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Job involvement of anganwadi workers: A study from south India

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Abstract

Effective involvement of anganwadi workers is essential in disseminating the services at community level. In this view point the present study was carried out to evaluate job involvement of anganwadi workers in Tirupati and Srikalahasthi areas of Chittoor district both in rural and urban areas. Kanungo, 1982 research tool containing three scales viz., Job Involvement Questionnaire, Job Involvement Semantic Differential and Job Involvement Graphic scale were adapted. The data gathered well demonstrated effective job involvement of all anganwadi workers irrespective any socio-demographic variable selected such as age, education, training and habitat. However, younger women performed better than anganwadi workers of more than 30 years. Graduated women scored higher than non-graduated. It was observed that urban anganwadi workers involved relatively higher than rural anganwadi workers. Whatever might be the differences, training also observed to be crucial in imparting better job skills and involvement for performing the job much more effectively.

Keywords: Job involvement, Anganwadi worker, ICDS, India

Introduction

The Anganwadi is the focal point for delivery of ICDS services to children and mothers. An Anganwadi normally covers a population of 1000 in both rural and urban areas and 700 in tribal areas. Services at Anganwadi center (AWC) are delivered by an Anganwadi Worker (AWW), who is a part-time honorary worker. She is a woman of same locality, chosen by the people, having educational qualification of middle school or Matric or even primary level in some areas ^[1].

The job responsibilities of Anganwadi workers were defined way back in 1975. These have stood to test of time, however a lot of changes have occurred and many new policies and programs have come up to keep pace with the time and newer development of job functions of Anganwadi workers and other functionaries. The functionaries have been redefined to enrich the job and to make these more relevant to the needs and aspiration of the women and the children ^[2].

Every occupation is having the possibility of burnout the service and helping profession are seemed to be particularly susceptible. The anganwadi worker (AWW) is the community based voluntary frontline worker of the ICDS program. Selected from the community, she assumes a pivotal role due to her 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, attitude, training etc. The anganwadi workers are required to perform the main functions. Attainment of Integrated Child Development Scheme Services goals depends heavily upon the effectiveness of anganwadi workers ^[3]. Based on this background the present work was focused on assessment of job involvement of anganwadi worker using the relevant research tool.

Methodology

The present study was intended to assess the job involvement of anganwadi workers. The study was conducted from Tirupati and Srikalahasthi ICDS projects of 65 and 50 centers respectively with a total sample size of 115 anganwadi workers. Job involvement is a "performance self-esteem contingency". Accordingly, job involvement is the extent to which the self-esteem of individuals is affected by their level of performance at work ^[4].

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The three scales developed by Kanungo,1982 viz., Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ), Job Involvement Semantic Differential (JISD) and Job Involvement Graphic (JIG) scale were adapted in the present study.

Job Involvement Questionnaire(JIQ) consisted of fourteen statements related to job involvement such as overtime stay to finish job, job only a small part, involved much personally, avoidance of extra duties, immense satisfaction in dealing women problems, interests centered around job, job oriented personal life goals, very central for existence, other activities more satisfactory etc. A six point agree-disagree response format was used and the lower score represented higher job involvement of the anganwadi workers.

The Job Involvement Semantic Differential (JISD) comprised of twelve bipolar items to measure job involvement. For example, the present job is – important vs unimportant which need to be evaluated on seven-point scale. The other bipolar items of such were unmotivating vs motivating, bored vs excited etc. The scores on JISD scale were considered in the reverse order in which the higher scores were indicated by higher job involvement. The respondent was directed to circle the number against each item that closely described the attitudes towards job.

Job Involvement Graphic (JIG) was formatted with seven boxes each had two circles depicted side by side with

varying degrees of overlapping. The first circle represented the anganwadi worker and the other circle with job relationship. At one extreme (box-1) the two circles were entirely separated denoting far relationship and the other extreme (box-7) with totally overlapping circles denoting close relationship. This scale with seven-point response format indicated the higher score with higher job involvement.

Results and discussion

The job involvement of anganwadi workers was evaluated by adapting Kanungo, 1982 research tool containing three different scales. The anganwadi workers were provided with prior instructions to fill the scales. The data obtained was gathered, interpreted and discussed separately under different sub-heads for each scale.

Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ)

The job involvement was evaluated from the anganwadi workers in view of various socio-demographic variables like age, education, training and habitat. The mean scores and differences computed by t-values for each socio-demographic variable were tabulated and presented in table no- 1.

