



National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP)

MANAGE-University Alliance for Advancing Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services

Reflections That Cultivate Tomorrow's Agricultural Extension



Effort Over Blame: A path Lasting Change

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Firstly, I was very excited when I got nominated for the National Young Professionals Development Program (NYPDP) by MANAGE because I was not nominated the last time. It is a program that helps pave the way for our future. As a unique batch of the NYPDP program by MANAGE, we are the ones who took the count beyond 500 trainees and were featured in the media corner by MANAGE.

Key Learnings

Day 1: The first day began with enthusiastic photo sessions in the media corner. The key learning from this day was that learning can happen in many ways, especially the four modes of learning explained by Dr. Saravanan Raj, who delivered the session with great motivation. We also learned about the competencies and opportunities in agricultural extension. The next session was very interesting and focused on gender-related research by Dr. Meghajit Sharma. The final session, again by Dr. Saravanan Raj, was a group activity addressing the challenges faced by extension students. This session provided me clarity on why agricultural extension is often not given priority, and that was my best learning from the day.

Day 2: The second day began with an insightful session on ICTs and technology in agricultural extension, and how we can apply them in our research.



Dr. Sethiraman Sivakumar delivered a critical session on different measurement approaches used in extension research, which is highly relevant to our studies. Dr. Ramanjaneyulu discussed the current state of agriculture and made us realise the crucial role of extension in its future, what I learned from his session is that agriculture is our future. Dr. Rasheed Sulaiman Sir explained the policy issues in society and how we can connect them to our research. A major takeaway was learning how to write a policy brief, which helps provide evidence to policymakers for further policy improvement.

Day 3: We visited Access Livelihoods in Hyderabad, an organisation that provides group-based social services to marginalised farmers through Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and reimagines their livelihoods. To my surprise, they also offer scholarships to those willing to work with them. Dr. Mahesh Chander's session on organic agriculture was incredibly informative and insightful.



Day 4: The most awaited session for me arrived, on opportunities abroad for pursuing post-doctoral studies. Ms. Laxmi Prasanna, Dr. Vikram Koindiya, and Mr. Samrat Sikdar explained the three-phase approach for university admissions abroad.

Dr. Vikram clarified the financial support available to students and answered our queries. Dr. Arun Balamatti conducted one of the most interesting sessions, explaining how extension students can collaborate with various organisations and enhance their work quality. I learned valuable points from his session that I intend to share with my father for further discussion.

Day 5: The final day's session began with the warm and lovely Dr. Raahalya, who spoke about research paper publication and emphasised that quality comes before quantity. A special session by the Dr. Sindhura addressed health concerns and gave us tips on reducing study-related stress. In my opinion, the most outstanding session was on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) competencies by Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar. The participants gained hands-on experience with focus group discussions, which helped us gain clarity for our research.



Training Experience

My experience in this program was amazing. Before attending, I thought it would be a simple two-way session, but I ended up making wonderful friends and interacting with a wide range of subject matter experts. The knowledge shared during the program was extremely educational and valuable for life. I was particularly impressed by the interactive style of Dr. Saravanan Raj and the teaching style of Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar.

Change in Perspective

Initially, I assumed extension was only about disseminating scientific knowledge to farmers. Now, I understand that extension is a dynamic, collaborative process involving multiple stakeholders; farmers, academics, policymakers, and the private sector. Beyond traditional roles like subject matter specialists or assistant professors, there are now numerous opportunities for intellectuals across a wide range of global organisations.



Training Environment

The environment at MANAGE was peaceful, green, and welcoming. The program facilities were accessible to everyone. Our accommodation was clean and well-maintained, and the support staff were always prompt and helpful. Overall, the institute made us feel at home for those five days.



What I Appreciate

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the warm hospitality during this program. The staff were courteous, accommodating, empathetic, and always ready to help. We were pleasantly surprised by the excellent facilities provided. The food was delicious, appealing to all tastes.

Every trainee was treated with immense respect and care. Most importantly, MANAGE made a commendable effort by offering free training to young minds on emerging agricultural issues through a variety of experienced professionals. For students facing financial challenges, this program was an ideal opportunity to grow and learn.

Networking

Through various hands-on activities, the training allowed us to build strong connections with young agricultural extension professionals from different parts of the country, all while enhancing our learning. We had the opportunity to meet students and working professionals from other universities, which greatly expanded our knowledge of extension practices.

Main Takeaway

The main takeaway from this program was that we can learn independently through hard work. We grow more knowledgeable by attending different trainings and engaging with professionals. The wide range of topics covered in the program helped me understand and apply various research tools. Even if the research topic isn't new, how we approach it with modern tools and technologies makes a difference.



The most important lesson was to communicate our ideas clearly and specifically.

Action Plan

One of the most practical sessions, Focus Group Discussions led by Dr. P.V.K. Sasidhar will be applied in my research objectives to enhance data collection. I also plan to use multiple research tools in my study. Additionally, I would like to participate in more events and inspire others through public speaking, just like Ms. Iniya V.





The experience I had at MANAGE was beyond my expectations. Interacting with research scholars from across the country was truly unforgettable. Learning about the numerous opportunities available for extension professionals at every career stage gave me a strong sense of empowerment. The final message I want to share with my juniors is: "The bright opportunity is waiting for you. Put in the effort and grab it!".

*"If you focus on results, you will never change.
If you focus on change, you will get results."*

-Jack Dixon

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