

Research Article

Working Performance of Anganwadi Workers – A Study in Hanmakonda District of Telangana State

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Abstract

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is one of the India's flagship programs for child development, health, and nutrition which were introduced by Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1975. The objectives of the Scheme very much attended the health, nutrition, child and pregnant women care issues, pre-primary education for the children at gross roots level which is caused for the all-round development of the child below 6 years. But in practice, the services are not adequately fulfilling the expected outcomes of the scheme. The performance of the AWWs is also shows average. This paper focused on opinion of the respondents on ICDS services and performance of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) at gross root level. And this paper also attempts to identify the challenges being faced by the Anganwadi Workers and try to find out the solutions for the challenges.

Keywords: ICDS, performance, Anganwadis, Women, Children, etc.

1.Introduction:

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is one of India's flagship programs for child development, health, and nutrition which were launched on 2nd October, 1975 by the Government of India under the leadership of the than prime minister of India Indira Gandhi. This is a centrally sponsored scheme which is executed by the state governments. This is the biggest community-based welfare scheme in the world and is aimed at children below six years of age and pregnant, lactating, and adolescent women in the age group of 16 to 44 years.

2. The major objectives of the scheme are:

1. To improve the nutritional status and health of all beneficiaries, including children in the age group of 0 to 6 years pregnant and lactating women.
2. To cut down the rate of mortality and morbidity.
3. To undertake efforts to ensure the overall growth of a child, and
4. To impart nutritional and health education to mothers.

To fulfil the above objectives the following services are being provided by the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) the services include:

1. Supplementary Nutrition
2. Health and Nutrition Check-Up
3. Immunization
4. Non- Formal Education for Children in Pre- School
5. Health and Nutrition Education
6. Referral Services

Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) are the key frontline functionaries responsible for the implementation of ICDS services at the community level. One anganwadi centre can be started for each 1000 population in Urban and Rural areas and 700 in case of Tribal habitations. Their role in provision of services and organizing the communities is crucial. Their performance directly influences the health, nutrition, and education outcomes of children and women (Rao, M., & Reddy, S.). They act as primary respondents for all the government programmes at the grass roots level. In Telangana, there are 149 ICDS projects are functioning under them 35,700 anganwadi centers are functioning. Among them **31,711 are main centres and 3989 are mini centres. Under these 34,456 Anganwadi Workers, 26,127 helpers are serving in Telangana state.**

Warangal Urban currently known as Hanmakonda is a district which is having more urban features. It consists 14 mandala and 170 villages. According to the 2011 census their population is 1,080,858. To serve them, there are 7 ICDS Projects in this district. Under the 7, there are 1605 main and 291 Mini Anganwadi enterers are there.

3. Review of Literature:

1. Dayanand Singh and Kusum Lata Gaur (2015): The study measured beneficiaries' satisfaction with Jaipur Zone 'Anganwadi' Workers. The majority of lactating mothers were satisfied with AWW services for themselves and their children.
2. Despite their critical role in supporting millions of women, children, and the sick, AWWs are underpaid and lack retirement benefits, often living below the poverty line.

4. Need of the Study:

ICDS is one of the core projects in terms of Women and Child development; they are the primary respondents at gross root level who can provide quality nutrition food for the children and pregnant women. There is a difference between rural and urban performance. In Urban majority of the ICDS beneficiaries are working class people who are mostly living in urban slums. Most of them migrate from one place to another place in searching of the employment. In this situation, how far the urban people are satisfied with the facilities provided by the Anganwadi Workers and the problems facing by the Anganwadi workers in rendering services is need to be studied.

5. Objectives:

1. To find out the opinion of the beneficiaries on performance of Anganwadi Workers in Various areas.
2. To find out the challenges faced by the Anganwadi Workers in Telangana State.

