. Application of Information Tech. and Electronic Extn. in Rural Development

Group - IV : Themes Covered

1. Women in Agriculture, Their Issues, Policies and Perspectives,
2. Intensification of Capacity Building,
3. Organic Farming and Medicinal Plants, and
4. Agro-industries.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE GROUPS WERE AS UNDER :

Group - I

1. Farmers must be well prepared/educated before suggesting and advocating a technology for adoption.
2. Educational arrangements must be made to make the farmers aware about the Kisan Mandal System for Transfer of Technology in Mewar area of Rajasthan. This approach has great potentiality.

3. Coordination and cooperation should be improved among field functionaries of T&V system with more association of SAUs and Research Centers.
4. FLD programme has proved to enhance knowledge of farmers and therefore should be expanded.
5. More focus should be given on tribal farmers as a social goal. Inputs, credits and subsidies with proper communication to small and marginal farmers will be helpful to achieve the - economic goals.
6. Technology refinements/modification are required in post-harvest technologies, specially the model structure, fumigants and other inputs; they may be provided on subsidy to reduce post-harvest losses.
7. Farmwomen may be educated in post-harvest management of agricultural produce.
8. Energy saving technology like Gas fire-boiler system should be advocated under natural resource management.
9. Participatory approach is required not only for appraisal and implementation stage, but also at technology development stage.

Group - II

1. Varied topics, such as profile of agricultural labour, problems of mustard production, employment generation through watershed project, production technology of safed musali, impact of training through KVK and training needs of village extension workers were covered.
2. Interesting paper on profile of agricultural labour was presented and reported that majority of the labour were male 88.6% belonged to low class i.e. SC & ST. The labour did not belong to any organized group. Education level was low. It is recommended to have suitable organization to look after their welfare aspects.
3. Paper on employment Generation through watershed project in tribal area of Southern Rajasthan was presented and it has been observed that project has provided employment opportunity to more number of people during the programme implementation in activities related to soil and water conservation, whereas maximum regular employment was provided in agricultural production. Long duration migration was checked to some extent.
4. Paper presented on advanced technology of rain fed safed musali is one of the very important medicinal herbs and is in great demand. Total agronomy has been worked out and is found to be highly profitable. The area is found to be very suitable for growing and the universities must impart training to the farmers, hence there is urgent need to promote its cultivation.
5. Paper presented on training needs of the villages extension workers conveyed that majority of VEWS had farming as family occupation but possessed lower training experience with regard to crops, fruits and vegetables production technology.
6. Scope of the training infrastructures in our SAUs and the ICAR Research Institutes needed improvement and strengthening.

Group - III

1. Lack of awareness about the use of internet among students has been observed, hence good internet facility should be created in the educational institutions and intensive training's be organized frequently for the students to use internet facility for academic and scholastic purposes.
2. Efforts should be made to identify document and evaluate ITKs for sustainable development
3. Low cost technology for Niger production should be developed for tribal and poor farmers
4. There should be network of Goat Cooperatives for proper rearing and marketing.
5. Training on disease control of fish should be organized for the fish farmers
6. Supply of good quality fingerlings seed should be ensured.

Group - IV

1. Women issues dealt during presentation included role stress, training needs, drudgery reduction. Empowerment, entrepreneurship etc.
2. Presentations emphasized the effectiveness of training in transfer of appropriate technology.
3. Training should be followed with effective intervention programmes.
4. Presentation emphasized the need for training of women on various areas of agriculture e.g. for improved varieties, medicinal plants, organic farming, different sectors of animal husbandry.
5. Presentations also emphasized the educational programmes related to balanced diet, food preservation, water and household sanitation, labour saving devices and income generating activities.

