



Shri Vile Parle Kelavani Mandal's
Dr. Bhanuben Nanavati College of Pharmacy

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DST-SERB, ICMR & CSIR Sponsored
Three Days National Conference on
Neurodegenerative diseases: Strategies of drug discovery and delivery to the brain
July 27-29, 2017- A Summary Report

This National level conference on Neurodegenerative diseases: Strategies of drug discovery and delivery to the brain was planned with the following objectives in mind:

- a. To sensitize the young scientists (students and faculty engaged in pharmacy, life sciences and biotechnology) to the alarming increase in neurodegenerative diseases.
- b. To increase their awareness about neurodegenerative diseases in terms of statistics, causes and prevention and therapeutic intervention strategies in neurodegenerative diseases.
- c. To impress the need for research initiatives at a mega scale in academic institutes.
- d. To provide a platform for discussion with eminent scientists and clinicians in the field so that they get the feel of research opportunities available for follow up.
- e. To inculcate and encourage a research mindset and provide a platform for students to present their case studies and research in the field of neurodegenerative diseases.
- f. To promote interaction and networking with peers and seniors from academia and industry.

As I write this report I think we managed to touch and impress upon the delegates on each of the points mentioned above by way of high quality research talks from the eminent speakers. We received funding from DST-SERB (Rs. 1,00, 000/-), CSIR (Rs. 40,000/-) and ICMR (Rs. 40,000/-). We acknowledge the financial support rendered by these funding agencies without which it would have been difficult to organize this three scientific event successfully. The months of May and June witnessed extensive preparation work by the Local Organizing Committee members along with their regular undergraduate and postgraduate teaching load of theory and laboratory classes. A lot of effort was put in for selecting the Speakers for this conference as well as for selecting the Chief Guest. Eventually we managed to put together a scientifically rich combination of the above thus paving the way for an intellectually stimulating experience of the two days. We received an impressive number of registrations from the student and faculty members about 190 and a good number of delegates presenting papers on neurodegenerative diseases (about 60 poster presentations and 10 oral presentations).



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The conference proceedings began with the inauguration ceremony and addresses by the Chief Guest, Dr. Ashok Vaidya, Director, Kasturba Health Society, Medical Research Centre, Mumbai. His address emphasized the challenges and opportunities in Reverse pharmaceuticals as they apply to neurodegenerative diseases.

The Conference schedule comprised of four lecture sessions per day by eminent scientists coming from reputed and renowned institutes across the country to present and share their work with the delegates. The speakers included Dr. Aurnab Ghose, IISER, Pune, Dr. Sarika Gupta, NII, New Delhi, Dr. Padma Devarajan, ICT Mumbai, Dr. Samir Maji, IIT Bombay, Dr. Shrinivas Kulkarni, *Emeritus Professor of Pharmacology & Former Pro-Vice Chancellor (DUI)(PU)*, Dr. Vandana Patravale, Professor, ICT Mumbai, Dr. Sukhinder Kaur Cheema, Professor, Memorial University, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, Dr. Evans Coutinho, Professor, BCP, Mumbai, Dr. Bishwajit Kundu, IIT, Delhi, Dr. Sandhya Koushika and *Dr. Vidita Vaidya*, TIFR, Mumbai

All the sessions were well received and most of them were very interactive in nature thus facilitating a good question and answer session post completion of the talk. Apart from the plenary lectures, we saw good papers in the category of Young Scientists oral presentations. There was a panel of three judges for selection of two best oral paper awards. The poster viewing and evaluation session was scheduled during the lunch break and the posters were put up for the entire day. Here again we had a panel of three judges for selection of two best poster awards for two days of the conference. There was a tremendous zeal amongst the student delegates for competing for these awards and this led them to excel in their efforts. The three days of conference was witness to some fantastic discussions and deliberations on basic neurobiology, neuronal networks and traffic jams, amyloid interaction network and designing structure-based anti-amyloidogenic biomolecules and drug discovery and medicinal chemistry approaches across the versatile frontiers of neurodegenerative diseases. It left the audience with



