SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER 6

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CHAPTER-6
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The National Policy for Children, enunciated in August 1974 recognizes children as “nation’s supremely important asset” and declared that it is the nation’s responsibility for their “nurture and solicitude”. It affirms that “it shall be the policy of the state to provide an adequate service to the children before and after the birth and during the period of their growth to ensure their physical, mental and social development”. The policy suggests adopting certain measures to achieve these objectives. These measures include implementation of programmes to provide comprehensive health coverage to all children, nutrition service to remove deficiencies in their diet, nutrition education for expectant and nursing mothers, non-formal education for pre-school children and various other programmes for all-round development of children.

In pursuance of the National Policy for Children, the Government of India introduced the scheme of Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) during 1975-76 and it is the single largest early childhood intervention programme. People’s participation gains more importance as it is a stupendous task for the Government to provide services for 124 million children (0-6 years) in the country on a continuous basis. On the basis of the past experience, it has been realized that the community participation is not an automatic process. However, it can consciously be promoted and stimulated through proper management, education and systematic planned effort by the planners, administrators and implementors. The functionaries implementing any developmental programmes have crucial roles to play in creating the awareness about the objectives and benefits of the programme. In the ICDS scheme, Anganwadi worker plays the role of a catalyst at the grass-root level in creating
awareness about the needs, problems of women and children. She becomes a key agent in involving the community in the Anganwadi activities.

The scheme also involves the village leaders, community groups and representatives of the project level coordination committees constituted for monitoring and guiding the implementation of ICDS programmes.

Community participation and involvement of the people in the ICDS programme have certain pre-requisites like awareness or knowledge of the programme, perception or the right understanding of the objectives and the content of the programmes along with a clear concept of the roles and responsibilities of functionaries in programme planning and implementation.

6.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of the present study was to assess and compare the extent of community participation in the Government-urban ICDS project and the RASS-urban (voluntary organisation) ICDS project. The specific objectives of the study were:

- To determine the general level of awareness, perception, participation and involvement of beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel working in ICDS projects of Government and voluntary organisation (RASS) about ICDS scheme;

- To ascertain the influence of demographic, social, behavioural and organisational variables on the level of awareness, perception, participation and involvement of the beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel in both categories of ICDS projects;

- To assess the difference in functioning between the Government run ICDS and the voluntary organisation run ICDS projects in implementing the ICDS scheme; and
To determine the difference between the effective and in-effective Anganwadi centres of the ICDS projects run by Government and the voluntary organisation (RASS).

6.3 HYPOTHESES

On the basis of the aforesaid objectives the following hypotheses were formulated:

- There is no difference in the general levels of awareness, perception, participation and involvement of beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel working in ICDS projects run by Government-urban and voluntary organisation (RASS-urban).

- The demographic, social, behavioural and organisational variables had no significant impact on the levels of awareness, perception, participation and involvement of beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel of both the categories of ICDS projects.

- There is no significant difference in the functioning of the ICDS projects run by the Government and the voluntary organisation (RASS) in implementing the ICDS scheme.

- There is no significant difference between effective and in-effective performance of Anganwadi centres on the extent of community participation of the Government and voluntary organisation (RASS) run ICDS projects with regard to awareness, perception, participation and involvement.

6.4 VARIABLES STUDIED

The dependent variables were viz., awareness, perception, participation and involvement (for project personnel). The following independent variables were also included in the present study: viz., demographic variables like age, education, income, marital status, type of the family, size of the family, caste, religion, experience (for project personnel), social variables like mass media contact, membership in organization, extension contact,
urban contact (for beneficiaries and local leaders), value orientation, behavioral variables like innovativeness, change proneness, achievement motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational variables like organizational climate, organizational commitment for project staff.

6.5 TOOLS USED

To find out the variations among the beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel in ICDS scheme, three schedules were prepared consisting of two parts, viz., Part – A covering demographic, social, behavioral and organizational variables; Part – B, deals with awareness, perception, participation and involvement in ICDS programme.

