

SURVEY OF INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES AND PROBLEMS OF ANGANWADI'S IN AMRITSAR DISTRICT OF PUNJAB

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Abstract

ICDS is the national flagship programme of government of India started in 1975 to deal with the issues of early childhood. This paper is an attempt to assess the infrastructure facilities as well problems faced by Anganwadi workers working under Integrated Child development Scheme of government of India. In this study a random sample of 92 Anganwadi workers were selected from different Anganwadi centres located in Amritsar district of Punjab. The main tool for data collection was questionnaire, interview schedule and observational methods. Though there are good number of studies in ICDS, the problems faced by Anganwadi workers play major role in the implementation of programme which have not received due attention. The analysis indicate that nature of duties and responsibilities assigned to the Anganwadi Workers are mostly social, community based which keeps them in a perpetual state of despair and unhappiness. The purpose of the study is to assess the Anganwadi centres as in India through Anganwadi Centres non formal Early Childhood Education is provided to children of age group 3 to 6 years of age. So, the future of the country depends upon the effectiveness of Anganwadi Centres. This study revealed that the Anganwadi Workers were having dissatisfied with component of salary and overload but they are satisfied with other aspects of the job.

Keywords: Anganwadi Centres, Early Childhood Education, Infrastructure Facilities.

INTRODUCTION

Child Development Scheme is one of the flagship programmes of the government of India and represents one of the world's largest and unique programme for early childhood care and education. This programme is considered as country commitment to its children as a response to the challenge for providing pre-school non formal education. It also tries to breakdown the vicious cycle of malnutrition as well as reduced learning capacity among young learners of the country. ICDS was launched on 2nd October 1975 on the auspicious occasion of 106th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the nation. Currently ICDS runs seven thousand seventy-six projects in India for benefiting children between ages 3 to 6 years every year through non-formal pre school education. Facilities of pre school non formal education assist young children to grow holistically and lays sound foundation for formal primary school education.

Moreover, children during these years are more receptive towards learning with rapid brain development. Quality of pre-school non-formal education depends upon the quality of learning activities performed by the young minds under the supervision of concerned Anganwadi workers. It takes a holistic view of the development of the child and attempts to improve educational environment. ICDS provides following packages of services.

- Early childhood Care Education and Development (ECCE)
- Care and Nutrition Counselling
- Health Services
- Communication Mobilisation Awareness, Advocacy and Information, Education and Communication

Above services are provided through a network of Anganwadi centres. The Anganwadi literally meaning a courtyard play centre, is the focal point for delivery of services at the community level. It is run by Anganwadi Worker (AWW) who is supported by a helper in the delivery of services. The Early Childhood Care, Education and Development component of ICDS may well be considered the backbone of the ICDS programme, since all its services essentially converge at the Anganwadi. This is also the most joyful play way daily activity, visibly sustained for three hours a day. It focuses on total development of the child in the age range of up to six years from the under privileged groups.

The early learning component of the ICDS is a significant input for providing a sound foundation for cumulative life long learning and development. It also contributes to the universalisation of primary education, by providing to the child the necessary preparation for primary schooling and offering substitute care to younger siblings thus freeing the older ones

Review of related literature

A good number of social researchers have done their work on Anganwadi workers of ICDS project under social welfare project of India. P.D'Sauza (1989) had studied on problems of Anganwadi workers in the rural ICDS project, Mangalore Corporation, Karnataka. They found that low honorarium, personal problems related with socio economic status affect the ability of AWWs to become effective workers. Yelvattimath, Gauri G. and Nithya Shree, D.A. (2015) had conducted a study on 'problems faced by Anganwadi workers and suggestions given to them. Results reveal that most of the Anganwadi workers were middle aged, high school level of education. Majority of them were married and their experience were between five to ten years. Most of Anganwadi workers complained that they had no time to conduct personal education and majority of them suggested to fix the timings for personal activities. Patil, Sandip B and Doibale MK (2013) reported on 'Study of profile, Knowledge and problems of Anganwadi workers in ICDS Blocks. In this study most of the Anganwadi workers have problems of inadequate salary, lack of help from community, lack of infrastructure facilities, excessive work load and record maintenance. Madhavi L.H. and H.K.G. Singh (2011) conducted a study on 'A study on Knowledge of Anganwadi workers and their problems in rural field of Gulbarga District to assess knowledge regarding health services and problems faced by Anganwadi Workers while delivering health services at Anganwadi Centre under rural community Health training centre. The study reveals that Anganwadi Workers faced overload of routine activity work and excessive record maintained in inadequate space provided to them. Thakare Meenal (2011) assessed knowledge of AWWs and problems. The result found that AWWs had best knowledge about nutrition and health education but majority of them (75%) of the workers, complained of inadequate honorarium, lack of help from community and other problems reported were infrastructure related supply, excessive work overload and record maintenance.