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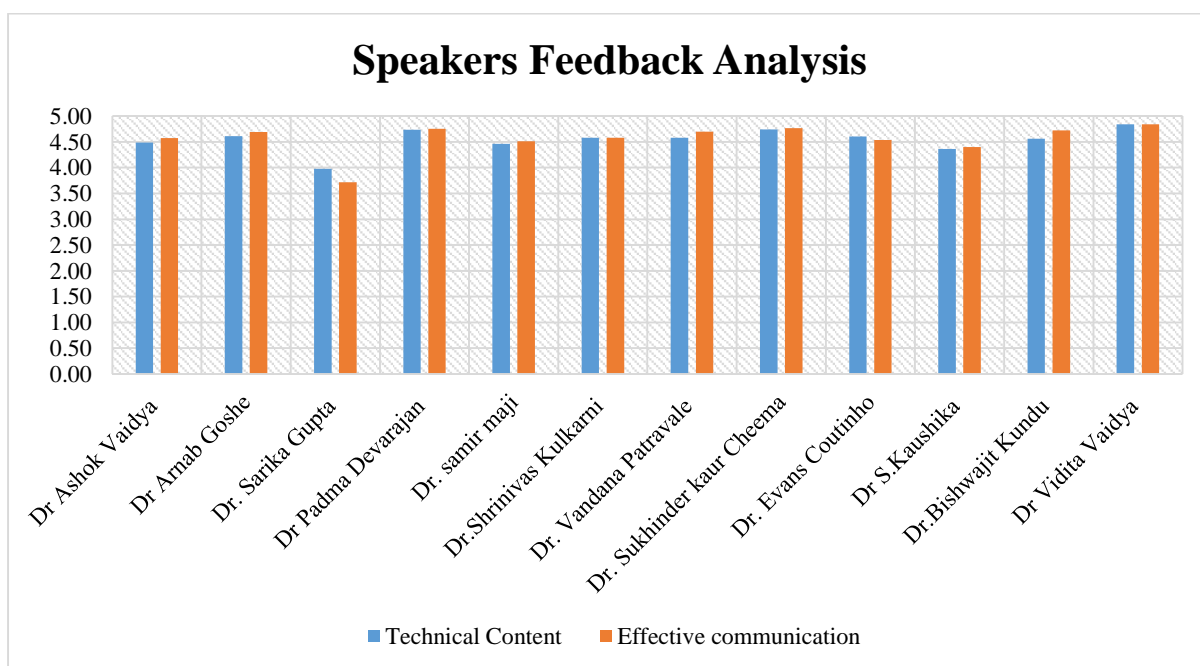
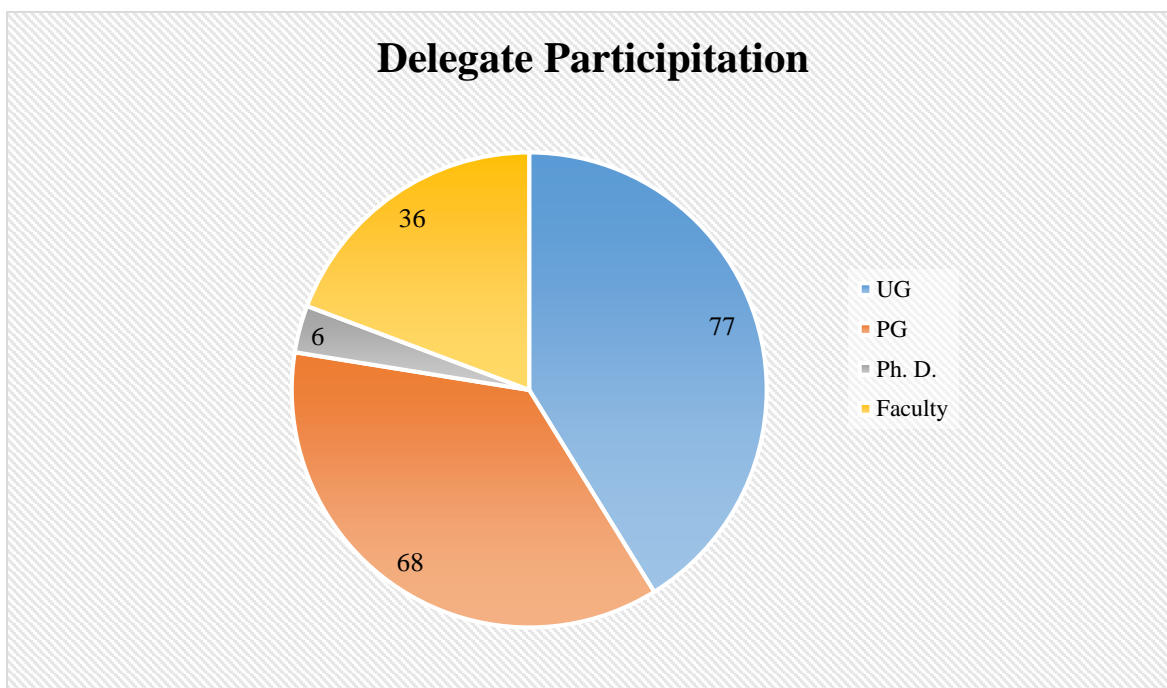
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some thought provoking questions and also kindled their interest towards doing good science in a collaborative manner and re-emphasized the importance of innovation in alleviation of diseases and maintenance of good health.