Table 1: Mean scores of job involvement of anganwadi workers measured by Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ) in relation to socio-demographic variables

Socio-demographic variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value
Age (Years)			
20 -30	1.74	0.53	1.39 ^{NS}
>30	1.91	0.61	
Education			
Up to SSC	1.87	0.55	2.47 ^{**}
Up to Graduation	1.56	0.56	
Training			
Untrained	1.81	0.49	0.22 ^{NS}
Trained	1.78	0.58	
Habitat			
Rural	2.00	0.64	3.32 ^{**}
Urban	1.63	0.47	

Note: ^{**}:P<0.05 ^{NS}: Not Significant

Lower score on JIQ identified with high job involvement. The results from the table clearly indicated that the anganwadi workers showed better involvement towards their job as evidenced by low mean scores. The computed t-values calculated for the differences in the socio-demographic variables revealed no significant differences with age and training. But highly significant differences were noticed at five percent level with regard to education and habitat.

Though the differences were not differed significantly, the findings illustrated that the younger aged women of less than 30 years involved more in their job roles than the higher age counterparts. This probably due to their natural activeness levels, initiation and enthusiasm associated at beginning stages. However striking variations were found with the level of education, where the graduated anganwadi workers shown more involvement in job. The well known fact that education certainly lead better knowledge and practical skills in any individual and might inculcated better

job skills among graduated anganwadi workers than non-graduated. The results not represented significant impact on training but the mean scores indicated that the training provided a definite improvement on job performance. With regard to habitat, urban workers were better than rural probably due to their exposure towards varied opportunities available in the town.

The overall findings demonstrated that the anganwadi workers irrespective of age, education, training and habitat performed their job roles effectively. Providing suitable training programs, extending facilities and incentives may be more helpful in fetching still higher job involvement.

Anganwadi worker is the key person and is charged with multiple responsibilities for achieving the targeted goals. Anganwadi workers are the main link between the community and ICDS schemes. So the success of the schemes largely depends on the effectiveness of the Anganwadi workers. The Anganwadi worker in ICDS programme assumes a pivotal role in Anganwadi centre due

to her close and continuous contact with the community. By virtue of her position in the community the Anganwadi worker has more chances to interact and to educate the mothers. The study was carried out at the urban Integrated Childhood Development Services Scheme (ICDS) block of Aurangabad city from June 2006 to June 2007. They had best knowledge about nutrition and health education (77.14%). Majority of AWWs were beyond 40 years of age, matriculate) experienced, having more than 50% of knowledge related to their job^[5].

The field survey was conducted in Taiwanese community health volunteers who had much closer contact with community to understand the relationship between the personality traits and the job satisfaction and job involvement. A cross sectional design was used with the sample size of 200 health workers. Data analysis was carried out using the SPSS/WIN10.0 statistical software package. The results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation between job involvement and locus of control

($r=0.223$, $p<0.01$) and achievement orientation ($r=0.410$, $p<0.001$) and there was a moderately significant relationship between job satisfaction and job involvement($r=0.434$, $p<0.01$)^[6]. The current findings also coincided with this study as concurrent with the high job involvement among anganwadi workers irrespective of any socio-demographic variable who were locus of control among their local areas.

Job Involvement Semantic Differential (JISD)

The job involvement was also assessed through JISD which scale contained bipolar items on seven point hedonic scale to identify their attitude towards job. The higher mean score indicated with high job involvement. The anganwadi workers were interviewed and asked to circle the appropriate number nearer to their attitude levels. The mean scores thus obtained were tabulated in relation to different socio-demographic variables in table no-2. The computed t-values for the mean differences were also presented in the same table.

Table 2: Mean scores of job involvement of anganwadi workers measured by Job Involvement Semantic Differential (JISD) in relation to socio-demographic variables

Socio-demographic variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value
Age (Years)			
20 -30	6.58	0.78	0.38 ^{NS}
>30	6.63	0.54	
Education			
Up to SSC	6.63	0.59	0.59 ^{NS}
Up to Graduation	6.51	1.01	
Training			
Untrained	6.57	0.89	0.02 ^{NS}
Trained	6.59	0.73	
Habitat			
Rural	6.52	0.52	1.43 ^{NS}
Urban	6.70	0.77	

Note: ^{NS}: Not Significant

The findings well demonstrated high mean scores among all anganwadi workers irrespective of socio-demographic variable selected denoting good self-esteem towards their job. However, no significant differences were noticed between groups within each socio-demographic variable. The results thus illustrated that all age group members irrespective of education and training both in rural and urban areas felt that job played a crucial role in leading better life. That means the job became centered and closely integrated in maintaining good self-esteem as they felt important, motivating and satisfactory. Further extending good support from the government in the form of providing better honorarium, good infra-structure facilities, appropriate training may be more helpful to perform the job much satisfactorily.

The cross-sectional exploratory study was assessed on the performance of Anganwadi workers in selected Anganwadi centers of a North Indian city. Tools used for data collection were performance appraisal checklist to appraise the performance of Anganwadi workers, and interview schedule

to assess the satisfaction level of ICDS beneficiaries. They were good in rapport building and record maintenance. The performance of Anganwadi workers was rated as poor only in two of the activities: home visiting and area mapping. This might be due to lack of time available with the workers as more time was spent in other activities. Satisfaction level was highest with referral services, preschool education and services for adolescents^[7]. The present study though not evaluated for the major activities of anganwadi workers, the findings clearly indicated overall good job involvement and satisfaction among the selected anganwadi workers.

