

Socio-economic status of anganwadi women workers in Marathwada region

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ABSTRACT

Anganwadi workers are the important part of integrated child development scheme. They are the most important in the successful implementation of scheme because, children in the age group of 0-6 are given pre-primary education and to the services like immunization of lactating and pregnant women and Health, Nutrition, Services are provided through them. Also the records of all the services provided are given to her authorities by them. Keeping in mind their role, it is necessary to provide them permanent jobs. But over the years, they have been working with a meager Honorarium. In this context, it is necessary to find out what is the impact of their job on their economic and social status. This is done through the scheduled interview of 50 Anganwadi women workers. The collected data is analysed and presented. Secondary sources of the data collection are also used.

Key Words : Anganwadi, Anganwadi Women Workers, Honorarium, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Child Development Project, Child Development Programme Officer

INTRODUCTION

India had followed the democratic socialism and welfare state is the part of it. For the realization of welfare state, planned development is necessary, as a part of it, several schemes are being implemented for the underprivileged sections of the society. Women and children are the most important part of the deprived sections of the society for their development the Integrated Child Development scheme was started with the help of 33 projects on 2nd Oct., 1975 (Pawar, 2008:18). It does not mean that before this Anganwadi was not being run. In the year 1920, Gijubhai Badheka started the first 'Balmandir' with the help of 'Dakshinmurti' institute in Bhavnagar (Pathak, 1981: 250). Later he started 'Shikshanpatrika' a magazine for the promotion and awareness of pre-primary education. He was assisted in this task by Tarabai Modok and started 'Nutan Balshikshan sangh' in 1929 (Bhalerao, 1995:5). They developed the education system suitable for the Indian Children. They studied and took some principles of Maria Montessori and Frobel's education system. In 1944, Mahatma Gandhi proposed pre-fundamental (Buniyadi) education system and started its experiments in Wardha (Narwane, 2007:3). The works of Gandhiji in Wardha done at the same time. Anganwadi was established in tribal region in 1945 at Bardi. Tarabai continued her work of child education with the co-operation of Anutai Wagh, Champutai, Shelanbhai, Sarla Sarabai, Sarlatai Devdher and other women's (Wagh, 1988:112). Therefore, she is called Montessori of Maharashtra.

In short, the term of Anganwadi was inculcated in Indian Society by Gijubhai Badheka, Tarabhai Modak & Anutai Wagh. From 1920 to 1945 Gijubhai Badheka, Keshubhai Badheka and Shelanbhai in Bhavnagar (Gujarat) and surrounding areas, Tarabhai Modak (Dahanu - Thane), Anutai Wagh (Bordi Thane), Mahatma Gandhi (Sewagram - Vardha), Sarala Sarabhai and Saraltai Devdher (Mumbai) and other parts of Maharashtra developed and implemented the concept of Anganwadi. As a result of it's directly or indirectly central Govt. celebrated the year 1975 as international women year and started on 2nd Oct 1975 Integrated Child development service scheme (Pawar, 2008: 18). 33 Projects were taken as pilot project in different states and tribal and slum areas of them. In Maharashtra Dharani (Amravati) and Dharavi (Mumbai) tribal projects were registered. Since then, the Integrated Child Development Scheme has been expanding all over the nation. At present there are 6719 child development project and 13, 70,000 Anganwadi and Anganwadi women workers are working in them. Of which 364 child development project and 88,272 Anganwadi and Anganwadi women workers are in Maharashtra itself (ICDS Govt.) considered as the most effective and most widely implemented scheme of ministry of women and child development for the primary education of children and providing health and other health associated services to pregnant and Lactating women's 15-45, 0-6 aged children and teenagers. Under this scheme Nutrition's, supplementary diet, Immunization, health check-ups, referral services. Nutrition and Health education, pre-primary education and guidance to teenage girls about physical and mental changes etc. services are provide through Anganwadi (Pawar, 2008). All these services of this scheme are provided to the beneficiaries under the control of child development project officer, Supervisor, Anganwadi women workers and helpers, Medical officers, ANMs and GNMs etc. All the above mentioned units are brought together and beneficiaries are given the services. The record of the services provided is maintained by the Anganwadi women workers and is provided to the administration. This is a risky and accountable task. Through they play a vital role in the implementation of scheme they are paid only 5000 rupees per month. The amount paid is lesser than the worker who earns through agricultural jobs or construction job of Anganwadi workers have social and economical impact. Hence the study is carried out. The researcher has used both the primary and secondary sources of the data and analyzed them in the research paper. As the Anganwadi workers are women, therefore their study is important for the study of social transitions in Indian women.

