

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INDIAN SOCIETY OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1987

The Indian Society of Agricultural Statistics, a scientific body, was founded on 3rd January, 1947 for promoting and undertaking research in Statistics and for its application to Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Forestry, Fishery, Agricultural Economics and other allied fields. The Society was fortunate to have Late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the then Minister of Food and Agriculture, Government of India, as its Founder President. He continued to guide the Society for 16 years. The Society had also the privilege of having as its Presidents Shri S. K. Patil, Shri C. Subramaniam, Shri Jagjivan Ram, Dr. M. S. Swaminathan and Dr. O. P. Gautam. They took keen interest in the activities of the Society and were a great source of inspiration. The Society has attained its present status due to the untiring efforts and guidance of its Presidents in the past and present and particularly of the eminent statisticians Prof. P. V. Sukhatme and Late Dr. V. G. Panse.

The Society organises annually a Conference in different parts of the country as per invitations received from State Governments, Universities and other Research Organisations. It provides a wider platform for exchange of ideas. During each Annual Conference, the Society organises two symposia keeping in view current national interest as well as problems of interest in the region where the Conference is organised. The Society brings out a Journal, one volume consisting of three issues per year, which serves as a media for disseminating research findings on Agricultural Statistics and allied fields. Ad-hoc publications and Bulletins are also brought out to help the research workers and students in the field of Agricultural Statistics. It has set up a Research Unit to undertake research on specific problems of current interest in accordance with the guidance provided by a Research Direction Committee. In order to perpetuate the memory of the Founder President Late Dr. Rajendra Prasad, a lecture is organised during the Conference. The Society has organised 23 lectures in the series so far and the Memorial Lecture being organised during this Conference would be 24th in the series.

The activities of the Society during the year under Report are as follows :

The membership of the Society, which is drawn from all parts of India as well as from abroad, during the year was :

Permanent Institutional Members	20
Life Members	290
Institutional Members	4
Ordinary Members	115
Student Members	6

In addition to regular members, the Society has a number of institutional subscribers to its Journal in India and abroad. The number of subscribers during the year was :

Indian	145
Foreign	40

Thus, the total number of members and subscribers during the year was 620

One of the important activities of the Society, as mentioned earlier, is the publication of its Journal. It has brought out 39 Volumes till 1987, and has maintained its time schedule. The Hindi Supplement continues to be a special feature of the Journal. The high standard of the Journal has been maintained due to sincere efforts of the Editorial Board and of the referees. The Society is thankful to them for their keen interest in the activities of the Society particularly in the publication of its Journal.

The 3rd Revised edition of the book "Sampling Theory of Surveys with Applications" by P. V. Sukhatme, B. V. Sukhatme, Shashikala Sukhatme and C. Asok was brought out during 1984. This book is in great demand by the students and research workers. Another important publication "Statistical Methods in Animal Sciences" by V. N. Amble brought out by the Society is extremely useful for the research workers in Animal Sciences.

Two ad-hoc publications namely, 'Contributions in Statistics and Agricultural Sciences' and 'Impact of P. V. Sukhatme on Agricultural Statistics and Nutrition' were brought out by the Society which contain a number of invited articles from India and abroad. The book on 'Sample Surveys on Agriculture' and a Symposium Volume on 'Crop Insurance' are being published by the Society.

The Research Unit of the Society continues to be engaged in the work relating to Crop Insurance as per request from the General Insurance

Corporation of India. In addition, it has initiated other important studies mentioned in brief, as follows :

In the wake of increasing population pressures and mounting food deficit, the agricultural production has undergone a radical change in most of the developing countries during the last two and a half decades. It is felt that the new agricultural technology has introduced greater variability in crop output alongwith the upward shift in productivity and production. Year to year fluctuations in crop output generate instability which has far reaching economic implications particularly in underdeveloped and developing countries. The problem of instability in agriculture has engaged the attention of scientists and planners in the recent past and led to the development of various Statistical techniques for measurement of instability in crop output. Instability in time series data may be defined as the extent of fluctuations present in the observations. Instability between two or more time series data may be compared on this basis. Several authors in the past have tried to study instability by dividing the whole period into two halves and made comparative study of variability in the two periods. The Society is engaged in studying the instability in Indian Agriculture and also devising certain methods for deciding the instability on the basis of test of significance. Non-parametric tests have also been proposed for the study of instability. The studies on instability conducted by other workers have a limited scope due to the use of aggregated data at the State or national level. The Society is using the data on productivity of various foodcrops at tehsil level for the study of instability in the selected area of the country.

It may be recalled that at the 40th Annual Conference of the Society, it was recommended that the Society might undertake a project on "Concept, Methodology and Data on Rural Employment in Agriculture" in view of its importance for National Planning. Employment/unemployment estimates in the country are primarily based on surveys carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation. From the discussions held, it was felt that the concepts, methodologies adopted in these surveys are not satisfactory. Different organisations collect data on employment in agriculture utilising different concepts. The Society propose to undertake the study in two phases. In the first phase, a consolidated picture would be prepared based on the methodologies adopted and results obtained in surveys carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation; in farm management and cost of cultivation studies; in Integrated Rural Development Projects as well as in other integrated adhoc surveys carried out by Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute and other organisations. In the second phase, additional data would be generated taking into account the drawbacks in other studies. Work on the first phase has been initiated.