6.6 LOCALE OF STUDY

The locale of the study was the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. The projects selected were located in Tirupati and Nellore of Chittoor and Nellore districts respectively. The voluntary organization, which is entrusted with the responsibility of Tirupati ICDS was the Rashtriya Seva Samithi (RASS). On the other hand, the Government organization, which is entrusted with the responsibility of Nellore ICDS, includes the Government infrastructure and functionaries appointed for the purpose. The two projects were selected for study, as they would offer opportunity for making comparative analysis of the degree of community participation in the ICDS projects.

6.7 SAMPLE SELECTED

The study covered a total sample of 353 respondents from both the ICDS projects. In Tirupati, of the 185 respondents interviewed, 120 were ICDS beneficiaries and the remaining 48 and 17 were local leaders and project personnel of the selected Anganwadi centers
respectively. Of the 168 respondents chosen from Nellore ICDS project, 120 were beneficiaries, 30 and 18 were local leaders and project personnel respectively.

6.8 COLLECTION OF DATA

To collect the data, interview schedules were used, which covered the demographic, social, behavioral and organizational variables. They were pre-tested on 50 respondents outside the projects selected for the collection of data. After analyzing each item based on the pre-test results and field experience, the schedules had been finalized. The schedules were administered personally to all the 353 respondents and the responses of the respondents were scored for the purpose of analysis.

6.9 SCORING AND ANALYSIS

The schedules were scored by assigning the appropriate weights to obtain numerical values on the various variables measured. The total scores obtained by each of the 353 respondents on all the variables were computed. The data were carefully analyzed by employing appropriate statistical techniques like ‘t’ test and ‘F’ ratio, to know whether the independent variables could influence significantly the dependent variables. The salient findings are succinctly presented below.

6.10 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

- Majority of the beneficiaries belonging to Government-urban and RASS-urban ICDS projects had medium level of awareness, perception and participation about ICDS scheme. In addition, the ICDS project run by RASS-urban was performing better than Government ICDS project.
The local leaders associated with the ICDS project of RASS-urban had high level of awareness, perception and participation than those belonging to Government-urban project.

The project personnel of the ICDS project implemented by RASS-urban had medium to high level of awareness, perception, participation and involvement than the project personnel of Government-urban ICDS. On the whole, the above findings indicate that the extent of community participation in ICDS project by three categories of people viz., beneficiaries, local leaders and project personnel was relatively high in RASS-urban ICDS project than the Government run ICDS project.

Out of 15 socio, demographic, behavioral and organizational variables, three variables namely, urban contact, value orientation, change proneness and five variables namely, age, education, mass-media contact, membership in organization and value orientation had significant influence on the awareness levels of the beneficiaries of Government-urban and RASS-urban ICDS projects respectively.

Regarding the perception levels of the beneficiaries three variables viz., urban contact, value orientation and change proneness and five variables namely age, education, caste, mass-media contact and innovativeness could significantly influence the perception levels of beneficiaries of Government-urban and RASS-urban projects respectively.

With regard to the participation levels of the beneficiaries, the variables namely urban contact, value orientation and change proneness had significant influence on the beneficiaries of Government-urban project. But in RASS-urban project, education, mass-media contact, extension contact and change proneness variables could significantly influence the participation levels of the beneficiaries.
Among the 15 socio, demographic, behavioural and organizational variables of local leaders, two variables each viz., mass-media contact and urban contact and mass-media contact and membership in organization had significant influence on the awareness levels of local leaders of Government-urban and RASS-urban projects respectively.

With regard to perception levels of local leaders, four variables namely, mass-media contact, urban contact, value orientation and change proneness and three variables viz., type of the family, membership in organization and extension contact could significantly influence the perception levels of local leaders of Government-urban and RASS-urban projects respectively.

