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STUDY ON

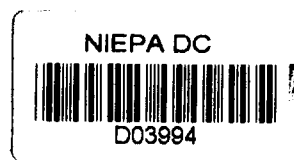
**Welfare Schemes
UNDER
Agriculture University, Jorhat**

EVALUATION AND MONITORING DIVISION
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

DISPUR

STUDY ON
WELFARE SCHEMES
UNDER
AGRICULTURE UNIVERSITY
JORHAT

EVALUATION & MONITORING DIVISION
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
DISPUR



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PREFACE

The evaluation study on the welfare schemes under Agriculture University, Jorhat was taken up by the Evaluation and Monitoring Division of Planning and Development Department under the recommendation of Estimate Committee of the Assam Legislative Assembly in order to see how the training programme is working and to know the impact of the scheme on the rural farmers.

The training programme has been continuing for more than a decade covering mainly four types of courses viz. short course for farmer, short course for farm-women, short-course for convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal and production-cum-demonstration training. To study the impact of the programme at the level of beneficiaries a total of 30 farmers who received training under the programme were selected on the basis of random sampling technique and were interviewed for detailed investigation. This report is based on the primary and secondary data for the three consecutive years commencing from 1980-81 to 1982-83, which were collected from the Directorate of Extension Education Wing under Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat.

The report consists of four chapters of which the last chapter represents the summary of findings and recommendation. It is desired that the recommendation made in the study will help the training institution to adopt suitable remedial measure for its improvement.

The report has been prepared by Sri K.K.Sen, Assistant Research Officer who was assisted in field level investigation by Sri J.Sarma, Computer. I express my gratitude and thanks to the officers and staff of the Directorate of Extension Education, Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat for extending their valuable help and co-operation in preparing the report.

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

Background: Farmer Community is the vital section of the rural society which can actively participate in the national development if they can be guided or trained in primary stages in a proper and effective way. With a view to uplift this Farmer Community and to expand their dimension of knowledge a few welfare schemes have been implemented by Extension Education Wing under Assam Agriculture University. The idea of the schemes is to extend the knowledge of improved techniques or practices of cultivation to the farmers so that they can utilise their experience and skill in practical field.

Objective: 1.2. The Welfare Schemes were adopted with a view to impart techniques and knowledge to the farmers in respect of cultivation of various farm crops with improved practices. The programmes were formulated keeping in view the strategy of considerable improvement in the level of agricultural production through the modernised method of cultivation.

Coverage: 1.3 The schemes adopted for the welfare of the farmers included the following courses and programme.

- (1) Farmer's Training Programme.
- (2) National Demonstration Scheme.
- (3) Printing and Distribution of booklet.

Out of these three programme at present it has been proposed to study the Farmer's Training Programme only and its impact due to the limitation of time and resources. Under the Farmer's Training Programme following courses have been organised:

- (a) Specialised short course for farmers;
- (b) Specialised short course for farm women;
- (c) Specialised short course for convenors of Krishi Charcha Mandal;
- (d) Production-cum-Demonstration training. The first two programmes referred above are courses of 5 day's duration, while the third and the fourth one are limited to three days and one day duration respectively.

Objective: 1.4. The objectives of the study are :
of the
study:

- (1) to examine whether adequate facilities are available for imparting training to the farmers in the technique of improved agricultural practices ;
- (2) to examine how the farmers have been selected and their willingness to accept it ;
- (3) to examine the impact of the programme on the farmers; and
- (4) to suggest remedial measure for the improvement of the programme where necessary.

Need of : 1.5. The Estimate Committee has recommended in their
the
study 29th Report Published in the year 1977 that an evaluation study on welfare schemes implemented by the Assam Agriculture University is to be conducted. As such, at the instance of the Agriculture department the evaluation study has been taken up by the Evaluation and Monitoring Division of Planning and Development Department.