Socio-economic status of women in Indian context:

In Indian society, women had right the upnayan and brahmacharya education like the men. Jain (2002) lopamudra, Gargi, Maitraiya, Vishwavara etc. women philosophers were famous then. And have their references in religious texts. It means, the social status of Indian women was higher in Vedic period. But there are some references in post Vedic period which indicate the lowering down the social status of women (Takbhaure, 1991). 'Pita Rakshiti Kaumarya, bhrata Rakshiti Youvane! Wardhakya Putr Rakshiti, Stri Swatantryam Na Arhati' this reference underlines the dependence of women. Later in smruti period Bhismacharya and Bhatruhari said that women are full of fault in as many parts as one have in the body. In short, except Vedic period all the three periods of Ancient India, the status of women got degrading.

In Medieval period (1100-1700) the customs of child marriage, Parda system, Sati, Polygamy etc. were practiced in large manner (Kachole, 1995). Samrat Ashok and Mughal emperors. Akbar were the exceptions to those who supported the above mentioned customs which were criticized all over the world. In the history of Maratha, Rajmata Jijau and Maharani Tarabai ruled for period of time (Khandagale, 1998). There were hardly any changes in economical and religious sectors of

the women. After 1700 the period was ruled by Britishers, in which all the lower castes and women and others were made to get education and promoted industrialization (Kachole, 1995). Which led to women getting jobs in some offices. Britishers did story by doing so, they also abolished bad customs of the society by enacting laws and effective implementation of them. The works of Raja ram Mohan Roy, Agarkar, Mahatma Phule and other social workers contribution cannot be neglected who made Britishers to enact laws. The organizational and institutional level efforts were also taken for example Bharat Mahila Parishad (1904), Bharatiya Stri Mahamandal (1916), Maharshi Karve University (1916), Women's in India Association (1916), and National council for Women in India (1925), Margaret council for women in India, All India Women's Conference and Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust are a few to name who worked for the empowerment of women. (Sane, 1988) In Short, British govt. and Indian social workers (Individual and organizational) efforts led to the liberation of women from the age old bad customs of the Indian society.

In 15 August 1947 India got the Independence and after that the India adopted democratic socialism and the values like equality, fraternity, and social Justice formed Indian constitution article 15 of Indian constitution lays down that discrimination on the basis of sex, casts, class and religion etc. is an offence and the culprit is punished (Hate, 1987). Hence, the discrimination on the basis of sex becomes restricted. But the women's movement and their development in true sense started from the year 1975 in which United Nations organization started all types of efforts for the development, progress and equal opportunities to women in all fields of life at national and international levels. India also celebrated 1975 as 'International Women's Year' (Bhatt, 2003). Further, India declared women decade for implementing the schemes sanctioned in the year 1975. The schemes primarily focused Health of women, experiment, educational progress and empowerment of women in general. The present Integrated Child Development scheme can be seen as one of them scheme. Because it was started on 2nd October 1975 along with 33 other child development projects (Pawar, 2008). Various Child Development Projects were started in different states of India's tribal and slum area. In Maharashtra, Projects were started at 'Dharani' in Amravati District while in urban area one project was started in 'Dharavi' slum area of Mumbai as pilot projects. This scheme has become instrumental especially in the physical, mental and educational development of children in the age group of 0-6 years. In 1984, Sundar Lal studied the impact of the scheme, in which he found that the Anemia among children has fallen down from 56.01% to 47.9% (Lal, 1984). In 1987 S. Chaturvedi studied the impact of ICDS in Uttar Pradesh in which he found that ICDS has positive psychological impact on the children which led to decrease in the dropout rate (Chaturvedi, 1987). In year 2007, Jean Drazé observed that Anganwadi is an institutional media which plays vital role in delivering rights, opportunities and facilities to children aged between 0-6 years (Jean, 2007). The importance of Anganwadi is recognized through various studies conducted all over the nation and therefore due scheme has been still implemented all over the nation. There are, at present 6719 projected (Wikipedia) and 1,241,749 Anganwadi women workers working (www.icds.gov.in). The job as Anganwadi Women worker has any (Positive / Negative) impact on their social status. Prior to that, it is necessary to have a review of the literature.

