

Original Research Article

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A Study on Anganwadi Workers of North Karnataka, India

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ABSTRACT

To provide basic services to the children as well as to the mothers for proper growth and development, the scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) was initiated on 2nd October 1975. It was launched under the women and child development department to reduce the level of infant and child mortality rates. The grass root level workers who are called Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) provide the services of ICDS. The place where the services are provided is called Anganwadi. The study was initiated to know the knowledge level and job satisfaction of AWWs in the Seven Northern Karnataka districts which comes under the jurisdiction of UAS Dharwad during 2017. Random sampling technique was used to collect the data. Total 450 rural AWWs were selected as a sample for the study. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed by using suitable statistical tools. The result of the study showed that that 40.00 per cent of AWWs had medium level of knowledge, followed by high knowledge (36.00 %) and 24.22 per cent of them had low level of knowledge. Regarding association between independent variables and knowledge of AWWs, out of eight independent variables education and training had positive and highly significant association with knowledge level. Whereas, age and year of experience of the respondents found to be positive and significant association with knowledge. Further, type of family and size of family possessed non significant association with knowledge level of AWWs. And also 62.00 per cent of the AWWs had medium level of job satisfaction, 25.11 per cent of them had low level and 12.89 per cent of them belong to the high job satisfaction category. In case of constraints, they were facing problems towards basic facilities viz, lack of proper infrastructure, no proper place for cooking, work stress, problems from beneficiaries and problems while working in office.

Keywords

ICDS, Anganwadi workers (AWWs), knowledge, Job satisfaction, Constraints

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Introduction

Health and nutrition are the most important contributory factors for human resource development. Good nutrition is the fundamental basic requirement for maintenance of positive health. A proper diet is essential from the very early stages of life

for growth, development and active life. The early years of zero to three years are crucial periods for brain development which may be adversely affected by malnutrition. India ranked 2nd in the world with over 47 per cent of its children exhibiting some degree of malnutrition. Malnutrition tends to have a detrimental impact on the economic growth of

nation and affects the overall productivity. Hence to reduce malnutrition, poverty and high infant mortality rates, Government of India launched ICDS scheme on 2nd Oct, 1975.

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme represents one of the most unique programs for early childhood development. The scheme aims at development of children in the age group 0 - 6 years, adolescent girls, and pregnant and lactating mothers. The grass root level workers who are called Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) provide the services of ICDS. The place where the services are provided is called Anganwadi. Which is child care centre located within the village, urban and slum areas. A network of "Anganwadi Center" (AWC) provides integrated services comprising supplementary nutrition, immunization, health checkup, referral services, preschool education, and health and nutrition education.

The AWW is the most important functionary of the ICDS scheme. The Anganwadi worker is a community based front line worker of the ICDS programme, selected from the community, she assumes the pivotal role due to her close and continuous contact with the beneficiaries. She plays a crucial role in promoting child growth and development. She is assisted by a helper who is also a local woman.

Being the functional unit of ICDS programme which involves different groups of beneficiaries, the AWW has to conduct various different types of job responsibilities. The AWW monitors the growth of children, organizes supplementary feeding, helps in organizing immunization sessions, distributes vitamin A, iron and folic acid supplements, treats minor ailments and refers cases to medical facilities. Attainment of ICDS programme goals depends heavily upon the

effectiveness of the Anganwadi workers, which in turn depends upon their knowledge, attitude, performance and practice. A sound knowledge of the AWWs strengthens their skills and raises their capabilities to early identify the children moving towards malnutrition with the help of regular growth monitoring. So she should have basic knowledge on children's growth and development, as she assumes a pivotal role in Anganwadi, and also due to her close and continuous contact with the community; she has more chances to interact and to educate the mothers. Also AWW's performance is based on her satisfaction with regard to job. Hence, present study was conducted with the objectives,

To know the knowledge of Anganwadi workers regarding children's growth and development

To study the job satisfaction of Anganwadi workers

To know the constraints faced by anganwadi workers

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Seven Northern Karnataka districts which come under the jurisdiction of UAS Dharwad. Namely, Bagalakote, Belgaum, Dharwad, Gadag, Haveri, Ultra Kannada and Vijayapur district during the year 2017.

