

ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TOWARDS RURAL WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME (RWEPE)

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted at the RWEPE centers of College of Agriculture, Dapoli, by personal interviewing 107 students. Majority of the students have positive attitude towards RWEPE. This programme have been attained its objectives and it is useful programme for the students in getting exposure to rural conditions. Less stipend was the major constraint reported by majority of the students. This programme requires little modifications for better implementation and effective results.

INTRODUCTION

The Rural Work Experience Programme (RWEPE) was introduced by Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University during 1980-1981. It is a well organized system where staff and farmers involve together with an objective to impart practical training to final year B.Sc. students by providing them an opportunity to live and work with the farmers in village for a period of one crop season.

Rural Work Experience Programme of 19 to 21 credits is being implemented in College of Agriculture, Dapoli for B.Sc (Agri.), B.Sc.(Hort.) and B.Sc (For.) students during seventh semester, since 1986. This is a sort of training and practical exposure to agriculture students in field situation. In order to know the attitude of students towards this programme, benefits and also their constraints and suggestions for improving the programme, the present study was conducted with specific objectives.

1. To study the attitude of students towards RWEPE.
2. To know benefits of RWEPE perceived by the students.
3. To know the constraint experienced by the students during RWEPE.
4. To obtain the suggestions offered by the students of RWEPE.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the RWEPE centers of College of Agriculture, Dapoli, Dist. Ratnagiri (M.S.). Students who had undergone RWEPE programme during seventh semester and in the academic year 2004-05 were selected. Out of 169 students, 107 students could be interviewed from agriculture (RWEPE), horticulture (RHWEPE) and forestry (FOWEX) degree programme. Data were collected by personally interviewing the respondents with the help of specially designed schedule and were analyzed by using simple statistical tools like frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Attitude of students towards RWEPE

The data pertaining to attitude of the students towards RWEPE are given in Table 1.

It is seen from Table 1 that at overall level, 57.94 per cent students had 'favorable' attitude and 24.29 per cent students had 'most favorable' attitude towards RWEPE. This means, by and large the students have positive attitude towards RWEPE. However, (17.77 per cent) had least favorable attitude. This may be due to their constraints during the programme. The findings were similar with findings of Anonymous (1989).

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Table 1. Attitude of the students towards RWEPE

S. No.	Attitude	RAWPE (N=65)	RHWE (N=26)	FOWEX (N=16)	Overall (N=107)
1.	Most Favorable	16 (24.62)	6 (23.08)	4 (25.00)	26(24.29)
2.	Favorable	37 (56.92)	15 (57.69)	10 (62.50)	62(57.94)
3.	Least Favorable	12 (18.46)	5 (19.23)	2 (12.50)	19(17.77)
Total		65(100.00)	26(100.00)	16(100.00)	107(100.00)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

2. Benefits of RWEPE perceived by the students

students' point of view are given in Table 2.

The data pertaining to benefits of RWEPE from

Table 2. Benefits of RWEPE as perceived by the students

S. No.	Benefits	RAWPE (N=65)	RHWE (N=26)	FOWEX (N=16)	Overall level (N=107)
1.	Got insight into the field problems of the farmers.	64 (98.46)	26 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	106 (99.07)
2.	Got acquainted with the living conditions of the farmers.	64 (98.46)	23 (88.46)	16 (100.00)	103 (96.26)
3.	Got acquainted with the Konkan agriculture.	63 (96.92)	25 (96.15)	15 (93.75)	103 (96.26)
4.	Got acquainted with the functioning of village institutions.	60 (92.31)	25 (96.15)	15 (93.75)	100 (93.46)
5.	Could enrich the knowledge gained in the college.	54 (83.08)	22 (84.62)	15 (93.75)	91 (85.05)
6.	Could improve the skill of communicating with farmers.	62 (95.38)	23 (88.46)	15 (93.75)	100 (93.46)
7.	Could improve the technical skills in performing various agricultural operations.	60 (92.31)	20 (76.92)	15 (93.75)	95 (88.76)
8.	Could learn the techniques of survey and farm planning.	42 (64.61)	22 (84.62)	13 (81.25)	77 (71.96)
9.	Could get the experience of organizing various extension education activities in the villages.	63 (96.92)	25 (96.15)	15 (93.75)	103 (96.26)
10.	Attitude towards farming enterprise and the farmers changed favorably.	43 (66.15)	21 (80.77)	12 (75.00)	76 (71.03)
11.	Could study the development programmes / schemes being operated in the village	42 (64.61)	18 (69.23)	12 (75.00)	72 (67.29)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

The data presented in Table 2 indicate that the students were benefited mainly in terms of acquaintance with living conditions of farmers, Konkan agriculture, village institutions; development of insight into the field problems; improvement in communication and technical skills and got experience in organizing various extension activities in the villages. This means that objectives of this programme have been attained and it is useful programme for the students in getting exposure to field conditions.