Review of literature:

In 2001, Vrinda Dutt carried out a study entitled, 'Factors affecting job performance of Anganwadi women workers: A Study of three districts of Maharashtra', In which she studied 615 Anganwadi women workers and concluded that these workers are not given training with the help of Modern tools of technology, It was found that 70% Anganwadi women worker who completed

their 10 years service but were not given orientation and refresher training. These women workers still continue their service. Sirjana Darnal also conducted research entitled ‘The Changing Role of Anganwadi workers: A case study on IMNCI in Valsad District, Gujarat in 2005. It was found that IMNCI gave the causes of child death in 1998 which include Malaria, Diarea, and Malnutrition. The Anganwadi women workers who are for away from the cities but performed their roles effectively and responsibly. In 2009 Rangrao P. Hendge did a research entitled “Sociological Study of Anganwadi women workers: with special reference to Purna Taluka” In which he found that there workers have been doing their roles effectively in ICDS and their social station is improving but their economic condition is pathetic. There is lack of means required for running an Anganwadi Ashok Jadhav in his study ‘A Sociological Study of Anganwadis in Sangali City’. Found that Anganwadi workers effectively and quickly provide the govt. sponsored health services to the beneficiaries and keep the record of it. 75% of the Anganwadi women workers give the instructions to their seniors for effective functioning. In 2016, Aruna Sawargaonkar in her study ‘A Role of ICDS in Mother and Child Nourishment: A Sociological Study’ found that Anganwadi workers and their Helpers are not given salaries in time per month. And the salaries are also meager. She recommended to give the salaries in due time.

In short, despite of several difficulties and problems they are performing their roles efficiently and honestly. It is necessary to find out whether their jobs have any impact on their social life. An attempt has been made to find out the same in the present research study.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher has selected 50 Anganwadi Women workers from Erandeshwar, Kuntheshwar, Tadkalas and Kawalgaon etc. regions of Parbhani district (Marathwada) with purposive sampling method. Collected the Data by Interview schedule and analyzed them with the help of secondary Data and conclusions are made.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Primary and Secondary sources have been taken for the data analysis in the present study. Following table gives the information about respondents:

It is seen that 74% respondents are between 20 to 40 years age group. 92% respondents have

Table 1 : Personal information of respondent				
Sr. No.		Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age Group	20-30 years	23	46
		30-40 years	14	28
		40-50 years	10	20
		50 and above	03	06
		Total	50	100
2.	Education	Secondary	15	30
		Higher Secondary	31	62
		Graduation	03	06
		Post-Graduation	01	02
		Total	50	100

Table 1 contd....

Table 1 contd...

3.	Category	Open	24	48
		S. C.	15	30
		S. T.	04	08
		O. B. C.	07	14
		Total	50	100
4.	Annual Income	50,000 to 75,000/-	29	58
		75,000 to 1,00,000/-	11	22
		1,00,000 and above	10	20
		Total	50	100

studied up to higher secondary class. In terms of category it is seen that 48% respondents are from open category followed by 30% S.C. women, while S.T. and O.B.C. respondents are 08 and 14 per cent, respectively. 58% respondents have their annual income between 50,000 to 75,000, 22% respondents have their income between 75,000 to 1,00,000 and only 20% respondents have their income above Rs. 1,00,000/-.

It shows that most of the respondents are middle class with higher secondary level education. Open category respondents are followed by S.C. category with 75,000/- annual income.

Proper shelter is the basic need of a person. Anganwadi women workers are also asked about it. In this regard, the information is given in the following table.

Table 2 : Ownership of house and types

Sr. No.	Ownership of Home	Nature of House			Frequency	%
		Tin	Concrete	Clay		
1.	Owned	31	09	04	44	88
2.	Rented	03	02	00	05	10
3.	Govt. Owned	01	00	00	01	02
	Total	35	11	04	50	100

The above table reveals that most of the respondents (88%) have their own house and 70% respondents have tin houses.

In short gas connection, Toilets and lack of concrete houses and other basic infrastructure facilities are not available with most of the Anganwadi women workers in Maharashtra.

Discussion and debate:

Hindu religion has impact on all the other sub systems of Indian society. The Hindu religious texts also have their impact on Indian society. Marriage and Family systems are not exception to that. Legally, choosing partner, right to education, family and powers, all are affected by Hindu religious texts. In this context, Jimutvahan (1090 to 1130) in his script called, 'Dayabhag' and Vidnyaneshwer in his script 'Mitakshara' put their opinions. According to Jimutvahan girl did not get property right until the death of father. While as per Mitakshara boy could get property right from his birth (Pratibimb, 2010). In short, in medieval period only boys could get the property rights. In post independence period, various social movements and social workers like Mahatma Phule, Savitribai Phule, Rajaram Mohan Roy, Justice Ranade, P. Ishwer Chandra Vidya Sagar, Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj, V.R. Shinde, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and other with the help of Brahmo Samaj, Prarthana Samaj, Depressed Class Mission, Arya Samaj tried to emancipate evil social customs

and give the women status beyond 'child and health'. It will result into ban on Sati and others bad customs. In 1925, British Govt. passed 'the Indian Succession Act (Mitra, 2011:28) due to the efforts of various social reformers. Girls were hereafter given equal right in property. All the respondents were asked about their rights in their father's property. It was found that 96% respondents were denied right to property. Women have got right to education due to the RTE act. Dr. Aruna Sawargaonkar in her study found that 26% workers were Graduate and 06% post graduate women did not have right to spend their earnings and sell or buy the commodities. In recent times, due to the constitutional amendments certain changes are observed in the lives of women. In this context, 76% respondents can spend their self earnings. Women did not participate in politics since ancient period. But in the due course of time reforms have taken place in various sections. With the 73rd constitutional amendment deprived sections have now got reservations in local bodies 33% reservation is given to women in these governing bodies. In this context, the respondents were asked about the right to vote with their own will. 58% respondents gave positive response.

