

Women and child development programmes in Karnataka: An analysis

Dr. Vidyadhar S Naganahalli

Guest lecturer in Women's Studies Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi, Karnataka, India

Abstract

To ensure that children get protection against neglect, abuse and exploitation, the department has taken up programs and schemes to guarantee the basic human rights including survival, development and full participation in social, cultural, educational and other endeavors for their individual growth and well-being. Children below 6 years constitute 17% of the total population of India i.e. about 17 crores. As compared to other developed countries, infant mortality rate in our country is very high. At the beginning of 1980s, 120 out of every 1000 newly born children were dying even before completing one year. Even after 50 years of independence, more than 40% of the Indian population live below poverty line. Ignorance and illiteracy are still rampant among the rural people. Severe malnutrition on account of acute poverty which gives room for low-resistance and the consequential early childhood diseases are the main causes for this alarming situation. The emphasis on child development has been on improving the quality of services under Integrated Child Development Services and also to improve the delivery of the programmes, components through the convergence of services meant for women and children. The Paper Analysis Programmes, Acts, Scheme, Policies of Women and Child Development Programs in Karnataka.

Keywords: abuse and exploitation, Child Policies, ICDS

Introduction

Rationality is the universal mark of adulthood, and childhood represents a period of apprenticeship for its development. Children's ages and stages, and the activities that are said to characterize each stage, are seen as markers of developmental progress towards rationality. Child development ceases at some point in late adolescence when the child has become a fully rational adult. Children are essentially irrational and have to learn to think logically and rationally, whereas adults have acquired logical thinking skills. This underlying theme of child development has been criticised strongly by children's rights advocates such as Alderson (2000) [1]. He argues that even very young children are capable of making rational and considered decisions, within the limits of their knowledge, whereas the notion of ages and stages of development implies that children are always inferior to adults in their understanding of issues. The relatively new discipline of the sociology of childhood also puts forward an alternative view - that children's behaviour and attitudes are better explained in a generational framework. Childhood is the other side of the coin to adulthood, and the nature of childhood in a given society can only be fully understood in relation to adult assumptions about, and behavior towards, children (Mayall, 2002) [4].

In some countries, there are standard and predictable publicly subsidized systems offering near universal centre based integrated education and care facilities, and some nutrition, at least for children aged three to six. This was true for most former communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and is still true for many Western European countries. These countries, because they provide(d) universal or near universal services, are/were less likely to offer home based care, home visiting or parent education, or to target provision in any way. They provide (d) coherent universal systems at all levels of administration as a public entitlement. Conversely, in English speaking countries, in

particular the USA, UK, Canada and Australia, where provision is much less systematic, and where parents bear a large part of the cost of any services, targeted interventions, home based care, home visiting and parent support are common strategies for 'multi problem' families who cannot otherwise access services, and who might otherwise bring up their children 'badly'. These countries all experience an administrative split between (nursery) education and (welfare) care systems, and administration and regulation of the system tends to be ad hoc and often inefficient (OECD, 2001). It is this targeted, ad hoc model of English speaking countries that has by and large been exported to the South.

Integrated Child Development Services Scheme

Introduction

Having realized the utmost urgency and importance of giving highest priority to develop human resources, the Government of India found it most essential to evolve a national programme for the overall development of children. The result of this concern is the emergence of a national programme called Integrated Child Development Services Scheme in the year 1975, with a modest coverage of 33 projects in the country with one pilot project at T. Narsipur in Karnataka, which has been expanded to cover all the taluks in the State. The welfare of pregnant and nursing mothers and children below 6 years has acquired a prime place in the programme.

Objectives of the Scheme

The main objectives of the scheme broadly are to:

1. Improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age group 0-6 years.
2. Lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child
3. Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school drop-out.

4. Achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and to.
5. Enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

Expansion of ICDS in Karnataka

The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme was started in Karnataka on 2nd October 1975 with a pilot project at T.Narasipura in Mysore District with just 100 Anganwadi Centres. Since then, the programme has been expanded to cover all the revenue taluks and 10 urban areas in the state. At present 185 projects are in operation covering all the 175 taluks and 10 urban areas.