AWWs meet every month for their work review. Supervisor of ICDS conducts review meeting of AWWs. With the permission of higher officials' survey was conducted. Rural and urban are two types of anganwadi centres are there. Among these, rural anganwadi workers purposely selected.

Random sampling technique was used to collect the data. Since Dharwad is the center where researcher resides, more visits were

made and 150 respondents were selected as sample. Whereas 40 samples each from Bagalkot and Vijaypur districts, 50 samples each from Belagavi and Gadag districts, 60 samples each from Haveri and Uttar Kannada districts. Thus total sample constituted to 450 rural Anganwadi workers.

A booklet was prepared and distributed after the data collection titled “*Shishuvina belavanige mattu aahar poshakamshagala kaipidi*”. Knowing their knowledge level needs to be updated regarding children growth and development and nutritional aspects.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 depicts that about 40.00 per cent of Anganwadi workers had medium level of knowledge, followed by high knowledge (36.00 %) and 24.22 per cent of them had low level of knowledge. AWWs had good knowledge about immunization and play materials. This results may be due to the ICDS is conducting periodic training programmes to update the knowledge of anganwadi workers, also supervisors conduct monthly meeting where in they discuss the work profile of anganwadi workers. These aspects helped to gain knowledge about children’s growth and development. The findings are similar with the finding of Sanjiv *et al.*, (1994) and Salutagimath and Nithya Shree (2013).

The analysis of data in the Table 2 revealed that out of six independent variables education and training had positive and highly significant association with knowledge level. Whereas, age and year of experience of the respondents found to be positive and significant association with knowledge. Further, type of family and size of family possessed non significant association with knowledge level. With regard to education it

varied from SSLC to degree level among the respondents. Similarly many training programmes were organized by ICDS, few of Anganwadi workers were attended many training programmes, so higher studies as well as more training programmes contributed to the medium and higher knowledge level of Anganwadi workers. Similarly more the age and experience in the job helped them to have better knowledge about children’s growth and development also exposure to many situations the above results were formed.

Anganwadi workers were mildly satisfied (Table 3.1) with regard to job security, kind of rules, policies and practices, recognition and respect from people, technical competence of immediate superior, responsibilities and independence in work, opportunity for acquiring skills. The recognition they get from society and independent working pattern were responsible for mild satisfaction from their job.

They were mildly dissatisfied with regard to compensation, promotion, working condition, interesting or enjoyable nature of the work, and opportunities in the job, sympathetic nature of immediate superior. They demanded for the more motivational aspects like promotion and some type of compensation or recognition for their work which was not there in the present job created mild dissatisfaction among anganwadi workers.

And in case of benefit plans like vacation, retirement, medical facilities and honorarium AWWs expressed moderately to extremely dissatisfaction. They felt that in case of the honorarium they receive is not in proportion to their job performance.

AWWs were expressed their extreme dissatisfaction towards their payment. They demanded for some benefit plans in their job.

Table 3.2 showed that many (62.00 %) of the AWWs had medium level of job satisfaction, 25.11 per cent of them had low level of job satisfaction and 12.89 per cent of them belong to the high job satisfaction category.

Table 4 indicates that, none of the independent variable was associated with job satisfaction of AWWs. All independent variable were non-significantly associated with job satisfaction. None of the variable was responsible for their job satisfaction.

Table 5 indicates the constraints related to basic facilities. Majority of the AWWs expressed lack of proper infrastructure (91.56 %) was the main problem, less honorarium was expressed by 89.56 per cent of respondents. No toilet facility and lack of water facility were expressed by 78.00 and 72.00 per cent of respondents respectively. The other constraints expressed were no electricity (56.54 %), no own building (50.67), no compound (46.89), lack of toys for children to play (33.78 %), no proper

place for cooking (26.00 %) and No ground for outdoor game (24.00 %).

