



Qualitative Assessment of Classroom Composition and Teacher's Disposition in ICDS AWCs and effect of Intervention on The Knowledge Level of AWWS.

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Abstract : A study was carried out in 200 AWCs from rural areas of Akluj block of Maharashtra state for their quality assessment. Out of 200 AWWS, 50 AWWS were selected for capacity building intervention. With the help of adapted standardized tool and self-devised rating scale, data is obtained with regard to quality of Classroom Composition and Quality of Teacher's Disposition in ICDS AWCs and knowledge level of AWWS. Results revealed that teacher-child ratio and class supervision in most of the AWCs was of good quality, whereas; age wise composition was of average quality. In teacher's disposition sensitivity and awareness about gender and other socially disadvantaged groups such as tribal, SC and OBC were found to be of good quality. Statistically highly significant improvement in the Knowledge level of AWWS with regard to teachers disposition was found in pre and post intervention testing.

Keywords : ICDS, AWCS, AWWS, Early Childhood Education, quality, class composition, teacher's disposition

INTRODUCTION:

ICDS is the largest project which offers preschool education to most of the Indian children especially in rural areas through its vast countrywide network of Anganwadi centers. Importance of preschool education is well recognized by various researchers all over the world. Benefits of preschool education in building educated human capital and productive society is a proven research. Quality preschool education helps in reducing dropout rate at primary education since the children who have attended preschools show better adjustment and

better performance in the school as compared to those who have not attended it and these children also score high on IQ points (Burnett 1998, Chaudhary2006).

Children from the under privileged sections of the society are brought up in deprived environments in the first six years of life and this can hamper their intellectual and language development. Unfortunately a large majority of children in our country grow up in extremely unprivileged conditions. Effective organization of early childhood education programme can compensate for child's deprivation at home and can truly help the children to build a strong foundation for later development of their life.

Expert all over the world advocate for the provision of high quality childcare and education for better child outcomes (Love et al 2003 and Peisner Feinberg 2004). In the Indian context, along with many other components Teachers –child ratio and teachers disposition in the class are the most important quality components mentioned by Swaminathan (1993) .

In light of the above, present study was undertaken to measure the quality of ICDS Anganwadi centers, in terms of class composition and teacher's disposition in ICDS AWCs. Plan, develop and intervene the programme of innovative strategies for the AWWs for the efficient use of available class composition and teacher's disposition in ICDS AWCs and find the effect of Intervention on the knowledge level of AWWs. Keeping in view, the present study was designed and investigation is carried out on basis of following objectives:

Objectives-

- 1.To assess the quality of Classroom Composition in AWC's
- 2.To find the quality of Teacher's disposition in AWC's
- 3.To study the effect of intervention on knowledge level of AWWs with respect to improve the quality in classroom composition and teachers disposition in ICDS AWCs.

METHODOLOGY:

The investigation was carried out in rural areas of Solapur district, Taluka -Malshiras, from Maharashtra state. For quality assessment, Anganwadi centers (AWCs) and Anganwadi workers (AWWs) from Akluj block were selected. Purposive sampling method was used for this research. For quality assessments of AWCs, out of 233 AWCs in Akluj block, 200 AWCs were selected. Out of 200 AWWs, 50 AWWs were selected for further intervention.

Tool for Quality data collection:

1.A standardized tool named ‘The Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment Scale’ (ECEQAS), 2012 developed by Centre for Early Childhood Education and Development (CECED), Ambedkar University New Delhi was adapted for data collection. Scoring for the responses is as follows.

- Poor category – 0 score
- Average category -1 score
- Good category – 2 score

For finding the quality of Anganwadi centers, 200 Anganwadi centers were categorized in three groups i.e. Anganwadi centers in poor quality, average quality and good quality by using the following statistical method

- Poor quality = Arithmetic mean - Standard deviation
- Average quality = In between high and low
- Good quality = Arithmetic mean + Standard deviation

2.A rating scale entitled ‘Assessment of knowledge of AWWs for quality enhancement in AWCs’ was designed to obtain information about teacher’s knowledge on overall quality of AWCs.

With the help of above mentioned ECEQAS- 2012 tool data is collected by visiting 200 AWCS, each by observing it for a day. Fifty AWWs were pretested on their knowledge for the class composition and teachers’ disposition in ICDS AWCs. The observations obtained on the quality of AWCs and teacher’s knowledge was analyzed. The innovative strategies package was developed and these teachers were given capacity building intervention workshops in two phases - one by researcher and another by experts in order to upgrade the efficiency of teachers in class composition and teachers disposition in ICDS AWCs. These AWWs were then post tested to assess the impact of intervention on their knowledge level.

