PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH APPROACH FOR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FARMER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IN SRI LANKA

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Education (Hons) University of New England

by

Dissanayake Mudiyanselage Bhashini Menike Dissanayake

The Department of Administration and Training,
Faculty of Education, Health and Professional Studies,
University of New England,
Armidale, NSW, Australia

April, 1997

For my parents and beloved country

DECLARATION

The studies presented in this thesis were completed by the author whilst a post-graduate student with the Department of Administration and Training, University of New England, Armidale, NSW, Australia.

* * * * *

I certify that the substance of this Thesis has not already been submitted for any other degree and is not being currently submitted for any other degree.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

D.M.B.M. DISSANAYAKE

24 April, 1997

ABSTRACT

An examination of procedures for educational needs assessment of farmer education programs in the Department of Animal Production and Health in Sri Lanka reveals a lack of participation by adult learners in making decisions about needs, and is characterised by an experts' judgment approach.

This study aims to examine the appropriateness of the Participatory Research approach for educational needs assessment in these farmer programs, and attempts to find a suitable way to implement it.

The study found that the whole livestock extension system follows a "top-down" approach, and the existing farmers' educational needs assessment procedure of the Department of Animal Production and Health is not in accordance with adult education principles. Livestock educational programs which are conducted without the contribution of farmers' ideas to educational program planning, do not contribute to improving farmers' income and living standards.

Needs assessment is the first step in any program planning, and it is essential to find a method for needs assessment which can provide an opportunity for adult learners to freely contribute their ideas on their needs. Participatory Research follows a radical approach for rural development and provides more opportunity for the underprivileged, neglected groups of societies who want to be developed and contribute ideas for their development plans. Participatory research empowers and educates people to enable them to lead the development programs and contribute their ideas to those development programs. Participatory Research is a process of community development as it empowers and educates neglected groups of the society.

For effective farmer education programs, a number of recommendations are proposed in this study for successful implementation of the Participatory Research approach in educational needs assessment of farmers in the Department of Animal Production and Health in Sri Lanka.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere thanks to my supervisors Dr. Margaret Somerville and Mr. Barrie Brennan for their guidance and all other assistance during the period of my candidature. I am especially grateful to Dr. Somerville for accepting this research proposal and providing all the necessary facilities and encouragement given to me throughout the course. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Somerville for her advice, constructive criticism and her support given in preparation of this thesis. I am especially grateful to Dr. Darryl Dymock for encouragement given to me throughout the course.

I am extremely grateful to the Head of the Department of Administration and Training, Dr. Narottam Bhindi, and all of the staff for their generous assistance extended at all times.

I am especially grateful to Dr. A.S. Abeyratne, the Director of the Department of Animal Production and Health for providing all the necessary facilities, assistance and encouragement given to complete the course.

I am indebted to the Project Manager of the Second Agricultural Extension Project of Sri Lanka, Mr. Gunathilake, and former Training Co-ordinator, Mr. Buddhi Jayasuriya, for providing invaluable financial assistance for my candidature.

I would like to thank my friends Garry Ahai, Judy Arasanilai, Sharmaine Somasundura, Neetha Fonseka, Sue Devon, Nishantha Jauakody, Kulunusen Yasakethu, B.M. Abeyratne, Yogannda Mahalingam for their support extended in all ways.

I am thankful for the patience of my son Javindu, and the encouragement given to me by my husband Raja during this laborious endeavour.

Lastly and most importantly, I wish to record my sincere thanks to Dr. Wallace, Orthopaedic Surgeon, and Mr. Micale, Physiotherapist who treated me for more than one year in relation to my back injury.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

RIGHT OF ACCESS	i
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	1
Importance of Human Resource Development in	
community development	1
Background to the study	4
Statement of the problem	5
Research question	8
Aims of the study	8
Significance and importance of the study	9
Limitations	10
Research methodology	11
Overview of the research study	12
CHAPTER TWO	
Introduction	14
Introduction to Sri Lanka	14
Physical features	14
Demographic features	15
Administrative features	15
Economic features	16
Livestock sector in Sri Lanka	16
Dry zone system	17
Mid and up country system	17
Wet zone system	18
Characteristics of rural farmers in Sri Lanka	20
Department of Animal Production and Health	21

Human Resource Development Division of the	
Department of Animal Production and Health	25
Role of the Human Resource Development Division	25
Educational needs assessment procedure	29
Livestock extension in Sri Lanka	29
Summary	30
CHAPTER THREE	
Introduction	32
Needs Assessment	32
Steps of program planning	33
Concept of needs	34
Classification of needs	35
Needs assessment approaches	38
The market consumerist approach	38
Liberal democratic approach	39
Radical approach	40
Needs Assessment methods	40
Self fulfilment method	41
Individual appraisals method	41
The system discrepancy method	42
Diagnostic or medical method	42
Analytic method	43
Democratic method	43
Participatory Research (PR)	44
Introduction	44
The origins of PR	45
Theories of PR	46
Principles of PR	46
Characteristics of PR	48
Participatory research method and adult education principles	52
Educational needs assessment and participatory research	53
Participatory research for educational needs assessment and	
social change	54
Summary	56
CHAPTER FOUR	
Introduction	57
Training model followed in the DAPH, Sri Lanka	57

Needs identification work of the training model	60
Problems faced by the present needs assessment method	
in the DAPH	61
Problem census techniques to identify farmers' problems	66
The failure of livestock development projects in Sri Lanka	67
Dairy training and demonstration modules	67
Pasture development programs in Sri Lanka	70
Goat development project at Koongodamulla	
extension link village	70
Summary	73
CHAPTED FIVE	
CHAPTER FIVE	74
Introduction	74
Case studies which used the participatory method for	
Educational needs assessment	74
Thailand land study on learning needs assessment	74
Community development project in northern Canada	78
Community educational needs assessment in Tanzania	80
Women's learning needs assessment in latin America	81
Indonesian study on learning needs assessment	84
Sri Lankan experiences of participatory research	85
Special features observed in case studies	87
Summary	90
CHAPTER SIX	
Introduction	92
A need to change the 'top down' approach	92
Suitability of the participatory research to the	
Sri Lankan situation	93
Suggested plan for the implementation of PR for assessing	
educational needs of Sri Lankan Livestock farmers	100
Suggested plan	100
Findings of the study	104
General recommendations	105
Conclusion	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY	112
DIDLIOGRALILI	114

LIST OF FIGURES & TABLES

1.1	Livestock farming zone	18
1.2	Livestock population of Sri Lanka (000, head)	19
1.3	Per capita availability of animal food products in Sri Lanka	19
1.4	Sectorial distribution of population urban and rural	20
1.5	Structure of the Department of Animal Production	
	and Health	22
1.6	Structure of the Provincial Department of Animal	
	Production and Health (PDAPH)	24
1.7	Locations of training institutes of DAPH in Sri Lanka	27
1.8	Training centres of the DAPH	28
4.1	Training model	59