

Stance for a Unified DVM Degree

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After the closure of B.Sc. (Hons.) Animal Husbandry degree at Faculty of Animal Husbandry (FAH), University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF) on Oct 4, 2003, the biggest reason and justification given was that one Composite 5 year DVM graduate will do it all.

First of all, this closure was not required, as it was not based on any consultative or democratic process or an output of any deliberations or workshop. It was just a thought of some narrow minded, specific invited stakeholders, sentimental people and miss-guided bureaucrats suffering from tunnel vision syndrome. Neither it was justified, nor was done in a sober/desirable way. It was against the PVMC Act 1996, as well as the University Act. For this unified DVM degree of 5 yrs, it was claimed that it will cover all faucets of animal health, as well as animal production, in the Livestock and Poultry Sectors.

The HEC already gave its intension on **Dec 13, 2002**, not to do this merger as it wasn't the mandate of PVMC. HEC gave its POV to PVMC through a letter (*dated 13.12.2002*) as *"it is the HEC which is authorized under the law to review and revise the curricula of all the subjects beyond class XII. As much the intervention of PVMC to institute a new degree program by terminating the existing degree program and merging them into a single consolidated (Unified) degree of DVM is illegal"*.

This so called unification was initiated on the recommendation of a committee (Nov 29, 1999) for unified degree under the name of **revision of courses and improvements of syllabi**, by abolishing the B.Sc. (Hons.) Animal Husbandry degree (a recognized degree program as per First schedule under Section 9 of the PVMC Act, 1996), as notified vide No. 6-155c 2001 dated Nov 19, 2001 for the academic year 2001-2002. As I discussed in my previous article, it looked next to impossible to be done through University statutory bodies, it was forcefully adopted in this 3rd meeting of the commission (Oct 4, 2003) as stated above. It was an illegal step, violation rather an infringement, as it could have not been done unless the amendment has been made in the PVMC Act 1996.

Although PVMC may have extended many goodies to the profession, but it is also

true that it has been reading too much between the lines of its charter and over stretched its imagined authority and competence, which in fact it doesn't possess. It seemed to be possessed of an obsession to encompass the trespass into areas of responsibility and types of function realistically not falling within its purview except that in a display of its brazen over-ambitiousness, it has arrogated to itself the authority and jurisdiction which logically and historically have always belonged to the Universities.

Logically this merger should have resulted in 8 years (4 yr DVM + 4 yr AH) of study, but it meant to understand a 5 yr DVM degree, *(I still believe that unified DVM should have been made for 6-8 yrs so that contents are covered, graduates are made perfect in health & production and competent enough to meet the field requirements to produce tangible results)*. In this era of specialization, world is shifting towards more concentration and research oriented depth of each and every discipline, this was an unwanted move just to fulfill some hidden mottos and just to satisfy egoism. By this way they have pushed the Animal Production field into dark ages and tried to make it crippled and virgin.

Anyway, the courses were developed by putting all production contents in the 5 year degree program, resultantly the curricula inflated so much that it took series of meetings over the years to reduce the size of the courses to fit on pages, an acceptable level and to fit into HEC criteria of credit hrs (~149). No teacher could finish this much course contents in a given semester and to get message sent across the students. The DVM students instead of getting expertise in production courses, they even lost their interest in DVM core courses. Students got confused/overloaded, parent has been pissed off, half-baked graduates are becoming the stigma for the profession. Instead of improving upon expertise in veterinary profession, surgery, clinics, medicine, treatment, prophylaxis, and disease surveillance, etc. grabbing, clutching, gripping, grasping and even snatching all production practices at the cost of their quality, became an urgent instinct.

Results of this decision were far reaching and it has deserted the Faculty of Animal Husbandry at UAF. Many able teachers have left the Faculty, no graduate degree, no crop of students, no new recruitments, no second line in production discipline, no new courses, obviously no post- graduate students, no professional activities and very less research projects. Five year DVM composite degree was allowed to take off at ~ 11 places even in "Kothi" Colleges, where there was no

facility, no faculty, no farm and no labs, etc. Previously they were worried to absorb about 250 DVM graduates in the province, now they wanted to produce 250 graduates at more than 11 places each. How, when and where they will be absorbed, was a big question? While the FAH was left merely to teach DVM supporting courses and to polish the DVM graduates.

After a lapse of this much time (2003-2019, ~ 16 years), we have come to a point of realization that it was a mistake and decision not required. One DVM graduate with 5 year degree neither is expert in Veterinary profession, nor is he able to handle the production aspects of the Livestock and Poultry Sectors. If such graduates will show their transcripts to any international University or agency, they will laugh on it.

Instead of asking for B.Sc. (Hons.) Animal Husbandry degree, we were asked to give presentation on B.Sc. (Hons.) Dairy Science degree for FAH. We made a presentation on **Aug 24, 2006** at Governor House, later on after a series of meetings during the year with DG (Ext) and Secretary L&DD Dept on **Jan 18, 2007**, it was intentionally converted to B.Sc.(Hons.) Dairy Science and Technology. While UVAS, Lahore was allowed to initiate a new degree of B.Sc. (Hons.) Dairy Technology for 2008.

As poultry sector had big giants and much investment in the sector they thought to choose an exit to save their poultry discipline. So Poultry Science degree of B.Sc. (Hons.) was started at UVAS, Lahore and UAF Sub Campus Toba Take Singh (which was inaugurated on June 5, 2005, by the honorable Chancellor).

