"A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF DWCRA (DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS) AND ICDS (INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES) PROGRAMMES IN GOA."

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes the following sections.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION.

Development of human resources is crucial for the overall development of society. As we enter the new millennium women and children still continue to be under-privileged, despite the advances in all spheres of the world. The increase in the employment of women during the last two decades, specially in developing nations, has not made a substantial difference to the position of women, as they continue to be discriminated as before. It is found that the most neglected members of an Indian family are the women, followed by children. Women and children comprise nearly three-quarter of our population of which, nearly 17% are children below the age of 6 years and 7% of the women are nursing and expectant mothers (Sehngupta, G. 1988). Both these groups are very vulnerable groups and need special attention. Pandit Nehru rightly said, “In order to awaken the people, it is the women who has to be awakened. Once she is on the move, the household moves, the village moves and the country moves, and through the women, its children are brought into the picture and given the opportunity of a healthier life and better training. Thus, through the children of today we build the India of tomorrow” (Baidya, P. 1988).

Children are a precious natural resource and the future of a country. India is one, of the most populated country in the world, where approximately one fifth of the population comprises of children between 0-6 years (Maiti, S. 1988).
According to Kulkarni, S. (1979) though it is not proper to treat children merely as "economic objects" it has to be admitted that the economic aspects of the value of children cannot be completely ignored in a poor country like India, both at the macro and micro levels. The importance of the subject at the macro level is obvious because every child means not only a prospective addition to the labour force but also an immediate addition to the total number of consumers in the family and an additional investment in human capital.

According to Panse, G. A. (1979) Children are a supremely important asset of a nation. Their health and well-being are our responsibility. Children's Programmes should find a prominent place in our national plans for the development of human resources, so that they may grow up into robust citizens, physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy, endowed with the skills and motivations needed by society. Equal opportunities for the development of all children during the period of growth should be our aim, for this would serve our larger purpose of reducing inequality and ensuring social justice. The needs of children and our duties towards them have been outlined in the Constitution of India. We are also a party to the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of the Child.

The Government of India has launched a number of programmes in India like rural development programmes, welfare programmes, etc but the ultimate aim of all such programmes is the same i.e. poverty amelioration or poverty
According to George, P. S. (2001) the various anti-poverty Programmes followed in India can be broadly classified as (1) Income and Employment Generation Programmes and (2) Target Distribution Programmes. The Income and Employment Generation Programmes include (i) Self-employment programmes and (ii) Wage-employment programmes. The self-employment programmes include IRDP, TRYSEM and DWCRA. The wage employment programme includes JRY (Jawahar Rozgar Yojana) and some state government guarantee schemes along the lines of the Employment Guarantee Scheme in Maharashtra. The Target Oriented Programmes include (i) PDS (Public Distribution System), which has its origin during the second world war period, has been an important source for enhancing the food security of the poor and (ii) Nutrition Programmes which includes supplementary feeding, vitamin supplements and ICDS. The ICDS target group includes children below the age of 6 and expectant and nursing mothers. It offers a package of services including health check-ups, immunization, supplementary feeding, nutrition and health, pre-school education for children and nutrition education for mothers.

The specific perspective of economics in this study can be understood through the following:

Swedberg, R. (1991) stresses that according to Amartya Sen, "Economics is ultimately not about commodities, but about the lives that human beings can
lead.”

(i) Under labour economics women are an important constituent of the labour force of the country. This study studies women labour force in rural areas of Goa under the DWCRA Programme.

(ii) This study probes into the employment of women labour force under the DWCRA Programme and it also covers the health of children i.e. the future labour force of the country under the ICDS Programme in Goa.

(iii) The criteria used in the thesis to evaluate the success or failure of the Programmes/schemes, are economic criterias like profits, savings, revenue, etc.

(iv) The development of a country depends on the labour force of the country. This study studies women labourers in rural areas of Goa as participants in the development process through employment and income generation. The employment of women labourers in rural sector affects the rural growth and development, which in turn affects the overall growth and development of the country. The study also studies the health of children under the ICDS scheme. These children are the future labour force of Goa. According to Verma, A. (1989) every nation, developed or developing links its future with the present status of the child. Development, not merely socio-economic development, but human resource development is a major concern of all nations. The full development of human resources is an absolute necessity for nation-building. The foundations for this are built in the early years of life. Thus, it is childhood that holds the potential and sets the limits of future development of a society.
(v) According to Gupta, M. (1998) more than 1 billion people in the world today, the great majority of whom are women, live in unacceptable conditions of poverty, mostly in the developing countries. This study evaluates two poverty alleviation programmes in Goa i.e. ICDS and DWCRA Programmes.

