Department of Statistics, St. Thomas College, Pala
National Workshop and Lecture Series on
‘Statistics in Theory and Practice’
1 – 3 October 2003

Sponsored by

The Indian Academy of Sciences

Report

Introduction:
A three day National Workshop and Lecture series on Statistics in theory and practice sponsored by the Indian Academy of Sciences was held in the Department of Statistics, St. Thomas College, Pala during 1 – 3 October 2003. Prof. A.P. Gore, Head of the Dept of Statistics, University of Pune was appointed as the co-ordinator of the programme. Dr. K.K. Jose, Head of the Dept of Statistics, St. Thomas College, Pala was the local organiser. Prof. Joy Jacob, Dept. of Statistics, STC Pala was the convener. Prof. K.M. Kurian, Dept of Statistics, St. Thomas College, Pala was the local organizing secretary.

Resource Persons:
The following 8 nationally reputed scientists and Professors were the resource persons.

(1) Prof. A.P. Gore, HOD of Statistics, University of Pune (Co-ordinator)
(2) Prof. S.A. Paranjpe, Dept. of Statistics, University of Pune
(3) Prof. T. Krishnan, Systat. Asia-Pacific Software (PVT) Ltd, Bangalore (formerly ISI Calcutta)
(4) Dr. S. Ramasubramaniam, ISI, Bangalore
(5) Dr. K. Jayaraman, Head, Statistics Division, Kerala Forest Research Institute, Peechi.
(6) Dr. R.P. Suresh, Assoc. Prof. IIM Kozhikode
(7) Dr. K. Muraleedharan, Senior Scientist and Bio-Statistician, C.P.C.R.I. Kasargodu
(8) Dr. K.V. Palanichamy, Group Head and Biostatistician, Novartis India, Mumbai.

All the 8 resource persons were present on all the three days.

Inaugural Function:
The workshop was inaugurated at 10.00 am on 1-10-2003 by Prof. A.P. Gore, H.O.D. of Statistics, University of Pune and Fellow of the Indian Academy of Sciences. Very Rev. Msgr. Philip NJralakattu, the Manager of the college and Vicar General in charge of Education, Diocese of Pala presided over the function. The principal Rev. Dr. M.M. Mathew Maleparambil, welcomed the gathering. Prof. S.A. Paranjpe, University of Pune, felicitated the programme. Dr. K.K. Jose, HOD of Statistics, St. Thomas College expressed vote of thanks. There was a solo by Kum. Miss Joshni George.
The inaugural function was well attended by Faculty and P.G. Students from other science departments also. The meeting concluded at 10.50 am.

Programe Schedule:

The programe schedule was strictly followed without any change. On all days there were panel discussions on recent issues of concern to the faculty and students. This was also attended by faculty and students of other department also. The programme schedule is enclosed in the souvenier and abstracts.

Panel Discussions:

(i) On 1-10-03 the topic of Panel discussion was ‘Opportunities in Bio-Statistics’. The moderator was Prof. A.P. Gore. The panelists were (i) Prof. S.A. Paranjpe, (ii) Dr. K. Jayaraman, (iii) Dr. K.V. Palanichamy. They elaborated on the various opportunities in the field of Bio-statistics, Pharmaceuticals, Genome research, Forestry, Microbiology etc. The participants had an active discussion and clarification of doubts. This session was very active and interesting. From 6-00 to 7-30 pm there was a free consultancy session to clear the doubts of delegates on specific problems from their own field of activity.

(ii) On 2-10-03, the topic of discussion was ‘Opportunities in IT and Business’. The moderator was Prof. T. Krishnan. The panelists were (i) Prof. A.P. Gore (ii) Dr. R.P. Suresh (iii) Dr. K. Muraleedharan. The discussion was very informative and was effective in unveiling the various opportunities and challenges in the field of IT and Business and Management. The use of Statistics in Industrial Quality Control and the need for developing user friendly statistical software packages were stressed. The discussion went on upto 7.00 pm.

(iii) On 3-10-2003 the topic of discussion was ‘Improving Quality of Statistics Education’. Dr. K.K. Jose was the moderator. Dr. A.P. Gore, Dr. S.A. Paranjpe, Dr. Manoj C. Mathew, Dr. Sebastian George & Dr. K. Muraleedharan were the panelists. There was a very active participation of students also. Many suggestions such as the need for including more applied topics, need for collaboration with industries and research institutes were pointed out. Project works and reports are to be made part of the curriculum. There should be some steps for popularizing statistics and its applications, need of quality of data etc.

Participants:

There were above 100 participants on all the days. There were about 50 registered outstation participants from various places. About 20 local teachers and 40 local P.G. students also participated. For some talks like Forestry, Biodiversity etc students in Botany and Zoology were also present. For talk on Management and Business, students in Commerce and Economics were also present. Among the participants there were about 40 teachers in Statistics from various colleges, 10 Applied Statisticians from Research Institutes, 15 Research Scholars, 10 M.Sc./M.Phil students from other institutions and 35 local P.G. Students in Statistics. There were delegates from
various places such as Coimbatore, Trichy, Palakkad, Kannur, Thrissur, Kochi, Munnar, Pala, Kuttikkanam, Kothamangalam, Kottayam, Chengannur, Moovattupuzha, Ernakulam, Kollam, Kayamkulam, Kariavattam, Thiruvananthapuram etc. A list of participants is also included. The topics of the lecture series were very useful and update. Some participants suggested to arrange follow up programmes such as Refresher course in future.

Valedictory function:

The valedictory function was held at 4-00 pm on 3-10-2003. The chief guest was Prof. A.C. Joseph, Chairman of Pala Municipality. Prof A.P. Gore, co-ordinator made an over all report of the programme. Prof. K.K. Jose presented a brief account of the delegates and other matters. Rev. Dr. M.M. Mathew, Principal of the College distributed the certificates. Dr. Sebastian George welcomed the gathering. Prof. K.M. Kurian expressed vote of thanks. The programme concluded at 4-45 p.m.

Summary of the Evaluation Sheet

An evaluation sheet was circulated among the delegates. Most of the delegates were happy with the arrangements like food, accommodation, hall arrangements, audiovisual aids and other infrastructure in the college. All praised the beauty of the green campus and the serene atmosphere conducive to academic excellence. Even though most felt the topics to be useful, some opinioned that the lectures were tightly packed. There should have been more time for discussion. Some were of the opinion that some practical lab sessions were also necessary. Some wanted the inclusion of certain topics such as bio-informatics, data mining and warehousing etc. Some wanted more theoretical classes. Most participants wanted follow up programmes in coming years also.

Acknowledgement:

The organizers are grateful to the Indian Academy of Sciences Bangalore for sponsoring this programme. The local hospitality was provided by the college. We thank the college management and Principal and other staff for providing all facilities in the college. A nominal registration fee was charged and students were given concession. The arrangements were excellent. Audio visual aids like OHP and LCD projectors were made available at the Seminar Hall. This made the lectures and presentations very effective. Participants were happy with the arrangements for food and accommodation also. We are grateful to all the resource persons, especially, Prof. A.P. Gore, the co-ordinator of the programme. The natural beauty and infrastructure facilities in the campus were widely appreciated by the delegates and the resource persons.

Palai,
10-10-2003

DR. K.K. JOSE
(Local Organizer)