As mentioned above, during the presentations, the FAH, UAF was given a lollypop to start a degree of B.Sc. (Hons.) Dairy Science and Technology as the people in the meeting knew that it will never take off at UAF. We also knew it, as we were demanding to start B.Sc. (Hons.) Dairy Science, (w/o Technology), due to some good reasons.

Starting degree of Poultry Science was also against the real spirit of composite 5 yr DVM degree, however it was accepted by the poultry sector as they were the major contributors and main stakeholders of the PVMC. Under the shadow of B.Sc. (Hons.) Poultry Science, the UVAS initiated other 5-6 following degrees also. These were started without evaluating the effects and outcomes of the 5 year DVM composite graduates as envisaged at the start of the unified degree. They

thought, rather insisted, that 5 year DVM will be the panacea of all ills. The new degrees started were:

1. *B.Sc.(Hons.) Poultry Science*
2. *B.Sc.(Hons.) Dairy Technology*
3. *B.Sc.(Hons.) Applied Microbiology*
4. *B.Sc.(Hons.) D Pharmacy (D Pharma) (was closed by the worthy Chancellor)*
5. *B.Sc.(Hons.) Bioinformatics*
6. *B.Sc.(Hons.) Animal Nutrition and Feed Tech (was also in making)*

Initiation of these degrees without evaluating the effects of a composite graduate, was pointed out at Governor House on **Aug 24, 2007** but this could not create any surprise among the participants or anybody in the meeting. Surprisingly they thought that these 5/6 degrees will not harm to one composite unified 5 yr degree of DVM but the one, a broad based degree of B.Sc. (Hons.) Animal Husbandry, abolished during this merger.

Other fields like animal science, dairy beef, sheep and goat production, leather technology, wool production, animal hair, animal behavior, animal welfare, draft animals, camel production, equine production, equitation science and practices, range livestock science, etc. etc. had also great potential to be initiated as B.Sc. degree programs in the near future. These subjects have the potential to be taken up as an individual or combined degree(s) may be in the mind of many people or in incubation stage at any University or DAI.

Our POV was, and still persist, that production degree must have a broad based graduation allowing the graduates to cover all faucets of production, choose major/minor and specialize in various branches of animal production at graduate and doctoral levels. It is required in the country and its in demand with Animal Production Systems, Animal Agriculture, PDDC, L&DD Dept, Livestock and Poultry Farms, Hatcheries, Breeding farms, Pvt sector, Nestle, Haleeb, Idara-a-Kissan (late), AusAID, USAID, FAO, UNDP, ERR, CDA, Feed Mills, Feed Technology, Breeding Farms, Feedlots, Dairying in rangelands, Camel Dairy, Camel and Equine, Small Ruminants and Leather Industry, etc. etc. Developed countries have separate wings of Production and Health. They are role model for us, instead of following the model of the countries where urine is more precious than milk. Eating animal meat is eating like mother.

Millions and Billions of Rupees of the country and international AIDs have gone in waste over the past 70 yrs, as of today we are standing at a crossroad and in 21st century still looking the answer of four (4) basic and fundamental questions:

- (1) *how to develop livestock and poultry sectors ?*
- (2) *how to increase the productivity of our animals and farms ?*
- (3) *how to make our country's livestock disease free ?, and*
- (4) *how we can use livestock and poultry to reduce people's poverty and their sufferings ?*

Some people have tried their best to push the sector to a dead end. They could not do much except pushing AH to zero and try to make them extinct. Though it is out of scope of this article, but just to remind some episodes and instances out of many, as how production graduates were pushed to wall, transferred to worst situations, kept without promotions and gradually AH degree removed from various production jobs at L&DD Dept. At present many positions are vacant and no relevant work is in progress. At present L&DD Dept doesn't have expertise to run bull production, data collection and analyses. Soon such institutions will be left with pseudo-experts who will pretend to be animal production specialists. If there is no production graduate or trained production officials and staff, what DG Animal Production will do? If "right man for the right job" is not followed, the spirit of the designation will be lost. The role of PVMC would have been exemplary and model in such cases, being an apex body in the country.

It is my earnest hope that, by closing AH degree, many degrees will come (*In shaa Allah*) with different names as off shoots of Animal Husbandry to take care the production aspects of the livestock sector, (if it has to fly high). What does Livestock Assistant Diploma (LAD) of 2 Year means? What does Poultry Assistant Diploma (PAD) of 2 Year means? What does Dairy Herd Supervisor Diploma (DHSD) means? What does Training of Community Livestock Extension Workers means? What does Livestock Associate Diploma (4 Year) means, (which has been rejected by the L&DD Dept in Oct 2018. One broad based Production degree will not suit them? B.Sc.(Hons.) Animal Husbandry is still the best option as it is included in the PVMC Act 1996, otherwise other names are deemed to bring new issues of recognition, accreditation, employment and service structure, etc. Ironically the degree of B.Sc.(Hons.) Animal Science at UOS (started in 2010) is and has been under the threat of strangulation, while the same degree is in making for some other Campuses. Many Parent Alerts were issued (Sep 2014) on this

degree. What does it indicates? When this degree doesn't fall under the purview of PVMC Act.

Let me conclude by inviting the kind attention of all honorable(s), respectable(s) and higher up(s) in the field of livestock and poultry to think about that whether 5 yr unified DVM graduates have achieved their objectives and had the stance been fulfilled, envisaged in the beginning.

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