Job Involvement Graphic (JIG)

The job relationship of the anganwadi workers with their job was represented graphically by seven boxes with two different circles of varying degrees of overlapping. The higher score was associated with higher close relationship with the job. The mean values obtained and the calculated differences with t-values for each socio-demographic variable were depicted in table no-3.

Table 3: Mean scores of job involvement of anganwadi workers measured by Job Involvement Graphic (JIG) scale in relation to socio-demographic variables

Socio-demographic variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value
Age (Years)			
20 -30	6.48	0.61	1.12 ^{NS}
>30	6.61	0.58	
Education			
Up to SSC	6.55	0.62	0.95 ^{NS}
Up to Graduation	6.43	0.56	
Training			
Untrained	6.35	0.75	1.07 ^{NS}
Trained	6.56	0.58	
Habitat			
Rural	6.40	0.63	1.35 ^{NS}
Urban	6.82	0.40	

Note: ^{NS}: Not Significant

The mean scores of job involvement measured by graphic (JIQ) scale for different socio-demographic variables also found to be high representing relatively better close relationship with their jobs. This showed that majority of the anganwadi workers involved satisfactorily in their job in relation to anganwadi center. The reason might be that maximum of the anganwadi workers selected were local candidates and residing as far as possible much closer to the anganwadi center and integrated with close association with the community and enabled to perform the job efficiently.

The study conducted at Ahmedabad city concluded that the most of the Anganwadi Workers were performing their basic task such as preschool education materials, beneficiary's enrollment, supplementary nutrition, Referral services, Nutrition and Health Education, Community Participation, Reporting and Record maintenance regularly. 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 suggested 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 traveling [8].

The ICDS program is executed through dedicated cadre of female workers named Anganwadi workers (AWWs), who are chosen from the local community. The performance of AWCs and MCH services delivered by AWCs still needs improvement. The findings help in providing some insight into the existing situation. A holistic approach is needed to optimize the functioning of the scheme, identifying various issues concerning the scheme as a whole will help in reworking the policies related to women and child development [9].

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 Quality of Life (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. Therefore, they can assess their QoL in a rational manner. A cross-sectional study was conducted from September to December 2011. All the AWWs from Mandya city were included. The World Health Organization Quality of Life—short version (WHOQoL-BREF) in Kannada, the local language, was administered to assess their quality of life. Of the four domains of quality of life, the social and physical domains were slightly higher than the environment and psychological domains. AWWs had higher scores among the social and physical domains compared with the environment and psychological domains. Majority of the AWWs felt that their QoL was good [10].

The Integrated Child Development Service Scheme (ICDS) is one of the initiatives taken up by the Central Government, which provides a package of six services viz., supplementary nutrition, immunization, health checkups, referral services, nutrition and health education for mothers/pregnant women, nursing mothers and to adolescent girls (kishoris) through anganwadi workers. The responsibilities of anganwadi workers are ever increasing these days. They have certain prescribed responsibilities other than the above mentioned services in the anganwadi. The study was undertaken with the objective of assessing the role and responsibilities of anganwadi workers in Mysore district. The tool used for the study is questionnaire. Among 235, around 122 anganwadi workers representing grama panchayats of each taluk had been covered under the study. The results found that anganwadi workers were very active in rendering their services to the beneficiaries [11]. Similarly the current survey conducted also expressed effective role of anganwadi workers in job involvement in executing their services effectively.

Conclusion

The job involvement analyzed through three different scales represented high job involvement of anganwadi workers at their centers. Though all of them scored better scores with not significant differences all the time, the results indicated relatively better involvement among young aged women as well as graduated anganwadi workers. Urban workers found to be involved higher than rural women due to better access towards varied facilities. Training was one of the

components that would be considered for much more involvement in undertaking job responsibility.

The partnership at community level, between frontline workers of different sectors and community groups, can make the vision a reality. The Anganwadi Worker is the community - based voluntary frontline workers of the ICDS Program. Selected from the community, she assumes the pivotal role due to her close and continuous contact with the beneficiaries. Anganwadi workers play a role of bridge between the community and the ICDS. They play an active role in bringing the services to the door step of the beneficiaries. A holistic approach is needed to optimize the functioning of the scheme, identifying various issues concerning the scheme as a whole will help in reworking the policies related to women and child development. A motivated, skilled and satisfied worker is essential for improving the quality of services. In recent years, researchers have evaluated the ICDS program at different sites and suggested changes for better functioning of AWCs time to time, but the age old problems of infrastructure, logistics, lack of quality of services, lack of minimum amenities etc. are still persisting that require urgent attention of policy makers.

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