

CHAPTER – I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

India is a multicultural nation with high-level of regional inequality, health and nutrition inequality, social hierarchy, which are pervasive and persistent [1] . After Independence Government of India realized the utmost urgency and importance of giving highest priority to develop human resources and found it most essential to evolve a national program for the overall development of our children who constitute the most precious asset of country's future. The most valuable asset of a nation is its human resource. Countries who have learnt to invest on its human resources are today the most progressive and developed nations. India has also recognized this and has made several efforts to improve the quality of its human resources. The Constitution of India provides a framework for care and protection of women and children and it mentions that states shall make special provisions for children.

The ICDS is the World's largest community based outreach program running unilaterally all over the country, which offers a package of health, nutrition and education services to children below the age of 6 years, pregnant and nursing mothers

Anganwadi worker (AWW) is a multipurpose worker employed under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, India. They are the community's primary link with health services and an important agent for behavioral change for improving QoL. The AWW undergo training at the beginning of their career and once in every 3 years, and this training includes various issues regarding the improvement of physical, psychological, social, environmental, and other aspects of life.

An Anganawadi worker is selected from within the local community. Her responsibility and job function include ensuring key maternal and child services like supplementary nutrition immunization, periodic health check-ups referral, non formal pre school education, giving advice on the nutrition and the common ailments to adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women. Besides caring the mother and child an Anganwadi worker also has to be involved in the pulse polio Immunization programme the house to house survey etc.

Now their responsibilities and functions include surveys and disease control programs that require door to door visits beyond the working hours which further stress them. Performing and discharging many duties in a limited time may lead to stress and discontent among the AWWs. Stress may lead to dissatisfaction, poor motivation and a decreased efficiency. There is a lack of information on the Anganwadi workers occupational stress. Such information would be important in improving the quality of the service and the optimal utilization of the existing Anganwadi workers by taking measures to address the issues. Thus, in this study an attempt was made to assess the level of job stress and personal efficiency and also to understand the various factors which were associated with job stress which could be responsible for the sub-optimal performance of the Anganwadi workers (Desai, 2012).

The Anganwadi worker (AWW) is the community based voluntary frontline worker of the ICDS programme. Selected from the community, she assumes a pivotal role due to close and continuous contact with the beneficiaries. The output of the ICDS scheme is to a great extent dependant on the profile of the key functionary i.e. the AWW, her qualification, experience, skills, and attitude. training etc. The rate of rural development in India, is lesser than urban development. By rural development, here, we mean the actions which are mainly taken for the socio – economic development of the rural areas of the country. It is a process of improving the quality of life and economic well being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Rural development is also characterized by its emphasis on locally produced economic development strategies. India is a country suffering from malnourishment, high mortality rate & poverty. The problem is high in the rural parts of the country. In order to counter the health and mortality issues gripping the rural parts of the country, a need of medical and health care experts was felt by the government of India (Dasgupta, 2013).

A comprehensive and integrated early childhood services were regarded as investment in future economic and social progress of the country for both the urban and the rural areas of our country. Accordingly a scheme for integrated child care services was worked out for implementation in all states.

The major problem faced by AWWs, though they are the basic functionaries of ICDS, are less pay honorarium (administration related), frequent travelling (Infrastructure related) and communication problems for convincing community people as well as employees (man power related). Further, the top most reason for job satisfaction mentioned by AWWs was “they loved working with children” and the most dampening reason was “less number of public holidays”. Further the relationship between problems and job satisfaction faced by AWWs was found as a result that when job related problems decrease the level of job satisfaction increase. Therefore the study suggest that to improve job satisfaction of AWWs the authorities should provide proper honorarium and job security to AWWs for their work. The efficiency of AWWs should be increased by improving their infrastructure facility, reducing reporting work and travelling.