Regarding work stress majority of the respondents (88.67 %) expressed that there was too much of record writing and maintenance, 76.00 per cent of respondents mentioned that more work from other schemes like Bhagyalaxmi, Sabla and IGMSY. Work from other departments was expressed by 67.11 percent. There was too much of work in providing adhar card to the villagers was expressed by 27.33 per cent of respondents. And 24.89 per cent of respondents expressed that there was no time for providing pre-school education due to more work.

In case of constraints faced from beneficiaries, 78.67 per cent of respondents expressed that beneficiaries were not providing correct documents or information, 71.78 per cent of them expressed that, mothers were not attend meeting, health and nutrition education programme.

Table.1 Knowledge level of Anganwadi workers regarding children’s growth and development n=450

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low (<52)	109	24.22
Medium (52-56)	179	39.78
High (>56)	162	36.00

Table.2 Association between independent variables and knowledge of AWWs n=450

Independent variable	Chi-square values
Age	15.920*
Education	29.004**
Type of Family	0.33
Size of family	5.59
Experience	18.63*
Training	26.22**

** Significant at 0.01 level

* Significant at 0.05 level NS- Non Significant

Table.3.1 Job satisfaction of Anganwadi workers n=450

Sl. No	Statements	Ext Sat	Mod Sat	Mild Sat	Mild Dis	Mod Dis	Ext Dis	Job satisfaction Index
		F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	
1.	The amount of security in the job	17 (03.78)	134 (29.78)	191 (42.44)	17 (03.78)	35 (07.78)	56 (12.44)	63.44
2.	The kind of rules, policies and practices that govern in the job	11 (02.44)	134 (29.78)	175 (38.89)	20 (4.44)	48 (10.67)	62 (13.78)	61.25
3.	The amount of compensation is reasonably good for living	1 (0.22)	30 (6.67)	109 (24.22)	52 (11.56)	128 (28.44)	130 (28.89)	42.00
4.	The kind of benefit plans (vacation, retirement, medicals and so on) in the job	4 (0.89)	60 (13.33)	98 (21.78)	65 (14.44)	113 (25.12)	110 (24.44)	46.18
5.	The chance of future promotion in the job	6 (01.33)	70 (15.56)	98 (21.78)	70 (15.56)	93 (20.66)	113 (25.11)	47.66
6.	The kind of working conditions (lighting, noise, office space and so on) in the job	11 (02.44)	90 (20.00)	176 (39.11)	35 (07.78)	76 (16.89)	62 (13.78)	57.00
7.	The interesting or enjoyable nature of the work in my job, I feel	14 (03.11)	101 (22.44)	176 (39.11)	47 (10.44)	44 (09.78)	68 (15.12)	58.88
8.	The amount of recognition and respect that receive for the work	16 (03.56)	114 (25.33)	159 (35.33)	47 (10.45)	67 (14.89)	47 (10.44)	60.14
9.	The opportunity I have in my job to work with people I like, I feel	23 (05.11)	105 (23.33)	161 (35.78)	45 (10.00)	46 (10.22)	70 (15.56)	59.40
10.	The technical competence of my immediate superiors	17 (03.78)	131 (29.11)	154 (34.22)	28 (06.22)	59 (13.11)	61 (13.56)	60.59
11.	The opportunity to achieve excellence in the work	15 (03.33)	105 (23.33)	157 (34.89)	45 (10.00)	55 (12.22)	73 (16.22)	57.81
12.	The considerate and sympathetic nature of immediate superior	15 (03.33)	130 (28.89)	142 (31.56)	36 (08.00)	62 (13.78)	65 (14.44)	59.44
13.	The kind of responsibility and independence in the job	19 (04.22)	115 (25.56)	174 (38.67)	40 (08.89)	44 (09.78)	58 (12.88)	61.14
14.	The opportunity for acquiring higher skill	18 (04.00)	108 (24.00)	185 (41.11)	27 (06.00)	59 (13.11)	53 (11.78)	60.74
15.	The amount of compensation for the work	5 (01.11)	24 (05.33)	102 (22.67)	55 (12.22)	115 (25.56)	149 (33.11)	40.81
16.	An overall consideration with respect in the job	21 (04.67)	117 (26.00)	198 (44.00)	24 (05.33)	31 (06.89)	59 (13.11)	62.81
Overall Job Satisfaction Index							56.21	

