



Report of the Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC)

Prof. Dr. Asandas Manwani	Convener
Dr. Ali Muhammad Khushi	Member

Degree Programs in Agricultural Economics Sindh Agricultural University, Tandojam

NAEAC Secretariat, Room No. N-2, Old Comsats Building, HEC, Sector H-8/1,
Islamabad.

Ph# 051-90802681, Fax No. 051-90802682

Website: www.naeac.org, E-mail: infonaeac@yahoo.com

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1. Introduction

The Chairman National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council (NAEAC) formed a two member Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC) with Prof. Dr. Asandas Manwani, Isra University, Hyderabad as its convener and Dr. Ali Muhammad Khushk, PSO, Social Sciences Research Institute, Tandojam as member. The AIC was tasked to carry out accreditation process of the degree programs B.Sc (Hons) Agricultural Economics and M.Sc (Hons) Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam. The AIC was provided a self assessment report (SAR) prepared by the Department of Agricultural Economics, Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam and an evaluation manual for agriculture degree programs.

The AIC visited the Sindh Agriculture University on March 19-20, 2013, Mr. Naseer Alam Khan, Secretary, NAEAC also accompanied with committee. The AIC commenced its program with a meeting with the Dean, Faculty of Agricultural Social Sciences, Prof. Faizullah Shah and also chairperson, Mrs. Tehmina in the Department of Agricultural Economics on March 19, 2013. Prof. Faizullah Shah welcomed the AIC and provided background information relating to the faculty. The committee of AIC moved along with Chairperson, Department of Agricultural Economics for a presentation arranged in the faculty.

2. Department of Agricultural Economics

2.1 History of the Department

Mrs. Tehmina, Assistant Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Agricultural Economics made a detailed presentation on the history and development of the Department. The presentation was attended by the faculty members of the department. She said that Department of Agriculture Economics was established in 1974. The department is offering B.Sc (Agri) Hons, M.Sc. (Agri) Hons and Ph. D in Agricultural Economics. Department also offers compulsory courses to all the five faculties of Sindh Agriculture University. The department is committed to equip the students with knowledge and skills required to analyze the agriculture economic issues, for efficient use of scarce resources in agriculture sector and its department, consistent with the interest of all stakeholders. Department is also committed provide highest standards of excellence in learning, research and engagement on all aspects regarding the economics of production, distribution and consumption of food and fiber goods and services, and public and private use of natural resources. It indicates that this department plays an important role for enhancing education in agricultural economics which is dire need of today.

2.2 Mission statement

“To develop a cadre of professionals with specialized skills in Agricultural Economics serving as academicians, researchers and policy makers and lead the way as agents of change for agricultural growth and development that is essential to bring prosperity to society at large.”

2.3 Objectives

- i. Produce competitive and quality graduates who have understanding of the basic concepts of economics, agriculture, agribusiness management, WTO, Mathematics economics, financial issues in agricultural sector issues of natural resources and sustainability in agriculture and application of the basic concepts of economics in agriculture.
- ii. Equip the students with the knowledge and skills required to analyze the agricultural and economic issues and enable the graduates to develop research projects on high priority issues facing society in agri-business (including food and fiber production inputs, processing products and marketing) natural resources, environments quality and communities.
- iii. To prepare skilled hands for a wide range of leadership roles, both in private and public sectors.
- iv. To build capacity of the graduates through implementation of an updated curriculum consisting of core, major and elected subjects based on modern trends in Agricultural economics for practical solutions.
- v. To provide the graduate a sound academic background through conceptual teaching, home assignments, group discussion, presentations, etc..

2.4 Degree Programs Offered

In pursuance of goals and objectives department of agricultural economics offers following degree programs.

- B.Sc in agriculture with major in agricultural economics
- M.Sc in agricultural economics
- M.phil in agricultural economics and
- Ph.D in agricultural economics

3 Analysis of Degree Program by Prescribed Criteria

3.1 Criteria: I Strength and Quality of the Faculty

The Department has a teaching staff of 07 members: 05 assistant professors, 2 lecturers, both lectures are study leave doing PhD abroad. One assistant professor is on deputation in Sindh government. Two of the present faculty members are doing Ph.D, one is enrolled in Ph.D. programs at Sindh agriculture university and one at the Sindh University Jamshoro. The other two are M.Sc.(Hons.) level in Agricultural Economics from the SAU Tandojam. The Department seems below standard in terms of the strength of the faculty, both in terms of its numbers and qualifications to cater for the current degree programs.

