

Qualifications

- MBBS – Madras University, India
- Diploma in Otolaryngology
- Diploma in Industrial health
- Diploma in Public Health
- Certificate in Occupational and Environmental Medicine – University of California, SF, USA

Professional Career

- Current positions:
 - Chair: Scientific Committee on Rural Health, International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH), Rome, Italy
 - Occupational Health Consultant for private sector industries, Bangalore, India
- Previous positions:
 - Former President of the Association of Occupational Health Karnataka, India
 - Senior Medical Officer in public sector and private sector organizations

Affiliations with Professional Organisations

- ICOH – Scientific Committee Chair
- Indian Association of Occupational Health – Central Council Member
- Association of Otolaryngologists of India – Member
- Indian Medical Association – Member
- Workplace Health Without Borders – Member
- Center for International Health, LMU, Germany – Member

Career Highlights

- Recipient of many orations and awards from the Indian Association of Occupational Health and the Association of Occupational Health Karnataka, India
- Has completed many occupational health studies and presented papers at national and international conferences
- Participated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Programmes at the UN HQ, New York, USA
- Associated with NGOs for rural health activities
- Advisor for social marketing projects for postgraduate students.

Pesticide issues and the need for action: A perspective from India

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Keywords: Pesticide toxicity, awareness programmes, regulatory frameworks

Overview:

Pesticides are actively spread in the environment as they are used extensively to control pests to increase the yield of crops. Pesticides continue to be a cost-effective efficient tool for pest management. Due to pesticide toxicity, farm workers and the general population who are environmentally exposed are affected and it leads to occupational, social and public health issues. Pesticide issue is a grave concern, as the health and safety precautions are overlooked by farm workers. Many deaths due to pesticide poisoning are suicides made easy by the wide availability of pesticides.

Farmers are unaware of pesticide toxicity and its grave consequences. Awareness programmes on best practices of pesticides usage, behaviour changes by nudging on personal protective equipment usage, and proper handling of pesticides are important. Spraying of pesticides by drones and a poly-oxime-treated protective fabric suit are being tested.

A comprehensive umbrella legislation is necessary with implementation of regulatory frameworks, surveillance, monitoring, and enforcement. Irrational use of pesticides, indiscriminate mixtures of different pesticides and illegal trade of unregistered, banned, and obsolete pesticides should be stopped. Agro ecological systems of agriculture are needed. A stringent pesticides management law to address pesticide issues will protect the health of farm workers and the public.