The data obtained at the base line was tabulated, coded and analyzed statistically. Student’s *t* test was used to test the significant difference between the means of two groups. The scores for each category were totaled, compared and the mean scores, t-test, were obtained and data is presented.

Result and Discussion:**TABLE 1. QUALITY OF CLASSROOM COMPOSITION IN ICDS AWCS**

N=200

Sr. No.	Classroom composition	Quality of AWC's in mean percentage		
		Poor	Moderate	Good
1	Class supervision	2.00	24.0	74.00
2	Age wise composition	11.00	87.00	1.00
3	Teacher-child ratio	2.00	19.50	78.00

Quality of classroom composition is shown in Table 1. Teacher-child ratio and class supervision in most of the AWCs was of good quality, whereas; age wise composition was of average quality.

Class composition includes three important aspects i.e. class supervision, age wise composition of the class and teacher child ratio. In 87.00 percent of AWCs all 3 to 6 years old children were sitting together , in 11.00percent AWCs children between 2/3 and 5/6 years of age were sitting together, whereas; only in 2 (1.00%) AWCs children between 3 to 6 years age children were sitting age wise.

Contradictory to above points 78.00 percent of AWCs had one teacher for less than 25 students, 19.50 percent AWCs had one teacher for 25 to 40 students, and only in 2.00percent AWCs had teacher for more than 40 students.

In 74.00 percent AWCs the class was supervised by AWWs and in 24.00 percent, AWCs it was supervised by helper, only in 2.00 percent AWCs older child was seen supervising the class when teacher was absent.

TABLE 2. QUALITY OF TEACHER'S DISPOSITION IN AWCS

N=200

Sr. No.	Sensitivity and awareness about	Quality of AWC's in mean percentage			
		Poor	Moderate	Good	Others
1	Gender	1.50	18.50	67.00	13.00
2	Children with special needs	00	0.50	1.50	98.00
3	Other socially disadvantaged groups such as tribal, SC and OBC	5.50	20.00	67.50	7.00

Table 2 reflects quality of teacher's disposition in AWCs. Teacher is at main position in preschool education programme as she is the role model and main facilitator for laying attitudinal base line in innocent children at her hand. Her position in the class has long term impact on the overall development of the children.

In terms of gender sensitivity and awareness in 67 percent of the AWCs no gender biases, no discriminatory act was observed during conducting activities and at the time of interaction, while in 18.5percent AWCs such biases was notice at one incident, and in only 3 (1.5%) AWCs such bias interaction was observed for more than three occasions. Here teacher continuously preferred girls for performing in front of the class. In13percent of AWCs no interaction between teacher and child was observed hence these are excluded from the fixed quality criteria for gender awareness.

From no discriminatory act of teachers sensitiveness towards socially disadvantaged group such as tribal, SC, OBC was reflected in 67.5percent of AWCs, where as in 20percent of AWCs discriminatory act was observed at one occasion. In 7 percent AWCs teacher and child belonged to the same caste so sensitivity regarding castes of other socially disadvantaged groups such as tribal, SC and OBC could not be observed.

In 2 (1%) AWCs teacher showed her sensitivity regarding the needs of these children at one incident. In 98 percent of AWCs children with special needs were not present.

Table 3. Mean percent, standard deviation and ANOVA for knowledge level after the intervention of innovative strategies for AWWs about quality in AWCS

N=200

Sr. no.	Quality parameters		Mean	Standard deviation	df	F-value	Result
3	Class Composition	Pre Test	65.73	15.59	49	1.54	Non - Significant
		Post Test	69.33	17.81			
9	Teachers' disposition	Pre Test	57.20	17.17	49	3.78*	Significant
		Post Test	68.00	14.42			

*Significant at $p \leq 0.05$

Table 3.exhibits mean percent, standard deviation and ANOVA for knowledge level of AWWs about quality in AWCs.

Results reflected that there is no significance difference found in class composition in pre and post intervention knowledge level of AWWs.

In the teachers' disposition, focus was given on teacher's role in dealing with children coming from all strata of society, bringing gender equality, including children with special needs showed significant increase in knowledge of AWWs in post testing.

CONCLUSION:

With regard to class composition, parameters like Teacher-child ratio(78%) and class supervision(74%) in most of the AWCs was of good quality, whereas; age wise composition was of average quality (87%).

In teacher's disposition sensitivity and awareness about gender and other socially disadvantaged groups such as tribal, SC and OBC were found to be of good quality(67%).

Statistically highly significant Improvement in the Knowledge level of teachers with regard to teachers disposition was found in pre and post intervention testing.

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