Of the 15 independent variables, four variables namely mass-media contact, urban contact, value orientation, change proneness and two variables viz., mass-media contact and value orientation had significant influence on the participation levels of the local leaders of Government-urban and RASS-urban projects respectively.

Out of 19 independent variables, four variables namely age, education, income and organizational climate and 13 variables viz., income, type of the family, size of the family, religion, membership in organization, extension contact, value orientation, innovativeness, change proneness, achievement motivation, job satisfaction, organizational climate and organizational commitment had significant influence on the awareness levels of the project personnel of Government-urban and RASS-urban ICDS projects respectively.

The perception levels of project personnel of Government-urban project was significantly influenced by three variables namely extension contact, innovativeness and organizational climate and for RASS-urban project personnel by 10 variables viz., education, income,
religion, extension contact, value orientation, innovativeness, change proneness, job satisfaction, organizational climate and organizational commitment.

- With regard to participation of project personnel, three variables namely extension contact, innovativeness, organizational climate and 14 variables viz., education, income, type of the family, size of the family, religion, membership in organization, extension contact, value orientation, innovativeness, change proneness, achievement motivation, job satisfaction, organizational climate and organizational commitment had significant influence on the participation levels of the project personnel of Government-urban and RASS-urban ICDS projects respectively.

- The involvement of project personnel was significantly influenced by the variables age, education, income, extension contact and innovativeness for Government-urban project and the variables viz., membership in organization and job satisfaction for RASS-urban project personnel.

- A highly significant difference with regard to extent of community participation by the beneficiaries was observed between Government-urban and RASS-urban projects. The performance of RASS-urban project in creating awareness, developing right kind of perception and participation of people is far superior than Government-urban project.

- The overall level of community participation of local leaders in RASS-urban was highly significant than the local leaders of Government-urban ICDS project.

- A highly significant difference on the two dimensions of community participation (perception and participation) was observed between Government-urban and RASS-urban ICDS project personnel. Irrespective of the category of the project, the awareness and involvement of project personnel was similar.
A comparative analysis of the level of community participation in RASS-urban and Government run Anganwadi centers indicates that there was significant difference in the overall level of community participation of beneficiaries and local leaders in both set ups. The most contrasting finding of the analysis was that while none of the RASS-urban centers ranked low on the overall level of community participation, none of their Government run counterparts ranked high on this score.

The project personnel of RASS-urban were able to create a significantly higher level of awareness at the grass-root level (Anganwadi centers) than Government project, whereas in other dimensions of community participation i.e., perception, participation and involvement there was no significant difference in both the set ups.

6.11 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

During the period of the study, some important aspects relating to community participation in ICDS came to the surface, which call for systematic analysis and consideration. The comparative analysis of the functioning of Anganwadi centers run under the auspices of RASS-urban and the Government indicates that the RASS-urban a voluntary organization has been able to involve the community in ICDS more systematically and effectively as compared to the Government. The limited scope for flexibility in the Government run centers is one of the important factors for such glaring differences. The very concept of community participation in the context of development project is a dynamic one. The lack of motivation among the functionaries and their supervision seriously affect the level of community participation in the project. In fact, an element of dynamism needs to be introduced in the Government set up which would help achieving the goal of higher community participation in ICDS. Further, a variety of strategies also need to be adopted for building rapport with the community and seeking their participation.
Despite various constraints, the functionaries in the Government run centers could probably support formation of functional coordination committees at the village level. They could also activate the existing local organizations like the mahila mandals, yuvak mandals etc. Efforts should be made to strengthen coordination among the local organizations including the village school. The project functionaries could keep linkages with other developmental functionaries in the village, which may help channelising the local resource for the implementation of ICDS and also enhancing people's participation. Such effective linkages will also help in meeting the needs of the community which otherwise do not fall within the purview of one single development project.

Frequency of contact maintained by the project functionaries at different levels with the community can also be increased and made more effective by coordinated planning. Regularity in their visits to the project would enable them to give timely guidance to the Anganwadi worker at the village level.