All the 185 Integrated Child Development Services Scheme projects are now operational under the Central Sector.

The Profile of Projects and Anganwadis in Karnataka

	Rural	Urban	Tribal	Total
ICDS Projects:				
Sanctioned	166	10	9	185
Operational	166	10	9	185
Anganwadi Centres				
Sanctioned	46369	1819	3426	51614
Functioning as on Mar. 2007	45940	1799	3411	51150

2646 additional Anganwadi centres and 405 mini-anganwadi centres sanctioned by the Government of India on 21st December 2006 will be operationlised during 2007-08.

Targeted Beneficiaries

The benefits of the scheme are provided to children below 6 years, pregnant women and nursing mothers belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged families living in backward rural and tribal areas, urban slums and places where SC/ST/minority populations are concentrated.

Services under ICDS

The package of six services provided are -

1. Supplementary Nutrition
2. Nutrition and Health Education for women.
3. Immunization
4. Health check up
5. Referral services
6. Non formal preschool education

Expenditure on ICDS

The Central Government bears the entire administrative expenditure. The expenditure towards supplementary nutrition is borne by the State Government and the central Government on 50: 50 basis.

Community Participation

The fulcrum of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme is community awareness and participation. Community is assisting in the implementation of the scheme by providing buildings locally grown vegetables, fuel, organizing health checkup, immunization and conducting health and nutrition education camps. In some places the community has come forward to donate toys, uniforms, utensils and furniture also for use in Anganwadi centres. The participation from

community has enhanced after setting up Balavikas Samithis in each of the villages. Members of women self-help groups also assist in the implementation of the programme.

Monitoring of ICDS Programme

Monthly and quarterly progress reports under the Integrated Child Development Services programme are being consolidated through NIC NET with the co-ordination of the National Informatics Centre, Bangalore.

Impact of ICDS

The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme has proved to be a very effective child survival scheme in the country and state as well. Infant Mortality Rate in Integrated Child Development Services areas has come down from 120/1000 live births in 1975 to 55/1000 in 2006. Likewise, the percentage of severely malnourished children has also come down considerably. The community has fully accepted the programme and actively participating in the implementation. The School dropout rate has come down considerably. Elected representatives, local organizations and public have realized the importance of the Integrated Child Development Services scheme.

ICDS Training Programme

The training component of the Integrated Child Development Services Programme has now been recognized as the most important key to achieve the aims and objectives of Integrated Child Development Services scheme with the ultimate aim of moulding the functionaries into "Agents of social and behavioural change."

The Southern Regional Centre of the National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) located at Bangalore is an apex body catering to the training needs of senior level Integrated Child Development Services functionaries like Deputy Directors/Programme Officers/CDPOs/ACDPOs etc., besides undertaking Research and Evaluation studies.

At present there is one Middle Level Training Centre (MLTC) at Ujire (Dakshina Kannada) which is catering to the training needs of ICDS supervisors. The state has 19 Anganwadi Workers Training Centres (AWTCs) which are run by NGOs for training anganawadi workers and helpers. The rates of honorarium as well as course grants as per GOI guidelines have been sanctioned by the State Government to implement various training programmes.

During 2006-07 an amount of Rs 216.29 lakhs was released and Rs. 196.73 lakhs was incurred under the ICDS training programme to train 595 supervisors, 6658 Anganwadi Workers and 8595 Anganwadi Helpers (Job/Refresher training /orientation training).