Method : 1.6. The first and foremost task was thus the prepa-
of sele-
ction ration of complete list of trainees who received training under each course during the year 1980-81 and 1981-82. Ten trainees from each of the first two courses and five trainees each from the remaining two courses were selected by the method of random sampling technique. Thus a total of thirty beneficiaries were selected for interview :

Procedure :1:7.
of Inves-
tigation

The selected beneficiaries were contacted and interviewed by devising a short questionnaire. In-depth investigation was carried out at the level of training centre and also at the level of beneficiaries. On the basis of information collected sample beneficiaries and Extension Education Wing, Assam Agriculture University through the aforesaid devices as well as discussions with the officials and non-officials connected with the training programme, the report has been prepared.

CHAPTER-II

Implementation of the programme

The Farmer's Training Programme was launched in the Directorate of Extension Education, under Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat since April, 1970. The Programme was introduced by the State Government as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme with a view to acquaint the under privileged section of farmer society with improved methods of cultivation.

2.2. The main function of the training wing is to impart peripatetic training which is organised in the farmer's field on cultivation of "High Yielding Varieties" along with application of improved inputs like chemical fertilisers, pesticides and seeds. Over and above, there are courses of institutional training both for farmers and farm women, which covers major topics on agriculture and allied activities. A prescribed syllabus prepared by the extension specialists of the Directorate of Extension Education is followed for imparting training which deals with classification and analysis of soil, cultivation of improved varieties of major crops and fruits, disease of crop and their prophylactic measures, weed control, pest and rodent control, application of improved machineries like power tiller, tractor, sprayer etc.

2.3. In respect of course for convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal much emphasis is laid on leadership, group discussion and agricultural topics. The syllabus is also consist of practical training which includes field work on various subjects taught in the theoretical courses, with special attention on line sowing, preparation of compost and application of fertilisers with proper doses, etc.

2.4.

The Farmer's Training Centre is placed under the overall control of the Director of Extension Education Wing, Assam Agriculture University. A District Training Officer in the rank of Associate Professor remains incharge of organising institutional training who is assisted by two training officers, one farm management specialist and other Assistant Professor for keeping liaison with radio and "Krishi Charcha Mandal". The male training officer plays the role of organising and imparting training to the farmers while the female training officer also play the same role and impart training to farm women. It has been found that the post of a District Training Officer, a farm management specialist and one Radio Contact Officer were lying vacant for more than 4 years. However the post of District training officer has been filled up recently in March, 1984 and in order to fillup the remaining two posts action has already been taken by the University Authority and will be filled up very shortly.

The training is organised in batches and target of the number of batches for imparting training is fixed at the Directorate of Extension Education. The Training is organised keeping in view the target, capacity of training hall and interest of farmers. The number of training organised and number of farmers trained by the institute during the last three years is furnished in table below:

Table-1

No. of training organised, duration and number of farmers trained.

Year	Farmers & Farm Women			Convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal.			Production and demonstration			
	No. of training proposed.	No. of training held	No. of farmers trained	No. of training proposed	No. of training held	No. of farmers trained	No. of training proposed	No. of training held	No. of farmers trained	
6	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1980-81	15	9	225	5	2	50	60	45	2527	
1981-82	15	7	175	-	-	-	60	35	1923	
1982-83	15	10	250	-	-	-	60	51	3125	

2.6. The above table reveals that during the years 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 it was proposed to conduct training of farmer and farm women in 15 batches, of which training was actually held in 9 batches in 1980-81, in which a total of 225 trainees participated. In the year 1981-82, altogether 175 farmers were trained in 7 batches. Again in the year 1982-83, a total of 250 farmer and farm women attend the training courses in 10 batches. There has been some progress in respect of trainees participated in the year 1982-83 in comparison to the year 1980-81 and 1981-82.

In respect of the course for convenor of "Krishi Charcha Mandal" the target for the number of batches was earmarked as 5, of which training was held in 2 batches only. During the year 1981-82 and 1982-83 not a single training class was held in respect of the course for "convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal."

2.7. The progress in respect of one day course for "production-cum-Demonstration Training" was satisfactory as out of the target of 60 batches each year, training was held in 45 batches, 35 batches and 51 batches during the year 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 respectively. However, in all the years under report the targets have never been achieved which were due to the following reasons.

