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A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF ANGANWADI CENTRES FOR CHILD NUTRITION AND HEALTH IN DHAKUAKHANA GAON PANCHAYAT UNDER LAKHIMPUR DISTRICT, ASSAM

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Abstract

Anganwadi centre focuses on promoting children health and nutrition, pregnant women's health, and early childhood education. It plays a significant role in all round development of children life. Anganwanwadi level focus on preparation for school, health and nutrition, such as-good nutrition supports development of learning ability and concentration. Nutritional and health status of Anganwadi students is very important to identify their physical growth, cognitive development, and disease prevention ability. By monitoring the nutritional and health status it ensures that children grow healthy, and learn effectively not only in this stage but in the future life also. Early detection malnutrition, underweight, overweight, stunting, and other deficiencies allow timely intervention, ensuring physical, mental and socio-emotional development.

This study will help to identify the effectiveness of Anganwadi centres in children nutrition and health for their better future.

Keywords: Anganwadi Centres, ICDS Scheme, Nutrition, Health, Child Development, ECCE, Dhakuakhana

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INTRODUCTION

Anganwadi centres are established by the Government of India to promote free pre-school education. The scheme was launched on 2nd October, 1975. It focuses on promoting children health and nutrition, pregnant women's health, and early childhood education. These centers were established as a foundation for community-based child care and the enhancement of overall maternal and child health. It comes under the ICDS project. Even with the impressive outcomes and expansion of the ICDS program, challenges such as malnutrition, poor sanitation continue to effect children overall health.

Anganwadi centre works as a backbone of childrens development for entire life. It focuses on physical, mental, social, and emotional development of pre-school students that is very crucial for the future development of children. Anganwanwadi level focus on preparation for school, health and nutrition (good nutrition supports development of learning ability and concentration), and reducing inequalities.

Nutritional and health status of Anganwadi students is very important to identify their physical growth, cognitive development, and disease prevention ability. By monitoring nutritional and health status it ensures that children grow healthy, and learn effectively not only in this stage but in the future life also.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Anaganwadi level is the stage refers as pre-school in which education and overall child care is provided to the children below the age of 6 years. Anganwadi centre plays a significant role in all round development of childrens life. Anganwanwadi level focus on preparation for school, health and nutrition (good nutrition supports development of learning ability and concentration), and reducing inequalities.

Nutritional and health status of Anganwadi students is very important to identify their physical growth, cognitive development, and disease prevention ability. By monitoring nutritional and health status it ensures that children grow healthy, and learn effectively not only in this stage but in the future life also. Early detection malnutrition, underweight, overweight, stunting, and other deficiencies allow timely intervention, ensuring physical, mental and socio-emotional development. By identifying their health status helps in creating programs that prepare children for formal education effectively.

Objectives

The main objective of the study was-

1. To study the nutritional health status of Anganwadi children in Dhakuakhana Gaon Panchayat under Lakhimpur district, Assam.

Literature Review:

A review of literature is a comprehensive summary and critical analysis of existing research work, theories, and significant writings related to any specific topic or research question. Its purpose is to

provide an organized overview of what is already known, identify gaps in current knowledge, and establish the relevance of a study.

Meena¹, kaaushal², & sexena³. (2015) had conducted a study related nutritional status of Anganwadi students under five years of age. The objective of the study was to examine the prevalence of malnutrition among Anganwadi students. The study shows that based on clinical examination 49% of malnourished children were found. Approximately 40% of Anganwadi students who were above one year had mid arm circumference.

Jain¹, oberoi¹, jain¹, balgir¹, sandhu¹, lugani² were conducted a cross-sectional study on factors affecting nutritional status of Anganwadi students. The study finds that all the factors such as parity of mother, immunity of the child, and gender are significantly associated with the nutritional status of the child. But socio-economic status of the family is not significantly associated with the status of child nutrition. Those students who receive supplementary nutrition have less malnutrition than those who have not received the supplementary nutrition.

K. V. Radhamani¹, S. V. Rajeev² (2017) were conducted a study about nutritional status of Anganwadi students in a rural area of North Kerala. The objective of the study was to assess the nutritional status of 2-5 years Anganwadi children in a rural area of North Kerala. The study finds that among the age group of 2-3 years children most of the stunting, underweight and wasting were found. Among the age group of 3-6 years female children, underweight, and stunting were mostly found than the male children of this age.

Methodology

Method Of Research Followed:

Descriptive Method has been used for the present study.

Population of the Study

The Anganwadi workers of Dhakuakhana Gaon Panchayat under Lakhimpur district of Assam, who work under the ICDS project, are the population of the study. Thus, the population includes all Anganwadi workers under Dhakuakhana.

Sample

In this study, purposive sampling technique had been adopted. Sample of the present study comprised of 60 Anganwadi workers of Dhakuakhana working under the ICDS program in the year 2026.

Tools used in the study

In the present study, Interview, observation and a self prepared questionnaire were used as tools for the data collection.

Collection of data

In order to collection of data, the researcher had met the respondents personally. Respondents were asked them to fill up the questionnaire. After the questionnaires were filled, the workers were asked

for an interview. The workers were asked about the students' enrollment, attendance, health status and how the problems are to be tackled. They carefully answered all the questions and researcher had note down the answer in her notebook carefully.

Analysis of data:

Qualitative analysis was done in the present study and percentage was used to carry out the analysis.

Findings of the study:

According to 99% respondents, all students are enrolled in the Anganwadi centres, but 60% respondent opined that, all students do not attend the school regularly because they are enrolled and attend private pre-school and kindergarten school.

Majority (98%) of respondents responded no cases of anemia among Anganwadi students. It indicates that the children have an adequate level of hemoglobin. Similar to anemia, no cases of diarrhea were found. As viewed that 58% respondents said that there cases of cold and fever among the children. It represents that cold and fever are common illness among students.

As viewed by the 99% respondents there are no children that are suffering from Sever Acute Malnutrition. On the otherhand, although most children have normal nutrition levels, a significant proportion (20%) are Moderately Malnourished. The majority (97%) workers said that there very less amount of stunted and overweight students but 40% workers opined that some of the students are underweight.

Majority of the respondents (97%) answered that they timely provide seasonal fruits like banana, papaya, guava, and amla (Indian gooseberry) and also provide protein rich food such as egg, daal khichdi and suji halwa etc. Majority of the respondents (69%) says that they have no healthy eating environment due to insufficient space to cook and serve food. According to 90% respondents, they maintain food meal according to the food chart.

As per the data collected from the sample, the majority (57%) of the centers do not have proper drinking water system. They take the water from community Naamghar's water pump. The majority (68%) of the respondent said that they have no toilet facility available in the centre. There are some reasons such as they have no proper space and some of them say that their Anganwadi centres are running on the community hall.

All the respondents (100%) opined that they provide deworming tablets and they organize monthly health check up with the help of ASHA/ANM. Majority of the workers (95%) opined that parents are aware of children's health and education. Most of them provide nutritious food at home. All the Anganwadi workers (100%) said that they provide time to time polio drop to the students.

Conclusion

From the above analysis, the researcher has found that a few Anganwadi students nutritional and health status is not so good but maximum students are well nourished and healthy. The reason behind malnourishment or other type of health issues are poor eating habits of the children. Workers face various problems like poor drinking water facility, no toilet facility, no

sufficient space for eating and playing. Anganwadi centres are most essential part of our society for the holistic development of 0-6 year's pre-school children. Therefore, to improve the Anganwadi centres norms, it is very essential for the Government to take the necessary steps.

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