Since the ancient period the dominance of male in family system is evident in Manusmritissundark and 'Pita Rakshiti Kaumarya, Brata Rakshiti Youvane, Wardhakya Putra Rakshiti, Stri Swatryam na Arhati' This shlok of Manushmruti reveal the secondary status of women. There have been several transitions in the Indian society regarding women. In this context 62% respondents said that they take part in decision making problem the family. Dr. Ashok Jadhav also found the same in his study, Issues of selling buying property, Marriage are discussed with female and their opinion is considered is the indication of improving status of women. 72% respondents in this regard said that they are treated is given by others also. But as per the report of concernment evolution of ICDS. MANCAER in 2001, National Report Vol. 1, 2 New Delhi. It is found that most of the Anganwadi women workers are not helped by the political activists. Haryana Govt. in its report of department of Economic and Statistics showed that 56% respondents were assisted by different sections of the society in their programmes. Right from the efforts of Savitribai Phule to Anutai Wagh, women have been facing the several problems, but at the same time their status is also getting improved. Women as an individual are now getting recognized. It means their social status is improving.

It is necessary to inspect the economic status of women workers of along with social status. Karl Mark said that economic status is very important in determining the social status of individual. There are 58% respondents earning up to 75,000/- per annum and 22% respondent have their income up to 1,00,000/-. The husbands of most of the respondents are unemployed and due to that they are not given financial assistance by any bank. In the study of Dr. Aruna Sawargaonkar she said that women workers are paid less, others also opined in same way. In U. P. Non trained person is paid 7400 per month. Semi-skilled gets Rs. 8140 and skilled one gets 9118 (pay check in) while in Maharashtra Non-skilled gets 6700, semi skilled 7200 and skilled 7900 (pay check in). The Supreme Court also gave orders to give at least Rs. 6000/- to workers working in construction sector. (The Hindu) Minimum wages act 2017 says the person be paid Rs. 18000/- per month (M. Times). Yet Anganwadi women workers in Maharashtra still get Rs. 5000/- per month which is lesser than the daily wages worker. The services provided by their workers include providing pre-primary education to children in 9.00 am to 1.00 pm checking pregnant women, vaccination services and other allied services. They have to keep record of all the services and attend the meetings. They are not given T. A. for that the remuneration they get is less.

The infrastructure available at the person's home determines his / her social status. In this

regard women were asked in which 60% respondents said that they don't have their own toilets, while 68% said that they don't have gas connections and other facilities Dr. Aruna Sawargaonkar also found lack of facilities in her study.

Collected primary data supported the above facts and underlined the lack of concrete houses, Toilets and other basic infrastructural facilities are not available with most of the Anganwadi women workers.

Conclusion:

The present research paper has reviewed the social and economic status of Anganwadi women workers. Most of the Anganwadi women workers are in the middle age and have studied up to higher secondary level, most of them are from general category and women from S.C., S.T. and O.B.C. categories are also working as Anganwadi women workers. It will not be wrong to say that Integrated Child Development Scheme and women both are developing.

The women have been touching the sky in different sections of the life in modern age, earlier; they were restricted and disrespected for over the ages. Women today are making every opportunity into golden opportunity. Even Anganwadi women workers are not exception of that most of the Anganwadi women workers are helped by their family members, relative's neighbors and other sections of the society. Women have now their say in decision making, Education. Self Earning and voting practices. In short, the participation in family and public life has increased tremendously. This is their social progress index. But the economic condition has not improved likewise. In the age of inflation. Women are paid just 5000/- per month. They are not paid for 3-4 month. Since their jobs are not permanent no bank gives them loan or financial assistance which results into lack of infrastructures such as concrete houses, toilets, LPG gas connections etc. most of the Anganwadi women workers annual income is less than Rs. 1,00,000/-

In short, the social status of Anganwadi women workers is developing, but economic condition is worst as per the analysis of data. Anganwadi women workers should be given permanent jobs and be given salary instead of remuneration. So that their economic condition can be improved and they can perform their roles more effectively and efficiently.

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