

Knowledge Level of Anganwadi Workers about Low Cost Balance Diet

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ABSTRACT

The nutritional security of children's in rural area is based on the knowledge of Anganwadi workers. They are the principal worker in the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) project in India. She provides a package of basic health services like supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral, health education and non formal education. For the low income group families, this is a big challenge to arrange adequate diet for different age group members of family but this challenge can be defeat by the knowledge of the low cost balance diet. Anganwadi centers are providing supplementary nutrient as well as nutrition education to the nourishing mothers and children's under ICDS services. For that purpose the study was conducted from 86 Anganwadi workers of Bansur block to find their knowledge level regarding Low Cost Balance Diet. The data was collected via developed questionnaire. The findings of the study shows that majority of the participants having experience in their job above 15 years, up to metric level education, having 10-20 SHG by attachment with bank of less than 5 SHG by each, less than 10 training obtained by all of them, conducted only less than 5 programmes on nutrition, exposure to news paper. Per centage for different aspects of low cost balance diet varied from 73.25- 97.67 per cent. 74.41 per cent were having the knowledge about the availability of nutrients in Poshahar followed by the 58.13 per cent about the ingredients used in Poshahar.

Keywords: Knowledge, Balance Diet, Nutritional Security, Low Cost Balance Diet

INTRODUCTION

Food insecurity can be acknowledged as a cause of malnutrition, due to the lack of nutrients in the daily diet, especially for low income group families in rural and slum area of our country. Which can create the nutrition related problems as well as nutrition deficiency diseases, based on the lack of quantity and quality of nutrients intake from diet. Significant threats of malnutrition to affect the human health. The critical part of health and development is based on nutrition to improve the health, stronger immune systems, provide nutritional security to lower risk nutrient deficient diseases. The body requires both macro and micro nutrients from diet, called as balanced diet. Balanced diet provide differing kinds of foods in certain quantities and proportions so that the requirement for calories, proteins, minerals, vitamins and alternative nutrients is adequate and a small provision is reserved for additional nutrients to endure the good health and wellness. This is the big challenge for low income group families to ensure the balance diet for daily intake. But the option of low cost balance diet can defeat the nutritional deficiency by providing required nutrients of daily diet. This is based on the appropriate knowledge of

the food maker on the availability of material at low cost and how to manage for whole year. This can be by supplementation and value addition of food items to sure the availability throughout the year.

This step is possible through the efforts of Anganwadi workers. The Anganwadi worker (AWW) is the community based voluntary frontline worker of the ICDS programme. Selected from the community, she assumes a pivotal role due to her close and continuous contact with the beneficiaries. Her educational level and knowledge of nutrition plays an important role related to her performance in Anganwadi centers. Anganwadi center provides typical basic health care services in the rural areas as a public health care services. Basic health care activities include:-

- To provide health and nutrition education and counseling on breast feeding/ Infant and young feeding practices to mothers
- AWW would also assist in implementation of Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) as per the guidelines of the Scheme and maintain such record as prescribed under the NPAG

- To organize supplementary nutrition feeding for children (0-6 years) and expectant and nursing mothers by planning the menu based on locally available food and local recipes to overcome the malnutrition.

The output of ICDS scheme to a great extent depends on the profile of the key functionary that is Anganwadi worker, her qualification, experience, skills, attitude, training etc. But they have not efficient knowledge about low cost balance diet and value addition practices to save the seasonal fruits and vegetables for the use in off season to improve the nutritional status of the beneficiaries of ICDS. Less focus has been shifted over to assess the knowledge and awareness among AWW regarding recommended ICDS programmes, who are actually the main resource person. With this background the present study was planned to assess the knowledge of Anganwadi workers

Objectives

- To study the sociodemographic profile of Anganwadi workers.
- To assess the knowledge level among Anganwadi workers regarding the low cost balance diet.

METHODOLOGY

Study was carried out at KVK Gunta

Bansur, with the 86 Anganwadi workers from all 86 anganwadi's from the rural and urban area of Bansur tehsil of Alwar. The profile and knowledge of Anganwadi workers was assessed by interviewing Anganwadi workers on basis of a pretested predesigned questionnaire. For knowing their profile, basic information about the worker was collected in terms of her name, age, education and experience number of SHG, number of SHGs attached with banks, mass media exposure, training obtained by the workers and numbers of programme conducted by them on nutrition and health care regarding. For the assessment of their knowledge, a questionnaire was developed consisting the information regarding the different aspect of low cost balance diet. The prepared questionnaire was given to the AWW in the training conducted at KVK. The knowledge assessment score from each AWW was calculated based on the responses to a questionnaire. Each question contains one mark. One mark was given for a correct response, while no mark was given for a wrong response or unanswered question. So the individual knowledge score varied from 0 to 10. Total knowledge score was estimated by adding the individual scores of each response. For the analysis of obtained data the SPSS techniques were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1
Socio-demographic profile of Anganwadi workers