- (1) In every year the target is fixed in the month of April & budget is received in the month of June. Besides according to the limited availability of fund, number of training was to be reduced.
- (2) During the period of harvesting and transplantation, farmers usually were reluctant to participate in training.
- (3) Due to abnormal situation of the state number of training proposed was to be postponed on many occasions.

2.8. There is no fixed norm for selection of farmers for the aforesaid training courses. Normally the officers of the Directorate of Extension Wing select the farmers in consultation with the Agriculture Extension Officer of the development block in which jurisdiction the farmers reside. No hard and fast rule is imposed for selection of farmers. Small and marginal farmers who are cultivating high yielding variety or interested to acquire knowledge on improved practices are selected for the training. The selected trainees are informed through Gram Sevaks and other local leaders of the villages and directed to report at the training institute i.e. at the Directorate of Extension Education on the date of training.

2.9. The discussions with the training officers revealed that the training scheme had made some impact at the level of the farmers of the Sibsagar district who were interested and enthusiastic in taking up the training. According to them 95 percent of the trainees attended and followed lectures delivered in the training class properly. It was also reported that more than 70 percent of the farmers selected for training were quite ignorant

about the methods of line sowing, pest and rodent control, application of proper doses of chemical fertilisers etc. and the training courses helped them a lot in this direction. Further according to them the trainees could utilise their knowledge in practical field to some extent and as such area under HYV increased considerably in the district of Sibsagar.

2.10. Before the starting of training classes, evaluation sheets are supplied to the trainees for furnishing answers to a few questions. The system thus adopted enables the trainers to make an assessment about the knowledge and aptitude of the farmers before receiving training. Another preliminary test of the same nature is also conducted after completion of the training with a view to examine up to what extent the training was beneficial to the trained farmers for acquiring knowledge on agricultural and other allied aspects. The training officers of the extension wing informed that small quantities of improved seeds, fertilisers and pesticides were supplied to the farmers who had applied their knowledge and skill acquired during the training for demonstration in practical field. The training also helped the farmers to cultivate improved varieties independently without any help from Gram Sevaks and Agricultural Demonstrators as reported.

2.11. The training classes in the institute consisted of two shifts daily covering a period of six and half an hour which included both theoretical and practical courses. It was reported that the period of 5 days earmarked for the training course of farmers and farm women, 3 days for convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal and 1 day course for production-cum-demonstration training are too short to cover all the subjects included in syllabus adequately. Besides, the trainees also find difficulties to grasp the issues properly within this short period as reported. It was also reported that each trainee was provided with feeding allowance at the rate of Rs.5 per day during the period of training which was further increased to Rs.10 per day with effect from

March, 1983. There was also facilities for providing free lodging and hostel accommodation to the trainee attending the training classes coming from remote areas.

2.12. There were 10 rooms to accommodate 25 students in the hostel of the institution and the training hall had also capacity of accommodating 25 trainees at a time. As the capacity of the training hall was limited, the training was organised in batches.

It was also reported that during the year 1981-82 and 1982-83, training for convenors of Krishi Charcha Mandal was not conducted due to the non functioning of the Krishi Charcha Mandal properly. Thus instead of that there was revitalisation of Krishak Juvak and Mahila Sangha and the members of that Sangha participated in the training course.

2.13. The expenditure incurred by the institution for the training scheme since the year 1980-81 to 1982-83 is met from the fund allotted by the Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat which is indicated below:

Table-2
Expenditure incurred under different heads.

Head	Expenditure incurred		
	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83
Pay & Allowance	63553.87	78012.24	87368.32
T.A.	8136.39	7691.25	2344.36
Fooding Allowance & Misc. expenditure	6375.00	8300.00	7300.00
Total=	78,065.26	94,003.49	97,012.68

The above table has revealed that the expenditure for training scheme has been increased to 20.4 and 24.2 percent respectively during the year 1981-82 & 1982-83 in comparison to 1980-81. The Miscellaneous expenditure of the training institution included office expense and other expenditure for exhibition, field visit of farmers, cost of oil & lubricant, distribution of seed, fertiliser etc. under demonstration scheme. The officers of the training institution reported that distribution of seed, fertilisers etc. among the trained farmers under demonstration scheme was not made compulsory and as such only a limited quantity of inputs was supplied to a few trainees after completion of training.