3.2 Criteria: II Curriculum Design and Development

BSc. (Hons) Program:

The department follows the curricula for all degree programs as per guidelines of the HEC. The BSc. (Hons) agriculture is of 4 years (8 semester) duration. Admission is open to students with FSc. It was explained by the Chairman that HEC policy is strictly followed to complete the requirements of the degree programs. The courses offered to the students majoring in agricultural economics provide a judicious mix of economic theory, quantitative methods and applied courses in various sub disciplines of agricultural economics. These are in line with the courses approved by the National Curriculum Revision Committee of the HEC and meet emerging requirements of the profession. The students are also exposed to important soft ware packages so as to introduce them to electronic data analysis and presentation of the results.

MSc. (Hons.) Program

Eligibility criterion for admission to M.Sc.(Hons) program is a degree in B.Sc.(Hons) Agricultural Economics, with a CGPA of 3.0 and above. Total credits prescribed by the Department for the completion of this program are 47, including 10 compulsory credits for thesis research. The courses offered for M.Sc (Hons) program are as approved by the National Curriculum Revision Committee of the HEC and in line with the requirements of the profession. The students are exposed to important software packages for data analysis and presentations in addition to courses in economic theory and quantitative methods. Department chairman distributes the courses among faculty members with their consultation. Faculty members are required to provide course outlines to the classes at the beginning of the semester.

The degree programs, as mentioned above, are designed to meet the ever increasing requirements of Agricultural Economists in the country/ province. The programs include a combination of core courses in economic theory, quantitative methods and agricultural economics so as to equip the future professionals with sound knowledge of modern

economic theory and analytical skills to address the emerging challenges and issues in farm production, processing, marketing, and rural development.

Overall 1700 students graduated in all programs (1200 in BSc, 500 in MSc including males and females) during the period 1975-2010. The current enrollment of student (68 in B.Sc and 70 in M.Sc) during 2013. Average student/ faculty ratio turned out as 17:1 in BSc and 17.5:1 in MSc during 2013. It indicates that interaction among students and faculty is poor. Adequate transport facilities are in place.

3.3 Criteria: III Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The AIC during its visit to the Sindh Agricultural University Tandojam, inspected lecture rooms and met with students during the classes of two courses. The Committee also enquired from the students about the availability of various facilities on the campus and future prospects for the graduates of the department. The Committee also met with the regular faculty members of the Department, discussed various academic and research programs and solicited their views and suggestions for the improvement and development of the degrees programs at the university. In addition the team visited the Central Library of the university and briefly met with the Librarian and assistant Librarian.

The faculty members, especially in graduate classes, were reported to encourage interaction and participatory discussion of the students. Teaching at undergraduate levels remains lecture oriented, with not much emphasis on student participation, discussion and dialogue.

The department has establishment two computer labs one for undergraduate students and other for postgraduate students. But it was observed that there was none available of proper support staff for instruction and solving students' problems. The department library was visited by the team and found few old books and journals. It indicates that no purchase has been made for new books in recent years.

Building of central library is excellent and has adequate facilities for students in the library. It has digital system to several professional Journals as per policy of HEC. The librarian was enquired about the purchase of new books and general for last three years. He replied that a few journals were got on exchange programs but none new book was purchased. Team observed there is lack of text books in department and main library.

3.4 Criteria: IV Students Support and Progression

Admission to B.Sc. (Hons) program is open to student with F.Sc. and duration of this program is 4 years. Each academic year consists of two semesters of 18 weeks each. A student of 1st year must pass each course with at least a D grade and have an over all CGPA of 2.5. During the first two years courses relating to various disciplines of agriculture are offered to all the students enrolled in B.Sc. program. It is the third year when student select their major area including agricultural economics.

University follows a semester system. Grading of students is based on the marks obtained with following distribution: 30% for mid-term, 10 % for assignment and 60 % for the final exam. The marks obtained are divided into letter grades: A, B, C, D, etc. To assure transparency and fairness in the grading system, graded papers should be shown to the students and discussed with them if need be.