6. Data collection:

For the current study the data was collected from 90 stakeholders in Warangal Urban currently Hanmakonda District randomly. Among the 90 respondents, 30 respondents are Anganwadi Workers and 60 respondents are the beneficiaries of ICDS. The structured Interview Schedule was utilized for the study with about 10 questions.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

1. Opinion of the Beneficiaries:

Response	Good	Average	Bad	TOTAL
Enrolment Procedure	13 (21.7%)	38 (63.3%)	09 (15%)	60 (100%)
Food Provision	27 (45%)	19 (31.7%)	14 (23.3%)	60 (100%)
Health Facilities Provision	23 (38.3%)	29 (48.4%)	08 (13.3%)	60 (100%)
Awareness on Nutrition food	15 (25%)	14 (23.3%)	31 (51.7%)	60 (100%)

Caring of the Children	24 (40%)	27 (45%)	09 (15%)	60 (100%)
Caring of the Pregnant Women	34 (56.7%)	19 (31.7%)	07 (11.6%)	60 (100%)
Behaviour of the AWWs towards beneficiaries	16 (26.6%)	31 (51.7%)	13 (21.7%)	60 (100%)
Performance in Pre-Primary Education	14 (23.3%)	09 (15%)	37 (61.7%)	60 (100%)
Usage of Technology enabled services	18 (30%)	13 (21.7%)	29 (48.3%)	60 (100%)
Provision of Services at Door Step	17 (28.3%)	12 (20%)	31 (51.7%)	60 (100%)
Overall Performance of AWWs Workers	12 (20%)	37 (61.7%)	11 (18.3%)	60 (100%)

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the opinion of the respondents on services provided by the Anganwadi Workers. Out of total number of 60 respondents,

1. Majority of them 38(63.3%) said the enrolment procedure in Anganwadi Centers is Average, followed by 13 (21.7%) of them said it is good and 09 (15%) of them the enrolment procedure is bad and not beneficiary friendly, Hence, the enrolment process need to be revised.
2. Food provision is the major tack of the AWWs. 27 (45%) of the respondents felt the food services provided by the respondents are good, followed by 19 (31.7%) said it is Average and 14 (23.3%) said it is bad.
3. Health facilities along with ANMs are another assigned work of the AWWs. Out of 60, majority of them 29 (48.4%) said the health facilities are average, followed by 23 (38.3%) of the said it is good, and 08 (13.3%) of them said it is bad. Integration of ANMs and AWWs is mandatory if we want to get desired results.
4. In caring of the Children, majority of the respondents 27 (45%) said the AWWs performance in Child caring is Average, 24 (40%) of the respondents felt the AWWs performance in Child care is good and remaining 09 (15%) felt AWWs performance in Child care is bad. The training on child care is required for the AWWs to get more results.
5. Provide awareness on Nutrition food and Brest feeding is also one of the major works of Anganwadi Workers. 31 (51.7%) of the respondents felt the performance of AWWs is bad/poor in creating awareness on nutritional food, followed by 15 (25%) of the respondents felt it is good and the remaining 14 (23.3%) felt it is average. The supervisors must address the AWWs in this area which is related to health of the entire family.
6. 34 (56.7%) of the respondents felt the performance of AWWs in Pregnant Women care is Good, followed by 19 (31.7%) of the respondents felt the AWWs performance in Pregnant Women care is average and the remaining 07(11.6%) of them felt the AWWs performance in pregnant women care is bad.
7. 31 (51.7%) of the respondents felt the AWWs behaviour towards them is Average, followed by 16 (26.6%) of them felt the AWWs behaviour is Good and remaining 13 (21.7%) of the AWWs workers behaviour is bad towards the beneficiaries. The behaviour modification is required here.
8. Pre- Primary education is another major objective of Anganwadi's. 37 (61.7%) of the respondents felt that the AWWs performance in provision of pre-primary education is bad, followed by 14 (23.3%) of the respondents felt the AWWs performance is Good in

provision of Pre-Primary Education and remaining 09 (15%) of them felt the AWWs performance in provision of pre-primary education is average. Since, many of them only qualified SSC, the proper Teaching skills are required to get desired outcomes. So, teaching training sessions are also need to be conducted for the AWWs to strengthen the pre-primary education.