(vi) Rapid changes in technology and automation has drastically reduced the opportunities for rural women to work in the organized sector. This study highlights women as an entrepreneur under the unorganized sector and also brings out the limitations in the working of the DWCRA Programme.

(vii) According to Singh, K. (1999) a review of the failure of a number of rural development programmes in India reveals that there are significant gaps in the application of requisite management tools, techniques and skills in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these programmes. There is a credibility gap between the highly prestigious and sophisticated Planning Commission, which is responsible for plan formulation and the lowly paid and highly demotivated village level worker who is responsible for plan implementation.

This study has brought out the shortfalls in the management, evaluation and monitoring of such Programmes and has also proved that plan formulations/employment Programmes/welfare Programmes cannot function in isolation. The implementation part of the Programmes is also very important. The study highlights that professional programme management is the need of the
According to Levitt, T. (1991) the most valuable of all capital is that invested in human beings. Alfred Marshall approved of the notion that "...the well being of the whole people should be the ultimate goal of all private effort and all public policy."

According to Panse, G. A. (1979) the Planning Commission had already taken the initiative in setting up inter-ministerial study teams in 1972 on integrated childcare services. Based on the recommendations of these teams, and with the fillip given by the 15-point programme enunciated in the document on the National Policy for Children adopted by the Government of India in 1974, the fifth plan strategy was evolved to make a co-ordinated effort to have an integrated programme of package services for infants and pre-school children and for nursing and expectant mothers. Thus started the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS).

According to Sadashivaiah, K. and A. S. Ramesh (1979) in August 1974, India adopted a very important resolution- the Resolution on National Policies for Children- following the United Nation's declaration of the rights of the child. The second day of October 1975, which coincided with the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, witnessed the introduction of the Integrated Child Development
Services Scheme as sanctioned by the Government of India in pursuance of its earlier resolution of 1974. This scheme was in addition to some of the social legislation already in force to protect children from social injustice and to promote their welfare.

Insight of the expansion in the health infrastructure and educational programmes in the country, our knowledge about health and nutrition education and child rearing practices continues to be quite low, particularly in rural areas. Infant mortality is very high among lower socio-economic groups. To tackle these problems a scheme of Integrated Child Development Services was formulated and initiated during 1975-76 on an experimental basis in 33 rural and tribal blocks and urban slum areas (Desai, V. 1988).

The ICDS Scheme was launched by the department of Social Welfare, Government of India, in pursuance of the National Policy for Children. The ICDS Programme seeks to lay a solid foundation for the development of the nation's human resources by providing an integrated package of early childhood services. The National Policy for Children (1974) recognizes the supreme importance of Children's Programmes in the development of human resources that are vital to social and economic progress. In tune with the National Policy on Children, the Union Government launched an integrated Programme to reduce infant mortality and enhance the health and nutrition and learning
opportunities of pre-school children and mothers (Srinivasan, S. 1991).

The broad objectives of the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) Programme is improvement in the nutritional and health status of children in the age group of 0-6 years, reduction in incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts and enhancing the capabilities of mothers to take care of the nutritional needs of the child. Special attention was to be given to the malnourished children of grade III and grade IV and “at risk” mothers. According to Sengupta, G. (1988), the Government of India introduced the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) since 1976, as a maternal and child welfare programme.

It is being increasingly realized that women’s income in a family is very essential and important, in relation to the nutritional, economic and educational upliftment of the family, so a provision is made under IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme) that at least 30 per cent of the beneficiaries should be women. Hence, with an objective of improving the quality of assistance to the rural women, a sharper focus was conceived through the DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) Programme (Thangamuthu, C. and N. Manimekalai, 1989).

According to the report of the Committee on the Status of Women in
India (CSWI), about 94% of the women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector of the economy, 81.4% in agricultural and the rest in non-agricultural occupations. Only a small population ie. 6% of women are employed in the organized sector (Kumar, A. 1990).