Student enrollment in general has shown an increasing trend. However, the AIC observed that student enrollment in B.Sc. (Hons) in agricultural economics program had steadily declined during past year. On enquiry from the AIC it was pointed out this had resulted from the allocation of quota of students among various departments as some departments did not attract sufficient students. If this is true, it is neither in line with the increasing requirements of agricultural economists nor allowing the students selecting the subjects with their natural aptitude. Thrusting study program subjects on student which they do not like may adversely impact their future careers and professional development. It would also lead to inefficient and wasteful use of resources. Accordingly, AIC recommends the authorities to rescind this quota policy and let the students choose the subjects in line with their merit and interest. .

Internship program for B.Sc (Hons) Agriculture Students was launched a few years ago so as to provide hand on and practical training. . The program aimed at exposing the students to real life problems so as to make them aware of the practical issues and real life challenges at early stages formative years of their life. Both the students and teachers were appreciative of the value and utility of the internship scheme. AIC noted that internship program is useful for student for practical training.

Students in the M.Sc (Hons.) program have *to submit a thesis* and defend it before an external examiner. Research topics are generally selected by the students and then supervisors are allotted. Thesis research helps in training the student in undertaking research, familiarizing with and building analytical skills. Given the faculty resources and trained manpower the Department of Agri. Economics can play a crucial role in analyzing various economic issues of the province. The faculty may like to concentrate on focused research by selecting a broad research area and then assigning students on different topics within the selected area.

The graduates and alumni of the Department, established in 1974, were reported to be serving in many national organizations and reputed local universities besides manning many important positions in national and provincial academic, research and development institutions.

The Committee on the bases of its discussions with students and faculty and its own experience is of the views that lack of senior faculty unable teach the basic courses to the BSc students so as to motivate the promising young students to major in this subject.

3.5 Criteria: V Research and Consultancy Activities

The committee observed that currently there was no Ph.D faculty in the department; therefore senior qualified faculty members are required for research activities. Furthermore, the chair person of the department informed that two projects are on-going and two are in pipe-line. The committee observed that young faculty is quite enthusiastic in undertaking research projects and getting publications in national and international journals. But given the teaching load, they are constrained in its research activities and need encouragement and proper guidance.

3.6 Criteria: VI Governance and Leadership

The environment in the department is relatively better. The chairperson has maintained the departmental tradition consultation with the faculty members all important issues are discussed and decided through concerned among the faculty members. The department is following the administrative as well procedural rules as per Sindh Agriculture University policy. The AIC noted that financial powers at department level have become out-dated which need to be revised in time with trends in market process etc,

3.7 Criteria: VII Recent Innovation and Best Practices

The faculty members in department are committed to maintain supply of well trained graduates to the province. Many initiatives have been adopted to improve the study programs. The faculty has provided assistance to the government through its research and consultations on various policy related issues and other development problems. Thesis research has been directed to solving problems faced by farmers and agriculture sector. The faculty was able to publish research reports related projects in areas of production economics, marketing, dairy, trade liberalization, trade performance, technology adoption in agriculture specifically wheat, trade in food products; etc.,

The courses offered in the Department in line with the mission of the department and program objectives, however, need to provide more elective/optional courses to broaden the opportunities for choice to the students.

The exact number of student who graduated from the Department established in 1974 is about 1700. The graduates of the department were reported to be serving in many national organizations and reputed local universities besides manning many important positions in national and provincial academic, research and development institutions.

4. SWOT Analysis

4.1 Strengths

- Balance course work combining theory and practical
- Good working relationship between students and faculty
- Available well-equipped computer labs for graduate and post graduate students
- Competitive environment among faculty members
- High standing of the graduates the department

4.2 Weakness

- Shortage of faculty at senior level
- Lack of supporting staff of computer lab
- Insufficient budget and financial power
- Lack of capacity building opportunities for faculty members
- Shortage of text books in department as well as in main library
- Lack of excess to electronic journals

4.3 Opportunities

- Increasing demand for trained agricultural economists in public and private sector
- Potential for multi-disciplinary research with leading role for agricultural economists
- Funding of collaborative research projects by national and international agencies
- Linkages with foreign universities and research organizations
- Vast opportunities of agri. Economists in teaching, research and field departments, both in public and private sector.