9. Today majority of the ICDS services are interlinked with the technology enabled applications. Majority of the respondents 29 (48.3%) felt their performance in utilization of Technology enabled services is bad, followed by 18 (30%) of them felt their usage of technology enabled services is good and remaining 13 (21.7%) of the respondents felt their usage of technology is average. Technology related training sessions are required for the AWWs and the Applications must be design as User Friendly.
10. One of the prime works of the AWWs is provide nutrition food at the door step of the beneficiaries who are unable to come to the Centre. 31 (51.7%) of the beneficiaries said their AWWs performance in provision of food at their door step is bad, followed by 17 (28.3%) of the beneficiaries felt their services are good in that area and the remaining 12 (20%) of them said the AWWs performance is average in this area. The mechanism of the delivering of services at door step to the beneficiaries need to be updated.
11. 37 (61.7%) of the respondents said the overall performance of Anganwadi Workers is Average, followed by 12 (20%) said it is average and 11 (18.3%) said it is bad. Hence, the policies should be altered towards the effective implementation of this Scheme.

Table: 2 Responses of the Anganwadi Workers

Challenges	Number	Percentage
Over Workload	24	80%
Inadequate Remuneration	22	73.3%
Maintenance of many records	19	63.3%
Digitalization of Services	19	63.3%
Inadequate Infrastructure	17	56.6%
Identification of Beneficiaries with migration	06	20%
Lack of Community Support	08	26.6%
Involving them in other Works	17	56.6%
Frequent meetings with officials	16	53.3%
Work life Balance	21	70%
TOTAL	30	100%

Source: Field data

The above table shows the challenges faced by the Anganwadi Workers in provision of services effectively. Out of total 30 respondents who are Anganwadi Workers, 24 (80%) of the respondents felt with the over workload they cannot fulfil the desired assignments which are provided for them, 22 (73.3%) of them are not happy with the remuneration that they are getting, they are getting relatively low remuneration for the work they are doing. 19 (63.3%) of the feel that maintenance of around 12 records kills there time in rendering services effectively, again 19 (63.3%) felt the digitalization of services are another major challenges for them since their education background is about SSC. 17 (56.6%) felt that with inadequate infrastructure and rented building they failed in rendering quality services for the beneficiaries. Migration is another key challenge that the AWWs are being faced mostly in urban areas. But the frequent migration rate is comparatively less and only 06 (20%) of the respondents felt challenge with this. Community support is key factor for the execution of services. Still 08 (26.6%) of the Anganwadi workers failed in getting the support from the communities. 17 (56.6%) of the AWWs said they are involved in other works also other than they actually assigned which causes for the serious challenges for them in delivering their actual services, frequent meetings with

the higher officials is also one of the main challenge of them. Work life Balance is another challenge that the Anganwadi workers are being faced. With excessive workload they didn't find the time for their family and personal life which affects them mentally and caused for the decreasing of performance.

8. Conclusion:

The performance of Anganwadi Workers can influence the families' especially poor families' health and well-being. At gross root level the performance of the Anganwadi workers shows average in majority of the aspects like enrolment, provision of nutrition food, health facilities etc. and bad in creation of awareness, pre-primary education, and usage of Technology and provision of services at door step. This is a fact that the AWWs are facing challenges with the overwork load, stress, lesser remuneration and lack of Work life balance. The implementation strategies need to revise in ICDS which provides assurance and quality time to the AWWs to render their services with interest. The workload for the AWWs needs to revise and alter those duties to some other persons, and then only the expected quality can get from the AWWs. Otherwise, the actual objectives of the ICDS scheme many not be fulfilled.

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