3. Constraints experienced by the students during RWEPE

The constraints experienced by the students are shown in Table 3.

The data presented in Table 3 revealed that 'less stipend' was the major constraint reported by majority of the students from the three degree programmes, followed by the constraints namely, 'selected host farmers did not have the desired components' and 'heavy load of report writing'

reported by majority of RAWE and RHWE students. 'Improper time of RWEF was the constraint stated by majority of RHWE and FOWEX students. 'Improper orientation', 'non existence of the desired components in the selected villages' and 'unsatisfactory accommodation' were the constraint

reported by majority of the FOWEX students. 'Heavy expenditure on preparation of reports' was the constraints stated by maximum number of the students from all the degree programmes. The findings were somewhat similar with findings of Anonymous (1989) and Rambabu et.al (1999).

Table 3. Constraints experienced by the students of RWEF

S. No.	Constraints	RAWE (N=65)	RHWE (N=26)	FOWEX (N=16)	Overall (N=107)
1.	Improper orientation	10 (15.38)	9 (34.62)	12 (75.00)	31 (28.97)
2.	Non existence of the desired components in the selected villages	8 (12.30)	12 (46.15)	12 (75.00)	32 (29.91)
3.	Unsatisfactory accommodation	9 (13.85)	7 (26.92)	10 (62.50)	26 (24.30)
4.	Selected host farmer did not have the desired components.	59 (90.77)	21 (80.77)	4 (25.00)	84 (78.50)
5.	Non availability of inputs for demonstrations.	16 (24.62)	12 (46.15)	5 (31.25)	33 (30.84)
6.	Improper time of programme.	19 (29.23)	19 (76.07)	16 (100.00)	54 (50.00)
7.	Less amount of stipend.	54 (89.07)	19 (73.08)	11 (68.75)	84 (78.50)
8.	Untimely payment of stipend.	22 (33.85)	10 (38.46)	9 (56.25)	41 (38.32)
9.	Heavy load of report writing.	41 (63.07)	22 (84.62)	5 (31.25)	68 (63.55)
10.	Heavy expenditure on preparation of reports.	29 (44.62)	12 (46.15)	9 (56.25)	50 (46.73)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

4. Suggestions offered by the students of RWEF

The suggestions given by the students of RWEF are presented herewith in Table 4.

From Table 4 it is seen that major suggestions from the students of RWEF were 'host farmer should have all the components as per need of the subject' (71.02 per cent), 'adequate stipend should be given at proper time' (64.48 per cent), and Report writing should be optimum to save the time and money' (46.73 per cent). 'time of programme should be such that it will cover all operations of all major crops' (42.99 per cent) were the other important suggestions offered by the RAWE students.

The other suggestions were 'adequate inputs should be supplied by the RWEF center at proper time' (30.84 per cent), 'orientation should be

done properly' (27.10 per cent), 'good accommodation facilities should be made available in the villages' (24.29 per cent). The findings were somewhat similar with findings of Anonymous (1989).

Implication

1. The study brought out that the students of the three degree programmes had differential attitude towards RWEF. This implies that the programme needs to be planned and executed still more efficiently, so that the students could gain better experiences, and resultantly would form more favourable attitude towards the RWEF.
2. The study has pointed out some constraints faced by the students, especially with regard to

selection of host farmers, time of programme, stipend and report preparation. The concerned authorities may initiate suitable steps to help

the students in overcoming these constraints in the light of their suggestions.

Table 4. Suggestions of the students of RWEPE

S. No.	Suggestions	Students of RWEPE (No =107)
1.	Host farmer should have all the components as per need of the subject.	76 (71.02)
2.	Adequate stipend should be given at proper time	69 (64.48)
3.	Report writing should be optimum to save the time and money	50 (46.73)
4.	Time of programme should be such that it will cover all the operations of all major crops.	46 (42.99)
5.	Adequate inputs should be supplied by the RWEPE centre at proper time.	33 (30.84)
6.	Orientation should be done properly.	29 (27.10)
7.	Good accommodation facilities should be made available in the villages.	26 (24.29)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages)

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that majority of students have positive attitude towards RAWEP programme. This programme have been fulfilled it's objectives. Mostly students in getting exposure for rural situations. As far as constraints faced by students were less stipend, selected host farmers didn't have the desired components and heavy load of report writing.

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