Some statistical analysis and glimpses of this conference are presented below.





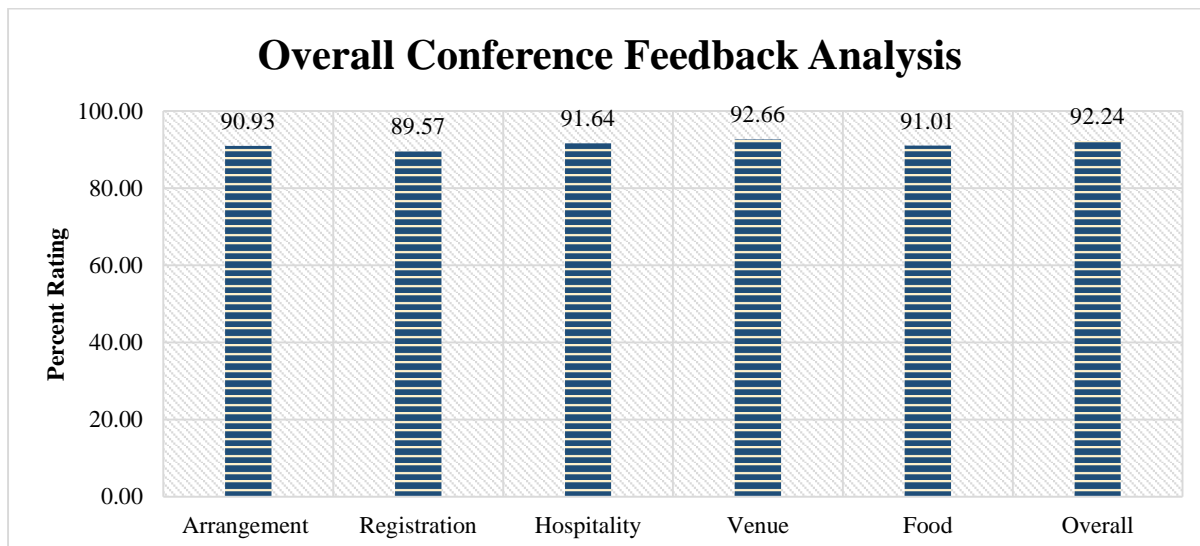
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Left to right: Dr. Tabassum Khan, Organizing Secretary, Dr. Rama Vaidya, Dr. Ashok Vaidya, Dr. Dhananjaya Saranath and Dr. Munira Momin, Convener & Principal



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Poster viewing area



Delegates in poster viewing area



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Resource speakers with members of LOC



Resource persons and Jury panel with student volunteers and members of LOC



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Conference delegates in the auditorium

This Conference concluded with the inputs from the Jury panel to the participants followed by the Prize Distribution ceremony. A review of the feedback forms indicated that the Conference was highly appreciated by the delegates and the speaker talks covering a range of paradigms and projects addressing neurodegenerative diseases gave them a very comprehensive overview and sensitized them to the kind of research work going on across a spectrum of research labs in our country. They enjoyed their first stint of attending a national level conference and getting to listen to a galaxy of wonderful scientists share their research endeavors.

Dr. Tabassum Khan

Organizing Secretary

August 10, 2017