4.4 Threats

- Overloaded available faculty
- Shortage of research projects
- Shortage of text book and electronic journals
- Retention of qualified faculty given the increasing number of private universities
- Insufficient of text books and electronic journals

5 Actionable Recommendations

- Recruitment to senior faculty members
- Provision of multimedia facilities in the class rooms
- Provision of more budget and financial powers
- Provision of internet facilities to students
- Subscription of reputed journals in the department
- Nominations of faculty to national and international seminar
- Initiation of multidisciplinary research projects
- Developing international links with universities and research organizations

Final Recommendations

On the basis of inspection/evaluation, the team recommended Accreditation/Rating of the degree programs of Agricultural Economics, Sindh Agriculture University, Tandojam, in the middle bond (58 % score) of “X” category of National Agriculture Education Accreditation Council/HEC.

TOR OF AIC

The Accreditation Inspection Committee (AIC) constituted by the competent authority is obliged to submit AIC report within two weeks of the on-site visit. Following are the Terms of Reference (TORs) of AIC.

- To validate the self-assessment report (SAR) of the degree programs (B.Sc and M.Sc (Hons) prepared by the department/discipline.
- To carry out external evaluation of the degree programs in a transparent, neutral, Holistic and participatory manner for accreditation and rating of degree programs based on the evaluation criteria of NAEAC.
- To submit synthesized and concise analytical report (7-8 pages) consisting of short introduction, brief criterion-wise analysis, self-explanatory SWOT Analysis and explicit actionable recommendation along with completely filled-in and signed Evaluation Manual (toolkit) based on the validation of SAR and interaction with the Chairman, Faculty Members, Students and Support Staff and alumni as well as detail on-site visit of physical infrastructure, facilities and other teaching resources available for the offering of degree programs.
- To submit clear, precise and justified actionable accreditation and rating recommendation about the degree programs to the Chairman NAEAC.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths: Attributes (resources and capabilities) of the degree programs that can be helpful for achieving its objectives.

Weaknesses: Attributes of the degree programs that may be a limiting factor/detrimental to achieving its objectives.

Opportunities: External condition/Factors that may help the degree programs to achieve its objectives or provide opportunities to improve its performance.

Threats: External conditions /factors (or change in external conditions) that could damage the performance of the degree program.

List of Faculty Members**Annex-II**

Name in full	Designation	Qualification / Experience	Specialization	Remarks
Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri	Assistant Professor	Ph. D (15 years)	Marketing, Economics Growth, international economics	Deputation in sindh Government
Ms. Tehmina Mangan	Assistant Professor	Ph. D thesis submitted for the evaluation (15 years)	Environmental economics, production economics, agriculture marketing	Chairperson Department Completing Ph. D degree at sindh agriculture university Tandojam
Mr. Sanaullah Noonari	Assistant Professor	M.Sc Agriculture (Hons) (18 years)	Pakistan economy, Economic development, International trade	
Mr. Mumtaz Ali Joyo	Assistant Professor	M.Sc Agriculture (Hons) (15 years)	International trade Mathematics for economists	Registered in M. Phil leading to Ph. D program at University of Sindh Jamshoro
Ms. Irfana Noor Memon	Assistant Professor	M.Sc Agriculture (Hons) (15 years)	Agriculture marketing Microeconomics	
Mr. Habibullah Magsi	Lecturer	M.Sc Agriculture (Hons) (two years)	Macroeconomics, Planning and Development	Coming soon after Ph. D abroad
Jam Ghulam Murtaza Saheto	Lecturer	M.Sc Agriculture (Hons) (five years)	WTO International Trade Farm Management	Doing Ph. D abroad

Supporting Staff**Annex-3**

	Designation	Highest Qualification
Mr. Maula Bux	One senior clerk	Matriculation
Technical staff	Nil	
None technical staff	Four peons	

Computers Lab**Annex-4**

	Undergraduate Computer Lab	Postgraduate Computer Lab
Desktop computers	11	10
Printer	1	1
Scanner	1	1
photo state	0	1
Multimedia projector	0	1

Projects in-Ongoing

1. Tourism and Sustainable Livelihood: Evidence from Keenjhar Lake In Sindh
Project submitted to south Asian network for development and environmental economics (SANDEE)
2. Australia Pakistan Agricultural sector linkages program phase II (ASLP ii) AUSAID / ACIR funded project 2011 to 2015 project worth may be mentioned.

Projects in Pipeline

1. Project submitted to South Asian Network for development and environmental economics (SANDEE)
2. A project submitted to EAWAG, Switzerland
3. A project submitted to Pakistan Science foundation