The propose study is Survey of Infrastructural facilities and problems of Anganwadi's in Amritsar district of Punjab. The domain of this study is concerned with the Anganwadi works of ICDS programmes under social welfare department. There are only one AWW and AWH have been engaged to perform the functions of AWC. The basic problems faced by Anganwadi workers are physical infrastructure at the work place, work place environment, lack of security and inflexible working hours and work load, job security, salary, promotion prospects, physical as well as mental constraint and stress. This paper deals with the infrastructural facilities as well as problems of Anganwadi workers in Amritsar district of Punjab.

Methodological Application

The information regarding the study was collected from primary sources. A close ended interview-schedule was designed to collect primary data. Some general information like name, residence, age, marital status, educational qualification, nature of family, work experience, total emoluments per month, designation, location of Anganwadi centre were collected to evaluate the infrastructure facilities and problems faced by them. Both observation and interview schedule were applied as a technique of data collection. The main tool for data collection was interview schedule and self made questionnaire.

To assess the infrastructure facilities provided at Anganwadi centres. Total 92 Anganwadi workers are selected as sample for study. Demographic details regarding infrastructure facilities available at Anganwadi Centres are shown in table 1 given below.

TABLE: 1

Distribution of Anganwadi workers as per Infrastructure Facilities				
VARIABLE	Frequency		Percentage (%)	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF TOILET FACILITY	72	20	78.02%	21.98%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF SAFE DRINKING WATER	74	18	80.22%	19.78%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF ELECTRICITY	78	14	84.61%	15.38%

The data from table 1 reflect that majority of respondents (78.02%) reported that they have good toilet facilities at their centres for staff as well as for children but still 21.98% centres lack toilet facility at their centres. 82.22% respondents reported of having safe drinking water at their respective Anganwadi Centres and 19.78% reported not having clean safe drinking water facility. 84.61% of Anganwadi centres don't have any issue related to electricity supply but 15.38% having issues of electricity also

To assess the responsibility perceived workload and problems faced by Anganwadi workers. Total 92 Anganwadi workers are selected as sample for study. Data provided by respondents related to day-to-day problems faced by them is shown in table 2 given below:

TABLE: 2

Distribution of Anganwadi workers as per problems faced by them				
VARIABLE	Frequency		Percentage (%)	
	YES	NO	YES	NO

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF INADEQUATE SALARY	68	24	73.63%	26.37%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF INFRASTRUCTURE RELATED PROBLEMS	69	23	74.73%	25.27%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF LOGISTIC SUPPLY RELATED	55	37	60.44%	39.56%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF EXCESSIVE WORK	88	4	95.60%	4.39%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF EXCESSIVE RECORD MAINTENANCE	57	35	61.54%	38.46%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF LACK OF HELP FROM COMMUNITY	85	7	92.30%	07.69%
PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF IN ACCESSIBILITY OF SUPERIORS	81	11	87.91%	12.08%

The data from table 2 reflects that majority of respondents 73.63% reported the issue of inadequate salary on the other hand 26.37% of Anganwadi Workers are satisfied from their salary. 69% of Anganwadi Workers are faces problems related to infrastructure while 25.27% of Anganwadi workers don't have any problem related to infrastructure. More than half of the respondents i.e 60.44% having problem of logistic supply and 39.56% are satisfied from logistic supply. Excessive work is the main problem of Anganwadi workers due to which they don't get enough valuable time for development of young children. 95.60% of Anganwadi workers reported the workload to be very heavy and only 4.39% of Anganwadi workers are satisfied from work. 61.54% of Anganwadi workers have problem of excessive record maintenance while 38.46% of Anganwadi workers don't have problem of excessive record maintenance. Lack of community help is the big problem among Anganwadi Workers, 92.30% of Anganwadi workers have problem of community help and only 7.69% of Anganwadi workers are satisfied from help provided by community. Majority 87.91% of Anganwadi workers have problem in accessibility of superiors while 12.08% of Anganwadi workers don't have any problem in accessibility of superiors. It is concluded that excessive work load, lack of community help and inaccessibility of superiors are the major problems as compared to logistic supply, excessive record maintenance, in adequate salary and infrastructure related problems among Anganwadi workers.

DISCUSSION

The Anganwadi workers as well as helpers are the basic functionaries of the ICDS are not treated on a par with other government employees and are known as social workers or voluntary workers. They are over burdened and not able to justify their routine work. Factors contribution to marginalization of the programme like inadequate supervision, lack of medical resources, lack of coordination with other related institutions and there are also some other implementation issues (Population Research Centre, 2009). As per the findings of the study anganwadi workers in both urban and rural area mentioned the problem of work overload. Anganwadi workers are overworked and not able to justify their routine work (Desai, Pandit & Sharma, January-June 2012).

CONCLUSION

Insufficiency of proper place, material and equipment's are the factors that lead to structural deprivation. Systematic inclusion for the betterment of the programme has to be done by community engagement and encouraging partnership of stakeholders. Anganwadi workers are not satisfied with the job. Since the honorarium is not satisfactory, it results into their inactiveness and efficiency in performing the duties. It's needed to have operational changes in the programme.

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