

## **Need and necessity to upgrade Rural Agriculture Work Experience**

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**ABSTRACT:** In view of globalization and development of new technologies it is essential that the students meet international quality standards to develop analytical skill, entrepreneurial qualities and experiential learning for having confidence to do profitable farming. To inculcate these qualities Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) introduced an integrated programme named Rural Agriculture Work Experience (RAWE) to agriculture graduates in all State Agriculture Universities. Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya (JNKVV) also started this programme in the year 2001-02. In order to know whether there is any necessity to upgrade the RAWE programme a study was conducted in the College of Agriculture, Jabalpur under JNKVV. Purposive sampling technique was used and statistical methods like percentage, frequency, mean and ranking were used for analysing the data. It was found that almost all the objectives of the RAWE programme were met and the students are enthusiastic to do a new module if introduced.

**KEYWORDS:** Module, Purposive Sampling, RAWE

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Rural Agriculture Work Experience (RAWE) programme was introduced to give practical orientation to undergraduate students in real life situations of farming in rural setup through interconnected exercises of skill development so as to identify the practical possibilities of academic knowledge in the field. In India, RAWE programme was introduced first by Andhra Pradesh Agriculture University, Hyderabad in 1980-81. Later on, the Third Dean's committee under the chairman ship of Keerti Singh (1995b) advocated the introduction of RAWE in all the State Agriculture Universities in India and laid down specific objectives for the programme.

Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Jabalpur on the recommendation of Fourth Deans' Committee (ICAR) introduced Rural Agricultural Work Experience programme as an essential requirement for B.Sc. (Ag.) degree in the year 2001-02. In the programme, students are placed in the villages for intensive training and field experience with farm families. During stay in the villages, they get an opportunity to study the different farm situations, farm practices adopted by the farmers, interact with the farmers to identify the problems and suggest the appropriate measures to solve them for improvement in the existing practices. Students also develop confidence in applying the knowledge gained during the course of the studies and fine-tune their skill with the experience and knowledge of host farmers. Under this programme, RAWE Model-I has been adopted in the Vishwa Vidyalaya with following objectives

1. To understand of rural community life and the current situation prevailing in villages with special reference to agriculture and allied enterprises.
2. To familiarize with the socio-economic conditions of farmers and their problems with reference to agricultural development.
3. To make students understand farm technologies as adopted by farmers and also to help farmers to prepare sound farm plans matching to available resources.
4. To facilitate development of communication skills in students through use of extension teaching methods for transfer of technology.
5. To acquaint the students with the on-going extension & rural development programmes and to understand the activities of Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Currently, there is a challenge of retaining youngsters in agriculture due to various socio-economic factors, including profitability in agricultural pursuits. It has become imminent to reorient agricultural practices

to make them intellectually satisfying and economically rewarding for the youth. To enhance value addition of RAWE in all State Agricultural Universities, on may 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> 2012, UAS, Bangalore and ICAR, New Delhi conducted a “*National Workshop on Rural Agricultural Work experience Programme of the students of Agricultural Universities*” in Karnataka State with the objective to merge the RAWE, IN-PLANT training and Experiential Learning into one composite programme of one year Finally, to make student ready with the grass-root level experience and entrepreneurship skills, the Student 'Rural Entrepreneurship and Awareness Development Yojana' (READY) programme was envisaged in the XII Five-Year Plan. In order to know whether there is any need and necessity to upgrade the existing programme in the University, this study was taken up.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in College of Agriculture, Jabalpur, JNKVV. An ex-post-facto research design was employed as RAWE was already implemented and data was collected from students based on their experience to know the participants perception towards RAWE programme. Student’s who completed the RAWE programme in 2013-14 academic year were selected as respondents for the study and the sample consisted of 86 students (34 girls and 52 boys). A well structured questionnaire was developed based on the objectives of RAWE and also on the present changing conditions of agriculture with 177 questions. The instrument was improved by taking suggestions from experts and also on pre-testing on 10 per cent population. The data was collected and suitable statistical tests were applied and the results were drawn.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The perception of RAWE students on orientation given at the college, the data in table 1 reveals that 2.32 per cent perceived low, 48.83 per cent perceived moderate and 43.83 per cent perceived high. Therefore, it is concluded that most of the respondents had good orientation. From the distribution of RAWE participants, on course content of the programme, the data reveals that 3.48 per cent have low perception, 59.3 per cent have moderate perception and 37.2 have high perception. Therefore, it can be concluded that most of the students are positive towards the course content. The results were in agreement with Ramanjaneyulu (1992).