Table.3.2 Level of job satisfaction of Anganwadi workers n=450

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Low (16-42)	113	25.11
Medium (43-69)	279	62.00
High (70-96)	58	12.89

Table.4 Association between independent variables and Job satisfaction n=450

Independent variable	Chi-square values
Age	2.414
Education	3.205
Caste	10.341
Type of Family	1.468
Size of family	1.912
Experience	4.522
Training	7.127

Table.5 Constraints faced by Anganwadi workers n=450

Sl. No	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
I	Basic facilities		
1	Lack of proper infrastructure	412	91.56
2	Less honorarium	403	89.56
3	No toilet facility	351	78.00
4	Lack of water facility	324	72.00
5	No electricity	254	56.44
6	No own building	228	50.67
7	No compound	211	46.89
8	Lack of toys for children to play	152	33.78
9	No proper place for cooking	117	26.00
10	No ground for outdoor game	108	24.00
II	Work stress		
1	Excessive record maintenance	399	88.67
2	More work from schemes (Bhagyalaxmi, Sabla, IGMSY)	342	76.00
3	Work from other departments	302	67.11
4	Providing Adhar card to villagers	123	27.33
5	No time for providing pre-school education due to more work	112	24.89
III	Problems from beneficiaries		
1	Not providing correct documents/ information	354	78.67
2	Mothers will not attend meeting, health and nutrition education programme	323	71.78
3	Children won't come in time	132	29.33
4	Parents didn't send their children to take weight in anganwadi	121	26.89
5	Lack of cleanliness of children	107	23.78
6	Irregular attendance	97	21.56
7	Problem during distribution of supplementary nutrition	83	18.44
IV	Interruptions while working in office		
1	Pressurization of providing immediate report	231	51.33
2	Not providing information at right time by higher officials	182	40.44
3	Some government departments pressurize on AWWs to collect village information through survey	172	38.22

Multiple answers possible

Children won't come in time and parents didn't send their children to take weight in anganwadi expressed by 29.33 and 26.89 per cent respectively, Lack of cleanliness of children (23.78 %), irregular attendance (21.56) and problem during distribution of supplementary nutrition (18.44 %).

AWWs also expressed constraints faced while working in office. Pressurization of providing immediate report was mentioned by 51.33 per cent of respondents, not providing information at right time by higher officials and some government departments pressurize on AWWs to collect village information through survey were expressed by 40.44 per cent and 38.22 per cent of respondents.

These findings are in accordance to the results found by Meenal *et al.*, (2007), Patil and Doibale (2012), Sarbjit (2012) and Parmar *et al.*, (2014) who found respondents were facing the problems towards inadequate honorarium, excessive record maintenance, excessive workload and lack of infrastructure facilities.

It is concluded that, providing scientific knowledge regarding children's growth and development and nutrients in the food will enhance. Anganwadi workers knowledge in turn her work efficiency will be improved. So as a intervention a booklet titled "*Shishuvina belavanige mattu aahar poshakamshagala kaipidi*" was distributed to the respondents and respective supervisors. Anganwadi workers also provide children (0 to 6 years) the ideal environment for development and also they can disseminate this knowledge to

SHG members since AWW is involved in formation of SHGs. Work performance of an employee depends on job satisfaction so it is necessary to provide the basic benefits they deserve.

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