The extent of the community participation to a large extent would also depend on effectiveness of organizing various services intended to meet the needs of clientele groups in the ICDS project. Further, it would be desirable and appropriate if ICDS functioning make special effort to know the needs and problems of community and functioning of social groups in the community. In this context, knowing the community in its totality is an essential prerequisite for establishing rapport with the community. The project functionaries more particularly of Government run centers in ICDS would have to make extra effort in this direction.

At the time of installation of project, the project functionaries under Government run ICDS are put to severe constraints. They do not have sufficient time to contact the cross-section of people including the local leaders and general community and appraise them with philosophy, objectives and services of ICDS. This was found to be one of serious draw-backs
in ICDS projects initiated under the patronage of Government. The initial effort by the project functionaries in making community to know about the ICDS programme and its services would also help ICDS functionaries to identify the problem of the community and establish rapport with the community in the beginning itself.

The motivational levels of the community, local leaders and the project functionaries cannot be constant in all stages of the implementation of the programme. Motivational level may be high for the initial 2-3 years and ebb out gradually. Sustenance of their motivation is therefore a management challenge in itself. Conscious effort would have to be made by the project functionaries for effective dissemination of information about the programme in the community on a continuous basis. It may be recognized that awareness building and motivation is not one time job but it is continuous process. It is equally important that the community may be informed about the success and achievements of the project and difficulties experienced by the project functionaries from time to time.

Clear authority lines, specification of roles and responsibilities, delegation of power, supportive supervision, an effective feedback system and a certain amount of flexibility in the functioning at the project level may be ensured by the project implementing organization. This will empower the functionaries at all levels, particularly the grass-roots level to take initiative in organizing the services and implementing the project. This would also motivate the functionaries to contribute optimally in the implementation of the programme.

Orientation and training of Anganwadi workers should lay adequate emphasis on the techniques of seeking community participation in ICDS. During the course of job training of Anganwadi workers adequate emphasis may be given to undertake practical exercises such as organizing community meetings, contacting community leaders etc. Anganwadi worker should be encouraged to adopt different strategies for eliciting participation in the community. Their efforts should be reinforced through effective supervision, regular
monitoring and timely guidance by the supervisors and child development project officer, especially in the projects run under the administrative control of the Government. To the extent possible, the community should also involve in monitoring the activities of Anganwadi centers. This would promote community participation and help in obtaining more objective feedback. The representatives of the community should be identified carefully and suitably oriented to take up this responsibility.

Women and other functional groups in the village community have been found to be the best educators in urban slum areas. So, a network of mahila mandals should be established in ICDS area or where there is already such mahila mandal existing, the same could be utilized for Anganwadi activities as well. Mahila mandals in ICDS would serve as potent institutions for mobilizing community participation. The strategy for creating community awareness about ICDS and enhancing participation of the community in it had to be people and community specific. It would therefore be advisable that well thought out strategies may be adopted by the functionaries of ICDS under the overall leadership of child development project officers.

The CDPOs as part of their job responsibility should frequently organize training workshops at the project level to provide guidance to other functionaries on a continuous basis. The project functionaries implementing ICDS under patronage of Government have to make more concerted effort in this direction.

The effort made by project functionaries at the grass-root levels towards enhancing community participation in ICDS should be recognized. It would be exemplary for other functionaries who may then be motivated to either emulate or devise strategies for enhancing community participation in the ICDS project. Such recognition would go a long way in reinforcing the efforts of the project functionaries in seeking people's participation.
6.12 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

- A similar study may be repeated by taking more number of voluntary organizations of other states with large sample size to draw general inferences.

- A comparative study of ICDS project with other developmental programmes such as Mid-day Meal Programme, Adult Literacy Programme, Integrated Rural Development Programme etc; may be undertaken to find out the variations if any in the participation levels of the community.

- A comparative study may be undertaken between rural, urban and tribal ICDS projects run by Government and voluntary organizations.