(n=86)

Parameters	Frequency	Per centage
Experience		
< 5 Years	10	11.63
5-15 Years	21	24.42
Above 15 Years	55	63.95
Education		
Up to Metric	47	54.65
10-12 th	14	16.27
Graduation	19	22.09
Post Graduation	6	7
No. of SHG		
10-20	84	97.7
Above 20	02	2.3
No. of SHG Attached with Bank		
Up to 5	100	100

Training Obtained		
Up to 10 trainings	100	100
Programmes Conducted on Nutrition		
Up to 5	100	100
Mass Media Exposure		
Radio	10	11.63
TV	60	69.8
News Paper	76	88.37
Mobile/ Social Media	50	58.13

About the profile of AWW data in Table 1 depicts that a large proportion of the participants had experience in their job above 15 years 63.95 percent followed by 5 to 10 years of job experience 24.42 per cent. Majority were having education only up to metric level 54.65 per cent followed by graduates 22.09 per cent, 97.7 per cent had 10-20

active SHG, by attachment with bank of less than 5 SHG by each, less than 10 training obtained by all of them, conducted only less than 5 programmes on nutrition, majority were having exposure to news paper 88.37 per cent followed by social media 58.13 per cent rather than other media exposure.

*Table 2
Knowledge of AWW about different aspects about low cost Balance diet*

(n=86)

Sl.No.	Aspects	Frequency	Per centage
1	Growth and development depends on nutrition	81	94
2	Requirements of food groups for balance diet	77	89.5
3	Nutrients availability in seasonal vegetables	82	95.3
4	Role of Nutri garden for low cost balance diet	80	93
5	Combination of two or more food groups to make low cost nutritious food.	83	96.5
6	Use of cheap and nutritive oil for low cost food cooking	81	94
7	Making sweets and food items at home can reduce the cost	83	96.5
8	For better nutrients combination of cereals and pulses	84	97.67
9	The leftover food can be used to cook new dishes.	63	73.25
10	Light and heavy combination of food items in daily diet	82	95.3

Data in Table 2 presents the information regarding knowledge level of Anganwadi workers about different aspects of low cost balance diet. It is observed that majority were having knowledge about better nutrients combination of cereals and pulses 97.67 per cent followed by 96.5 per cent having knowledge about the aspect of Making sweets and food items at home can reduce the cost, combination of two or more food groups to make low cost nutritious food, 95.3 per cent having

knowledge about Nutrient availability in seasonal vegetables, light and heavy food combination of food items in daily life, 94 per cent knows about growth and development depends on nutrition, 93 percent about role of Nutri Garden for low cost balance diet, 89.5 per cent about requirements of food groups for balance diet.

Only 73.25 per cent having knowledge about the use of leftover food to cook new dishes.

Table 3
Knowledge of Anganwadi Workers about Poshahar (N=86)

Sl.No.	Aspect	Frequency	Per centage
1	Knowledge the ingredients used in Poshahar	50	58.13
2	Knowledge on Availability of Nutrients in Poshahar	64	74.41

Data in Table 3 indicates the results about knowledge of AWW about Poshahar, 74.41 per cent of were having the knowledge about the availability of nutrients in Poshahar followed by the 58.13 per cent about the ingredients used in poshahar provided from there center for nutritional security of children's and pregnant or lactating mothers for nutrition security under ICDS services.

Data about overall knowledge of Anganwadi Workers about Low Cost Balance Diet indicates that majority of the respondents were in medium category of knowledge 98.83 per cent followed by low knowledge category 1.17 per cent regarding low cost balance diet. No one found in the high level category of knowledge. This shows that there is a great need to create awareness programmes and trainings for Anganwadi workers to create awareness among masses for the management of low cost diet at home to overcome the malnutrition among women and children's and also for smooth and effective functioning of the ICDS services in their respective area.

CONCLUSION

Te management of balance diet is the big challenge for low income group families. But the option of low cost balance diet, supplementation and value addition of food items can defeat the nutritional deficiency by providing required nutrients of daily diet. This is based on the appropriate knowledge of the food maker on the availability of material at low cost and how to manage for whole year. This step is possible through the efforts of Anganwadi workers by creating awareness among rural masses for the management of balance diet at low cost to ensure the nutritional security. The study on knowledge level of Anganwadi workers shows that majority of the participants were in medium category of knowledge 98.83 per cent followed by low knowledge category 1.17 per cent regarding low cost balance diet. No one found in the high level category of knowledge. So, there is the great need for the some training programmes and campaigns to uplift the knowledge level of AWW for the welfare of the ICDS beneficiaries as well as the concerned society.

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