Programmes for Women and Child

1. Nutrition Programme For Adolescent Girls (Npag)
2. Kishori Shakti Yojana
3. Bhagyalakshmi
4. Anganwadi Workers And Helpers Death/ Medical Relief Fund
5. Attendance Scholarship For Girls From Rural Areas
6. Scheme For Welfare Of Children In Need Of Care And Protection

7. Scheme Of Assistance To Voluntary Organizations For Crèches For Children Of Working Mothers
8. Scheme For Combating Trafficking Of Women And Children
9. Hoysala And Keladi Chennamma Bravery Awards
10. Financial Assistance For Children Especially Under Difficult Circumstances
11. State Awards In The Field Of Child Welfare
12. Ujjawala

Government of India Schemes for Women and Child

1. Scheme For Welfare Of Working Children In Need Of Care And Protection:
2. Scheme Of Assistance To Voluntary Organization To Combat Trafficking Of Children For Commercial Sexual Exploitation
3. National Award For Individuals And Institutions
4. National Award To Children For Exceptional Achievement
5. Rajiv Gandhi Manav Seva Award

Child Policies

1. National Plan of Action for Children, 2005
2. National Child Labour Policy, 1987
3. National Policy on Education
4. National Health Policy
5. National Nutrition Policy
6. National Child Labour Project (NCLP)
7. Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)
8. National Health Mission
9. National Child Labour Policy for Children
10. World Fit for Children, 2002
11. WHO Child Growth Standards 2006

Implementation of Legislations

Children

- 1956 The Probation of Offenders Act
2000 The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (As amended by Central Act No33 of 2006)
2006 The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act
1933 Children (Pledging of Labour) Act
1986 The Karnataka Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act

Women

- 1956 Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act
1961 Dowry Prohibition Act
1976 Karnataka Marriage Act
1986 Indecent Representation of Women Act
2005 Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act

Conclusion

A number of evaluation studies on implementation of ICDS Scheme have been conducted in the past viz., Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission in 1982, National Evaluation of ICDS Scheme conducted by National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) in 1992, Evaluation Results of Annual Survey during 1975-1995, published by Central Technical Committee on Integrated Mother and Child Development on completion of 20 years of ICDS and Nationwide Evaluation of ICDS by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)

1998-1999. Main findings of study conducted by NCAER (1996-2001) are as follows:-

1. Most of the AWCs across the country were located within accessible distance (100-200 meters) from beneficiary households. A majority of the beneficiary households was within 100 metres of the AWC. Another 10 per cent were about 150-200 meters away. The rest were beyond 200 meters. Thus, the factor of distance of beneficiary households from the AWC was unlikely to affect attendance at the AWC during inclement weather;
2. Most of the AWCs in the country, except those in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Orissa were functioning from community buildings. The type of building plays an important role in safeguarding against any natural hazards. Of those sampled, about 40 per cent were functioning from pucca buildings.
3. Nearly 50 per cent AWCs reported adequate space, especially for cooking.
4. One out of two AWCs was found to be educated at least up to matriculate level across the country. In all central and southern states, less than 50 per cent of the AWCs were 'at least matriculate'; more than 75 per cent of AWCs were matriculates in the northern and eastern states of the country. Gujarat and Rajasthan reported lowest percentage of matriculate functionaries.
5. Though about 84 per cent of the functionaries reported to have received training, the training was largely pre-service training. In-service training remained largely neglected.
6. The day to day functioning of the AWC is a critical indicator of the effectiveness of the ICDS programme. An assessment of on-going activities of sample AWCs through observations, record reviews and personal interviews with the AWCs revealed that, on average, an AWC functioned for 24 of 30 days in a month. On a given day, the AWC functioned for about 4 hours. By and large, environmental factors did not affect the functioning of the AWC.
7. On an average nearly 66 per cent of eligible children and 75 per cent of eligible women were registered at the AWCs. This indicates lack of motivation on the part of the AWC in identifying and registering the entire eligible population.
8. Community leaders were generally positive about the functioning of the AWCs (more than 80 per cent in all states) while more than 70 per cent found the programme to be beneficial to the community;
9. Participation of beneficiary women and adolescent girls in AWC activities was reported to be low. These two segments of population form the foundation for any child care programme and their involvement is imperative for successful implementation of the ICDS Services.

Reference

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