INFORMATIVE ABSTRACT
Informative Abstract

Information is now accepted as a resource with equal emphasis on its content and means of delivery. It is concerned with the integrative utilization of three basic resources: (i) people, (ii) information and (iii) system.

By 'Agricultural-Information-System', we mean the system which identifies, collects, records, processes and delivers the needs of the users associated with agriculture at all levels. It also includes the transferring of technology according to the needs from the source to the end-users. The users of any 'Agricultural-Information-System' are found in all the segments involved in processing agriculture i.e. the scientists (Life and Agricultural), extension agencies, farmers, manufacturers or any individual engaged in agriculture or its products.

The agriculture has become now 'information-intensive-occupation'. Agriculture provides not only food and raw materials but also employment to a very large proportion of population. Increased agricultural income create market demands for industrial consumption of goods, thereby providing a stimulus for market development. The research process is not complete until the adoption of new techniques by farmers results in higher yield and increased incomes. Adoption requires that the farmers be made aware of new practices, become interested in it, try it out and than adopt the process, in other words called Technology transfer. Technology transfer includes the engagement of the industrial process of an organisation or country to use what has been transferred. For efficient operation in agricultural management an effective system of 'communication of information' from the tail (end users) to the 'central point' (Planner/administrator) is necessary.
Dissemination of agricultural information is a continuous process. The main use of agricultural information is to educate the educators, to inform new technology to the research workers, to know the new and variety of improved method of farming to the extension workers and through them to the farming community who are at grass roots of the society and ultimately to produce more and better food for mankind.

In Manipur (5 hill districts + 3 plain area districts), as the statistics goes, the percentage of cultivator and agriculture-labours to the total population is not small and is engaged in total cropped area of 1,88,000 hectares land with a hill slope of 70,000 ha. A sizeable percentage of farming population belongs to scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. For dissemination of information and transfer of technology to the end-users i.e. farmers, the Department of Agriculture, Govt. of Manipur, has initiated a number of programmes during nineties. The ICAR unit of Manipur and the Agricultural College, Iroishemba, have also introduced a number of programmes for the transfer of technologies to the farmers through their ‘Lab to Land’ scheme.

But, as a ‘literature-survey’ reveals (in the introductory chapter), it has till then not been examined that how far the process is effective or what are the barriers for collection and dissemination of information or whether the end-users have really been benefited out of these programmes either. Considering the ‘user-study’ as ‘diagnostic study for discovering the casual relationship between the user of information and informative-system’, the present ‘survey research’ (entitled “Agricultural-Information-System in Manipur: A study”) has been conducted during the nineties. The purpose is to address to the issues mentioned above. The data are collected (i) through a structured and detailed questionnaire from different groups of users i.e. teachers, scientists, extension officers and farmers; (ii) through
visiting and interviewing different spots and persons associated with the professions respectively a number of times; and (iii) through various kinds of literature (like Annual Reports, Souvenirs, pamphlets, Statistical Reports, Handbooks etc etc) published by different organisations (Govt and non-Govt). The data acquired are analysed critically with the help of tables, graphs, charts, maps etc.

Some of the important findings of the study are:

The Urban section of the farming group has become only beneficiaries to some extent with such programme which very often do not reach the rural or remote areas in a systematic way.

Most of the farmers particularly in rural area, are totally ignorant about the new technique and the facilities available.

The amount of information available for “research” and experimentation is bare minimum to all groups of users.

The medium used for dissemination of information by Department of Agriculture fails to create any effect on illiterate mass.

The role of extension officials in accumulating and disseminating information is not very encouraging. To many farmers in rural areas, they are not known figure. Farmers even do not know their existence.

Libraries do not exist in rural areas. The farmers do not know anything about the library, whether it is urban or rural area.

In support to the ‘findings of the study’ the ‘views and comments’ of local newspapers, seminar reports are recorded in ‘Annexure’.

At the end, based on the ‘findings’ of the study and the objective of the ‘system’, a host of suggestions including a two-staged ‘model’ have been forwarded for the organisation of a modern ‘Agricultural-Information-System’ in the state in near future. Emphasis has been given on the leadership of the Department of Agriculture
and newly established Manipur Agricultural University. Finally, a bibliography (of both used and non used reading material on the subject) is included for the use of future researchers.

('Informative Abstract' of 'Agricultural-Information-System in Manipur: A study', a thesis submitted for Ph.D. Degree in 'Library and Information Science' by Akoljam Swarnalata Devi, Manipur University, 1995.)