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CHAPTER-III

Impact of the Training Programme

3.1 In this chapter, an attempt has been made to assess the impact of the training programme on the farmers who were trained. This will reflect how far and to what extent the programme was helpful for the trained cultivators in adopting improved agricultural practises. Accordingly a total of 30 farmers who completed the training during the year 1981-82 were selected and interviewed, of which 10 trainees were selected from each of the short courses for farmer and farm women while 5 trainees were covered from the remaining two courses viz, courses for convenor of "Krishi Charca Mandal" and Production cum Demonstration training.

3.2 It has been gathered that 29(97.7%) out of ³⁰ selected trainees had cultivation as the principal sources of income. Considering this aspect, it is felt that the training programme, which is in operation for more than a decade is beneficial for the farmers.

They were also asked whether they applied improved agriculture practices in their respective fields on which they received training. The following table indicates the position about the use of improved agricultural methods by these sample cultivators in respect of paddy as paddy was the main crop of the farmers.

Table-3

No. of trained farmers applying improved inputs in respect of paddy.

No. of farmers contacted	No. of farmers used High yielding varieties	No. of farmers using chemical fertilisers			No. of farmers using pesticides		
		Fully	Partly	Not at all	Fully	Partly	Not at all
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
30	23	17	3	3	3	8	19

3.3 The above table reveals that 23 trainees (76.6%) out of a total of 30 trainees contacted, applied high yielding varieties of paddy. It was also found that 17(74%) farmers who used HYV paddy have applied chemical fertilisers fully, while 3(13%) farmers have used the same partly and the rest 3 trainees (13%) have not applied any chemical fertilisers at all. This has been mainly due to the poor economic conditions of the farmers as well as non-availability of inputs readily. Again the number of trained farmers who have not applied pesticides at all was found to be quite high i.e.(63.4%). Out of these total trainees who did not apply pesticides nearly 25 percent never applied any pesticides since there was no occurrence of pests in their crop as reported while the others did not apply the same due to their poverty and non-availability of pesticides and sprayers readily.

3.4 It was gathered that 70 percent of the sample trainees did not have elementary knowledge of using improved inputs earlier, the training programme could help them in acquiring knowledge in those aspects. Accordingly these cultivators adopted improved agricultural practice for the first time during the year 1982-83. The extent of application of improved seed, fertilizers etc. by the sample farmers are indicated in the table below.

Table -4

Application of improved practices by the sample cultivators during 1982-83.

No. of trainees contacted	Total area under cultivation of paddy (Hect)	Area under high yielding variety paddy (in hect)	Area under fertilizers (in Hect)	Area treated with pesticides (in hect)
1	2	3	4	5
30	40.03	6.42 (16.03%)	6.02 (15.04%)	3.74 (9.34%)

3.5 It is seen from the above table that the total area under HYV (paddy), fertilizers and pesticides covered by these 30 sample farmers during the year 1982-83 appears to be satisfactory as most of these cultivators have adopted improved agricultural practices for the first time and that too after receiving training. The cultivators, however have not been able to cover more areas by the improved agricultural practices due to the following reasons :

- (i) Cultivation of HYV needs more labour and attention which they could not afford.
- (ii) HYV needs regular irrigation which is readily not available in the cultivators field.
- (iii) HYV requires high priced chemical fertilizer in proper doses pesticides etc. which the cultivators could not purchase due to poverty.
- (iv) Inputs are readily not available.

3.6 It was also found that the use of modern agricultural implements like tractors, power tillers, sprayer etc. was very limited as this was beyond the capacity of a small and marginal farmer to purchase the same. Only two out of thirty sample trainees were found to be using improved machineries like tractors and power tillers on hire purchase basis. This obviously indicates that the farmers could not apply their skill and knowledge acquired from training effectively due to the limitation of assistance and resources.