6. Need for developing organic farming model based on specific farming system.
7. Women have multifarious responsibilities, which is resulting in stress, and drudgery, which in turn affect social, economical and physical status of women. Therefore, the need was highlighted for developing effective strategies for coping with stress and drudgery.
8. At grass root level the women are responsible for various agriculture, animal and household activities. However, their participation at programme planning and policy formulation level is limited. Effective participation at these levels is recommended.
9. Mobilization of women through self-help group (SHGs) should receive priority in extension design, which will empower them.

IN THE VALEDICTORY SESSION MAJOR ISSUES WERE POINTED OUT AND RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS WERE MADE. IN BRIEF THEY ARE PRESENTED AS FOLLOW:

1. **Training**—Training is one of the mechanisms for transfer of technology. Broadly speaking, the main categories of training are: (i) Vocational training, (ii) In-service training, and (iii) Entrepreneurship development. All are very big areas and has to cater to a larger group of population. So far training has been a part of extension services. Now the time has come to separate it into the Directorate of Training and the concept of Teaching, Research and Extension should change to (i) Teaching, (ii) Research, (iii) Extension and (iv) Training - the four basic functions of the SAUs and similarly, a larger role of training in the ICAR Research Institutes by way of Advanced Training Centers. Some of the SAUs (PAU & HAU) have already nearly similar arrangements. The training should play a much bigger role in TOT.
2. **The KVK as a National Extension Design**—Virtually there is no national extension services system in the country after the T&V system of the World Bank. In view of the higher level of extension services and guidance now required by the farmers, farm women and farm youth, more trained and qualified farm scientists are necessary. Fortunately, we have the KVK model and by now nearly 400 rural districts have been covered by the KVK; and ultimately there will be nearly 550-600 KVKs. This is a national design and is most appropriate as an extension system for the country.
3. **Demand Driven Extension Approach**—From the very inception of Extension Education, bottom-up approach was one of the strategic designs/principles. However, in the implementation and field programmes, this could not be put to practice to a great extent basically because (i) its deeper implications could not be well visualized; (ii) it was difficult to put into practice; (iii) participatory mode of working has been emphasized late; and (iv) the farming system approach has yet to gain currency. That is why, the top-down approaches prevailed and demand-driven methodology (bottom-up) was not very much visible. Now the effort is that the demand driven extension system/approach must prevail over the top-down methodology. How this could be done? What could be the strategy and design? The extension professional must ponder over this and examine how to affect this approach, which is not only essential but also imperative.
As far as possible, the methodology should be such that it compels you to act as per its design. For instance, PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) is a methodology to gather relevant information about a village, community or any technological area in order to understand its socio-economic conditions and to plan for scientific and technological interactions. For PRA, you must sit with the villagers regularly and not by chance, in order to understand their problems and plan for their solutions. Can such an approach be visualized for demand driven extension methodology? Let us examine a proposition to this effect.
It could be “Model Farm Based Extension” The concept and contention is that the States may be understood in terms of agro-climatic zones and each zone may be understood as possible farming systems. Ultimately 5-10 village Panchayats may be considered as a unit for extension and in each such unit, a model farm or two may be developed depending on the farming situations on the participatory mode with the selected farmer(s). In order to do this, already relatively developed farms may be selected (which also ensures progressive farmers), whether marginal, small or large, and it could be studied on the premise of the farming system approach and the gaps if any, could be identified. These gaps could be filled up on 50:50 percent basis or 75:25 basis as the government support in order to make it an ideal/model farming. Such farm should be utilized as a basis for demonstration, vocational training, planning and S&T interventions. The progressive farmers so chosen should be thoroughly trained and prepared to act as an “Extension Agent”. He may be given suitable incentives/honorarium for his/her time and energy spent for extension work for the neighbouring farmers. He should be hub of all extension work for these villages and panchayats. All extension personnel, rural institutions including panchayats, other progressive farmers, NGOs and farmers associations/forums should be linked with the ‘model farms’ and the model farmers. This approach like PRA - put all the S&T workers on the ground tied with the farms and the respective farmers for learning the art and science of agriculture on the ground/on the farms in the same environment and locality. It would have numerous advantages in the long run. And in future it may lead towards privatization of extension at least partially if not fully.
4. **Electronic Media and Information Technologies**—This is the greatest revolution that has taken place in the World; the world has become a “Global Village” now. Any discipline, which cannot fully use these facilities, is bound to be a laggard. Fortunately, India has been playing a leading role in this context. Extension Education is basically a communication device to reach the unreached and, therefore, must take appropriate actions to fully equip extension systems with these systems in order to be prompt, and fast for accelerating spread of technologies for effective diffusion and adoption among the farming