The problem of finance for Scientific activities and printing of its Journal and other ad-hoc publications could be solved to a certain extent through grants-in-aid received from the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Government of Maharashtra. The Society wishes to acknowledge gratefully the financial assistance received from them during the year under report.

The Society continues to be a Member of the International Statistical Institute and also of the Indian Association for Social Science Institutions. It is also affiliated to the Federation of Indian Societies of Agricultural Sciences Technology (FISAST). The FISAST organised a one day Group Discussion on 'Agricultural Drought' on 28th September, 1987 at the I. A. S. R. I., New Delhi wherein about 38 Senior Scientists participated. The discussion emphasised long term perspectives and issues related to technological, social, climatological and policy making.

The last (40th) Annual Conference of the Society was held at Varanasi from 4th to 7th December, 1986 as per invitation received from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. The Conference was to be inaugurated by Prof. R. P. Rustagi, Vice Chancellor, B. H. U., Varanasi but due to some other urgent work he was not available for inaugurating the Conference. Prof. P. V. Sukhatme, Executive President of the Society inaugurated the Conference on 4th December, 1986. The Society is thankful to him for agreeing to inaugurate the Conference at a very short notice. Dr. Lallan Rai, Director, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, B. H. U., Varanasi welcomed the delegates. Prof. Prem Narain, Secretary of the Society presented the report of the Activities of the Society for the year 1986. The Technical Address on "Foodgrains Production under Irrigated conditions—Some Reflections" was prepared by Dr. A. B. Joshi, Sessional President and Prof. P. K. Bose, Vice President of the Society presented the Technical Address on behalf of Dr. A. B. Joshi who could not attend the Conference. We are thankful to him for kindly presenting the Technical Address. The "Dr. Rajendra Prasad Memorial Lecture" was delivered by Prof. Madhav Gadgil, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. The topic of his lecture was "on Biomass Budgets". The lecture was presided over by Prof. P. V. Sukhatme. There were two symposia organised at the Conference. The symposium on "Planning for Employment in Agriculture" was presided over by Dr. Tarlok Singh and the convenor of the symposium was Dr. Padam Singh, Planning Commission. The second symposium on "Yield Gap Analysis" was presided over by Dr. Mahatim Singh, Head, Department of Agronomy, B. H. U., Varanasi and the convenor was Dr. R. K. Pandey, Scientist S-4 of IASRI, New Delhi. The detailed summaries of the papers presented at the symposia as well as the recommendation made have been

printed in the Journal (Vol. 39, No. 1, 1987). There were as many as 110 technical papers received for presentation at the Conference. The Paper Reading Sessions were organised by conducting two concurrent sessions on two consecutive days. These sessions were presided over by Dr. Daroga Singh and Prof. S. G. Prabhu-Ajgaonkar.

"Dr. V. G. Panse Memorial Lecture" was delivered by Dr. B. N. Singh, Additional Director General, Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi on 6th December, 1986 during the Annual Conference at B. H. U., Varanasi. The topic of the lecture was "Role of Standardization in the Agricultural Development of India". Prof. P. V. Sukhatme presided over the lecture. Prof. R. P. Rustagi, Vice-Chancellor, B. H. U., Varanasi was present at the lecture and he gave his advice and best wishes to the participants of the Conference.

During 1987, "Dr. V. G. Panse Memorial Lecture", 12th in the series was delivered by Prof. Jagdish S. Rustagi, Department of Statistics, The Ohio State University, Columbus, USA on 24th July, 1987 at IASRI, New Delhi. Prof. P. V. Sukhatme presided over the lecture. The topic of the lecture was "Teaching of Statistics and Statistical Consulting". The lecture has been printed in the Journal Vol 39, No. 2, 1987.

The Society has conveyed its grateful thanks to the B. H. U., Varanasi and particularly to Dr. Subedar Singh for organising the last Conference and also to the Chairpersons of various sessions as well as to those who spared their valuable time in making the Conference a great success at Varanasi.

The Society provided financial assistance to deserving research workers and students to enable them to attend the Society's Conference at Varanasi for presenting their papers.

The railway authorities, as in the past, gave travel concessions to the members of the Society and delegates to the 40th Annual Conference to enable them to attend the Conference at Varanasi. The Society records its grateful thanks to the railway authorities.

The accounts of the Society for the year ending 31st March, 1987 were audited by a professional auditor appointed by the Society and these are being presented at the General Body Meeting.

The work of the Society during the year was made possible through the active help of the members of the Executive Council of the Society, the Editorial Board, and the Research Direction Committee. The burden of the entire Secretariate of the Society has been willingly borne by my colleagues, Dr. Shivtar Singh, Shri S. C. Rai and Dr. Padam Singh. In the end I wish to thank the staff of the Society for their devoted work.

PREM NARAIN
Secretary
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