3.7 The sample farmers also expressed that there was inadequate institutional finance for supply of agricultural inputs followed by cumbersome procedure for obtaining aids. Only 12(40%) out of 30 sample trainees received improved inputs free of cost from the training institute. The quantity of inputs received by them was also quite inadequate. The remaining 60% sample farmers had to purchase improved seed, fertilizers, pesticides etc. from the market located at a distance of 5 to 10 Km away. The farmers also reported that there was lack of proper irrigation facilities in their fields which caused much inconvenience in cultivation.

3.8 Summing up, we may say that inadequacy of institutional arrangement for supply of agricultural inputs, non-availability of irrigation facilities, general poverty among the rural masses are the main reasons for low use of improved agricultural practices. It was gathered that the farmers never met the officers of the training institute after completion of the training and at the same time field assistants or officers of the training centre had no scope to visit the agricultural fields of the trained farmers. As such, it has been difficult for the training institute to know how the trainees have utilised the training and whether further guidance or advice is necessary in various improved technology etc.

3.9 Out of a total of 30 selected trainees, 3 trainees reported that the training institute organised an excursion to Gauhati, with a view to deliberate idea about modern method of cultivation. It was also informed by all the sample trainees that film show on various methods of cultivation was also displayed by the training institute, which naturally helped the trainees in expanding their dimension of knowledge.

CHAPTER IV

Summary of findings and recommendation

4.1 The farmers training programme was launched since April, 1970 at the Directorate of Extension Education, under Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat with a view to extend the dimension of knowledge of farmer community on improved technology of cultivation. The programme which was a centrally sponsored scheme was adopted first by the state government, but latter on from the year 1980-81, the scheme was abolished by the State Government which was revived further by the Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat in the same year.

At present the Directorate of Extension Education imparts training to the marginal and small farmers under different development blocks of the district of Sibsagar.

4.2 There is neither any hard and fast rules for selection of farmers nor any target for number of farmers to be trained during a year. The selection of farmers is done normally in consultation with the Agricultural Extension officers of the development blocks in which the farmers reside. Small and marginal farmers who have already switched over to improved practices of cultivation or interested to switch over to modern practices are motivated for attending the institutional and demonstration training.

The trainees are selected both from male and female farmers. The programme includes 5 days short course for farmers and women, 1 days' production-cum-demonstration training and 3 day's courses for convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal.

4.3 During the year 1980-81, 1981-82 and 1982-83 it was proposed to organise training of farmer and farm women in 15 batches, training in respect of courses for convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal in 5 batches and production-cum-demonstration training in 60 batches. Out of which training for farmer and farm women was held in 9 batches covering a total of 225 trainees during the year 1980-81. In the year 1981-82 the same training was held in 7 batches in which a total of 175 trainees participated while in the year 1982-83 a total of 250 farmer & farm women attended the course in

10 batches. The coverage of trainees improved considerably in the year 1982-83 in comparison to the year 1980-81 and 1981-82 raising the percentage of participants to 11 and 43 respectively. In case of courses for Convenor of Krishi Charcha Mandal the training was actually held in 2 batches covering a total of 50 trainees during the year 1980-81, while not a single training class was held for this course during the year 1981-82 and 1982-83. Production-cum-Demonstration training was held in 45 batches, covering a total of 2527 trainees during the year 1980-81, while in the next year altogether 1923 farmers were trained in 35 batches and in the year 1982-83 a total of 3125 farmers and farm women were trained up in 51 batches. The coverage of trainees has been increased moderately to 24 and 63 percent respectively during the year 1981-82 and 1982-83 in comparison to its position in the year 1980-81.

4.4. The farmers who completed the training failed to keep contact with the training institution as required after the training was over.

4.5 During the period of training each trainee was provided with feeding allowance at the rate of Rs. 5 per day which was further increased to Rs. 10 per day with effect from March, 1983. The amount of stipend provided as feeding allowance to the trainees was also considered inadequate.

4.6 The documentary film show on improved methods of cultivation, which was organised by the training institute frequently, offered ample scope to the farmers for increasing their dimension of knowledge through audio-visual system.