**Table 1. Overall perception of students on RAWE programme**

S. No.	Statements	Low		Medium		High	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	On orientation received	2	2.32	42	48.84	42	48.84
2.	On course content of RAWE	3	3.50	51	59.30	32	37.20
3.	On inter and intra group relations	1	1.17	59	68.60	26	30.23
4.	On scientific information sharing	10	11.63	57	66.28	19	22.09
5.	On credit load	0	0.00	26	30.24	60	69.76
6.	On evaluation	0	0.00	19	22.09	67	77.91
7.	On gain in knowledge and skill	0	0.00	60	69.76	26	30.24

From inter and intra group relations during the RAWE programme, the data reveals that 1.16 percent are having low inter and intra group relations, 68.6 per cent are having moderate inter and intra group relations, and 46.42 percent are having high inter and intra group relations. Therefore, it can be concluded that majority of the students had moderate inter and intra group relations. From the distribution of RAWE participants, on scientific information sharing during the RAWE programme, the data reveals that 11.63 per cent students scientific information sharing was low, 66.28 per cent had moderate and 22.09 per cent had high scientific information sharing. Therefore, majority of the students had moderate scientific information sharing. From the distribution of RAWE participants, on credit load of the RAWE programme, the data reveals that none of the students perceive credit load as insufficient, 30.23 per cent feel as moderate and 69.76 per cent feel sufficient. Therefore, majority of the students were satisfied with credit load. From the distribution of RAWE participants, on evaluation method of RAWE programme, the data reveals that none of the students had low perception, 22.09 per cent had moderate perception and 77.91 per cent had high perception on RAWE monitoring and evaluation system. Therefore, it can be concluded that majority of the students were satisfied with the evaluation

system. From the distribution of RAWE participants, on knowledge and skill gained during the village stay, the data reveals that none of the students were found in low category, 69.76 per cent gained medium and 30.23 percent gained high knowledge and skill. Therefore it can be concluded that majority of the students' have gained knowledge and skill during the RAWE programme. The results were in agreement with Bortakur and Bortamuly (2013) and Sanjeev and Gowda (2013) but differed from Srinivasa Reddy (1985).

**Table 2. Mean score on gain in knowledge and skill in different modules of RAWE programme**

S.No.	Module	Mean score	Rank
1.	Crop production	3.1	IV
2.	Crop protection	4.3	II
3.	Rural economics	3.2	III
4.	Extension programmes	2.9	V
5.	Research station/KVK	4.5	I

The students were asked to give ratings on 5 points, and the average of ratings were taken and ranked. The data in the table 2 shows that the students who have undergone RAWE programme have gained more knowledge and skill on KVK or research station activities, next to it was crop protection followed by Rural economics and Crop production and finally extension programmes. Results of crop production are similar with Sanjeev and Gowda, (2013).

**Table 3. Problems faced by the Students during RAWE**

S. No.	The observed Problems that are faced by the respondents	Mean score	Rank
a.	Problem in getting information for socio-economic survey of village from other agencies	4.2	III
b.	Problem in conducting participatory Rural appraisal in the village	4.4	II
c.	The stipend given is not sufficient	4.7	I

**Table 4. Suggestions offered by the respondents**

S. No.	The following suggestions were made by the respondents	Mean. Score	Rank
a.	activities should be sub-divided into monthly schedules		
b.	staff should be always available for continuous guiding		
c.	stipend should be increased		
d.	evaluation should be monthly		
e.	few more practical oriented new topics		

From the table 3 and table 4 it is understood that, all the above mentioned problems were due to lack of continuous availability of RAWE staff at the premises of students. The course content was given as a schedule for complete RAWE period, students alone were unable to manage the schedule of the programme. So, the teaching staff of all the disciplines who were interested in guiding RAWE students may be placed. While residing at villages, there will be high resource expenditure and the students were finding it difficult to meet those expenditures. Hence, the students were requesting to increase the amount of stipend given. Probably, as most of the students were aware of other practically feasible topics to learn during the RAWE period, they might have made the suggestions. Hence, in order to overcome the problems the suggestions that were made by the students may be considered.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

RAWE programme is successful in improving communication skills of students and imparting knowledge and skill during the RAWE period. Division of entire RAWE schedule into monthly activities will enhance students' performance particularly in extension activities. Teaching staff from the college may be available to the students for continuous guiding, which will enhance the confidence levels of the students in performing the activities apart from increasing stipend. At the same time it is weak in proving practical experience in crop production and extension activities.

From the objectives of the university it is evident that entrepreneurial learning from agri-industries is not included as an objective. From the student's feedback on RAWE it is evident that almost all the objectives of the programme were fulfilled. By including the entrepreneurial learning and incorporating the suggestions offered by the students, and components of experiential learning the upgrading of the RAWE programme of a semester to READY programme of an year can be done, which may facilitate improving the students' abilities.

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