communities. Several speakers shared their papers on the IT&C and highlighted its uses and importance in terms of (a) developing a policy on IT & C, (b) developing farm packages on different farm enterprises most suited to the latest media and devices, (c) developing a communication at vintage extension units/wings, (d) capacity building of the existing as well as new extension professionals, (e) strengthening the research - extension - farmers linkages, (f) establishing wireless networks which was long done by AMUL, (h) developing software as well as hardware for on-line communication, and (g) development of web-based software applications.

5. **Gender Concerns and SHGs**—The second phase of Green Revolution will not come only by farm technologies, but several other concerns and considerations : (i) building half of our population (farm women) for doing scientific farming, (ii) organizing the farming communities especially the farm women on the SHGs line, (iii) making our organizations more responsive by scientific management, and (iv) promoting commitment from top to bottom - the top leadership is, in fact, failing on this account.
There is a global trend to educate, train and organize rural/farm women for their socio-economic growth. The Self-help Group concept (SHG) is an excellent mechanism to organize and mobilize them to take up productive activities both social as well as economic. This appropriate design should be utilized for organizing rural youth as well as other willing farmers.
6. **An Integrated Agriculture**—We have in the past concentrated on crops - cereals participatory. Other land-based activities like livestock production, horticulture, fisheries etc. have been neglected especially in the extension scheme of things - a balanced approach now is required. The potential of each area should be fully exploited for the domestic consumption as well as for export.
7. **As an Extension Design**—AMUL pattern of extension work in Dairying should be emulated in crops and allied areas - it is a holistic approach also called systems view and approach. This A to Z approach is extremely important for the successful extension services in agricultural extension system; we must improve on this line.
8. **Specializations in Extension**—In our academic programmes, specializations have not yet been effected; we are all journalists in that sense. The following areas may make our specializations in extension education discipline: (i) Extension system and management, (ii) extension designs, approaches and methodology, (iii) agricultural communication & information technology, (iv) research, evaluation and monitoring, (v) rural sociology-social work and organizations, (vi) agricultural journalism, and (vii) training - vocational, in-service & entrepreneurship. The academic courses, research work and fieldwork have to be well designed and in view of limited time available during academic pursuits, constant studies and advanced trainings have to be effected. Specialization has to be a mental game: professionals, who take on specific specialization, must keep on working on that as a life long learning process. Learning never ends; in specialization you know more and more about less and less! You stand for a specific cause - specialized professional. A basic foundation of professionalism should be fieldwork, which unfortunately, some of the studies show that highly qualified extension professionals have fewer tendencies for fieldwork. Should we prepare such white-collar professionals in extension education which is absolutely a field-oriented discipline?
9. **Socio-Economic Balance**—History speaks about skewed development in the country more thrust on economic development and negligible on social organization and inputs. The results of such an approach in the society are very obvious: social evils all over - terrorism, kidnapping, and chaos. This has to be arrested and rectified. We do not live by Roti, Kapada aur Makan alone - we are social animals; societies and civic bodies have to function for people. Self-reliance and sustainability of society have to be attained by organizing people - all stakeholders must participate in the up-keep and improvements of the social orders in the communities.

I am hopeful that the outcome of the congress in the form of recommendations will serve as the guidelines for future extension research and formulation of extension development programmes.

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(Jitendra Chauhan)
(Gen. Sec & Organizing Secretary)