The public employment programme has a long history in the country starting from pre-British times. The British government had also undertaken them extensively. These programmes were in the nature of temporary relief measures undertaken to combat famines. The first major public employment programme in the post-independence period was the Rural Works Programme in 1961 and since then employment programmes of different types have evolved in the country. They constitute an important plank of the employment scenario in the country (Joshi, V. 1991)

1.2 SCOPE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY.

The study covers the entire State of Goa. The relevance of this study becomes obvious, if one considers the ever-increasing role and importance of Women and Children in the emerging socio-economic scenario of the country. There is extensive awakening in present day Indian society, to the problems of Women and Children. Therefore, any scheme meant for the amelioration of the socio-economic conditions of these two categories needs to be thoroughly studied, to assess their efficacy in reaching out their targets.
Till date, no such study has been carried out on the operation of these two schemes in Goa. This research will critically evaluate the functioning of DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) Programme and ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services) Programme in Goa. Based on the findings, suggestions and recommendations will be made for the improvement of the functioning of the ICDS programme and similar future programmes especially for women.

The study will also help the policy makers and the Government to rectify their policy, with regard to the development of Women and Children in Goa. It will also help the Government of Goa to take corrective steps and bring about changes wherever needed. A detailed study of these two schemes will perhaps help the Central Government to make decisions in the future with regard to launching of similar schemes/programmes.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.

The following are the aims and objectives of the study.

1. To examine the socio-economic background of the beneficiaries of DWCRA and ICDS Programmes in Goa.

2. To examine the problems faced by the beneficiaries of DWCRA and ICDS Programmes in Goa.
3. To examine the implementation of DWCRA and ICDS Programmes in Goa

4. To identify the problems faced by the implementing agency of DWCRA and ICDS Programmes in Goa.

5. To analyse the achievements and shortcomings of DWCRA and ICDS Programmes in Goa.

6. To draw appropriate conclusions and make relevant recommendations/suggestions.

1. 4 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY.

The data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through interview schedules, interviews and observations.

In Goa under the ICDS scheme there are a total number of 1004 anganwadis of which a sample of 5% has been considered under this study. This 5% of the anganwadis amounts to 51 anganwadis of Goa of which, 25 anganwadis from North Goa and 26 anganwadis from South Goa have been considered. This study covers 50% of the child beneficiaries of each of the 51 anganwadis of Goa. A total of 429 parents of the beneficiaries (children) attending the anganwadi have been interviewed which includes 217 parents from...
North Goa and 212 parents from South Goa.

The DWCRA scheme in Goa has a total number 453 groups, of which a sample of 5% has been considered under this study. This 5% of the DWCRA groups amount to 23 DWCRA groups of Goa which covers 11 groups from South Goa and 12 groups from North Goa, of which 50% of the women beneficiaries of each of the DWCRA groups have been considered. A total of 119 women beneficiaries under the DWCRA scheme have been interviewed which includes 49 beneficiaries from North Goa and 70 beneficiaries from South Goa.

The primary data was collected through interview schedule for the parents of the beneficiaries of anganwadis under the ICDS Programme, interview schedule for the beneficiaries of DWCRA Programme, interviews were held with the Child Development Programme Officers, Gram Sevikas, the Director of the Directorate of Women and Child Development Panaji Goa, Block Development Officers and the Deputy Director of Rural Development Agency, Panaji Goa.

Convenient sampling’ was used under the sampling design inorder to collect information from the parents of the beneficiaries of ICDS Programme, anganwadi workers and also from the BDOs. In Goa there are eleven talukas and
each taluka is supposed to have one BDO. One of the BDOs who had retired could not be interviewed, as it was not possible to locate him. All together nine BDOs were interviewed. As one of the BDOs had worked in two different talukas during the DWCRA Programme, he could give information on the working of the DWCRA Programme in both the talukas. The data regarding the beneficiaries of DWCRA Programme was collected through simple random sampling. Besides this, all the eleven Gram Sevikas associated with the DWCRA Programme and all the CDPOs associated with the ICDS Programme were interviewed. Primary data was also collected through observations of the anganwadis.

The secondary data was collected from journals, books, official records of the Directorate of Women and Child Development, Panaji, the official records of the Child Development Project Offices of Goa, the official records of Block Development Offices of Goa and the official records of the Rural Development Agency office of Goa.

The statistical tools used in the analysis are (1) Mean, (2) Percentage (3) Correlation (4) Range.
1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

Some of the past official records with reference to DWCRA and ICDS Programme of Goa are not available. Some of the ICDS authorities were not ready to furnish some of the details of the working of the Programme at the taluka level.

From the target group of the ICDS Programme in Goa only the information of the children beneficiaries attending the anganwadis was collected.