4.7 For assessing the impact of the training at the field level, 30 trainees who completed the training course during the year 1982-83 were interviewed. The discussions with the sample trainees have revealed that training was much helpful and beneficial to them as they acquired sound knowledge on improved technique through the programme. They also expressed difficulties in applying their knowledge in practical field mainly due to the inadequate extension facilities and institutional arrangement for obtaining improved inputs and machineries. General poverty among the rural masses is also responsible for the slow progress in utilising their knowledge and skill which they acquired during the training.

4.8 Twenty three sample cultivators (76.6 percent) out of 30 used high yielding variety of paddy for the first time covering 16.03 percent of their total cropped area under paddy in 1982-83. Again out of 23 farmers who used. HYV, about 66.6 percent applied chemical fertilisers fully, 23.3 percent used the same partly and the remaining 10.1 percent did not apply fertilisers at all. On the other hand the percentage of trained farmers who has not applied any pesticides in their fields was 63.4.

4.9 During the year 1982-83, about 16.03 percent of the total cropped area under paddy of these sample cultivators were covered by high yielding variety, while the area covered by chemical fertilisers was 15.04 percent and pesticides by 9.3 percent of the total area which appears to be satisfactory as these cultivators have adopted improved agriculture practices for the first time in 1983-84 after receiving farmer's training. However, the area covered by improved farm machinery was found to be negligible and only 6 percent of the sample trainees used improved machinery like power tiller, tractor etc. on hired basis.

4.10 Only three farmers reported that the Directorate of Extension Education organised an educational excursion to some area of Guwahati where sophisticated and improved method of cultivation was adopted. Naturally this type of excursion trip had significant impact on the trainees and contributed much for the expansion of their idea and knowledge.

4.11 Summing up, the reaction of the trainees in respect of the training programme is found to be as follows:-

(a) All the sample trainees expressed satisfaction at the course content and methods of training and reported that the training was much helpful for elementary knowledge about improved practices of cultivation.

(b) Nearly 90 percent of the selected farmers advocated that training should be more intensive and elaborate and as such the period presently earmarked for the institutional training needs to be extended further at least for a period of 15 days.

(c) More than 80 percent sample trainees whom we contacted suggested that more emphasis needs to be given on practical training. And one day duration for Production Cum Demonstration Training is not sufficient which needed to be extended at least to a week.

(d) More than 60 percent of the sample trainees desired that there should be adequate institutional arrangement for supplying agricultural inputs at subsidised rate or free of cost at least for the first time after completion of the training.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations have been made for the improvement of the training programme:-

4.12 The course and the period of institutional training for farmer and farm women, needs to be more intensive and increased at least to a period of 7 days, instead of 5 days duration. Similarly the training period for conveners of krishi charcha mandal needs to be extended. It has been seen that within the present prescribed period the subjects can not be covered adequately and the trainees also fail to grasp the issues properly.

4.13 Much emphasis needs to be laid on practical training than on theoretical courses and the period of Production Cum-Demonstration training should be extended from one day to 3 days duration. In the course of the practical training all the problems faced by the cultivators need to be thoroughly discussed.

4.14 The training institute should be made more effective in motivating the trained farmers for adopting the improved technology and applying their knowledge acquired from training in practical field. Progressive and experienced farmers who are well conversant with local problems may be associated for imparting training to the farmers.

4.15 The training organisation needs to be suitably strengthened in a phased manner and the vacant post of District Training Officer, farm management specialist etc. should be filled up immediately.

4.16 At present the Training Institute, Jorhat covers farmers of the erstwhile district of Sibsagar only. The farmers of the other districts have not been covered by the training institute mainly due to inadequate fund provided to the institute. Other districts of the state should also be brought under the programme in a phased manner. Hence adequate fund needs to be provided to the training institute, so that the farmers of the other districts may also be associated with the training programme. In view of the growing training needs of the farmers the University should also consider to setup two more training centres covering all the allied subjects in appropriate places for the benefit of the farmer community.

4.17 It would be more imperative if the training programme is linked up with bank finance. To create a climate conducive for development of farmers, loan and subsidy should be arranged to the trained farmers for purchasing inputs and machineries after successful completion of training. Accordingly viable bankable schemes needs to be prepared for each trainee during the training period who is really interested in taking it up earnestly considering his capability, so that the training become purposive and is fruitfully utilised.

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