

UTILIZATION OF ICDS ACTIVITIES AMONG SCHOOL DROPOUT OUT ADOLESCENT GIRL IN GWALIOR URBAN, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA

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Abstract

Background: For the first time in India, the Department of Women and Child Development implemented an effort in 1991-92 to integrate 11-18-year-old school dropout girls in the ICDS scheme in 507 blocks across the country. With the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) as the focus medium for delivering services and improving the capacity of adolescents, this scheme aims on school dropout adolescent girls in the age range of 11-18 years to satisfy their requirement for health, nutrition, education and other life skill development. **Objective:** The study is designed to find out the different activities of programme and utilization under ICDS scheme are being implemented to prepare for school dropout adolescent girls to re-join at the school. **Methods:** The study is primarily focus on those school drop girls age between of 11-18 years who are registered in AWCs of Gwalior urban, sub-divided into five blocks govern under ICDS scheme. 395 respondents (samples) are gathered by using random sampling. Data are collected from each respondent, through interview method (pre-tested questionnaire) and observation method. **Results:** Different activities are found to be organized for school dropout adolescent girls at the AWC, with majority of respondents 354 (89.62%) are found to be effectively participated in cultural and arts activities, 329 (83.29%) in home management activities and 246 (62.28%) in health issues and hygienic activities. **Conclusion:** The study strongly recommended that the activities be made more exciting and creative, which will make it simpler to learn and produce results more successfully, as well as ensuring that all of the beneficiaries participate in all of the activities.

Keywords: ICDS scheme, Gwalior Urban, Anganwadi Centre, Adolescent girl, School dropout.



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Introduction

A unique programme in the country, the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) Scheme introduced in 1975, focused on the upbringing of the child from birth to age 18. All other government initiatives provide assistance to the child from the perspectives of its various

religious denominations. It does not limit itself with the child only, but it also includes adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers (Tandon & Kapil, 1991). For the first time in India, the Department of Women and Child Development implemented an effort in 1991-92 to integrate 11-18-year-old school dropout girls in the ICDS scheme in 507 blocks across the country (Evaluation of SABLA scheme, 2013).

Woman is frequently referred to as the "weaker sex" and they are constantly exposed to flagrant inequality, whether it is in the area of education and literacy, or in the field of nutrition and the ability to expand healthy and robust. This type of actions on the part of society presents a major threat to the health of adolescent girls (Krishna & Prathiba, 2016). According to UNICEF, 2020 it is estimated that approximately 43% of female secondary school students leave before completing their secondary education because of domestic duties such as labour exploitation, limited quality of education for careers and upskilling, travel distances to school, and/or a lack of improved sanitation at the school. Monitoring and improvement of health of teenage girls is critical for reducing health hazards and minimizing health issues in adulthood, and for enhancing the long-term health and potential to flourish and prosper of the country as a whole (Choudhary et al., 2014; Ranga, 2015).

The Government of India has introduced a numerous plan to enhance the health and nutrition, health, and improvement status of adolescents in our country, raise awareness about health, sanitation, healthy diets, and family planning, encourage them to seek knowledge and skills life skills and returning to school, assist them in increasing the knowledge of their surrounding life, and empower them to make self-sufficient actions in order to become strong contributors to society. With the Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) as the focus medium for delivering services and improving the capacity of adolescents, this scheme aims on school dropout adolescent girls in the age range of 11-18 years to satisfy their requirement for health, nutrition, education and other life skill development.

ICDS-related research in the past has classified factors that contribute to poor implementing the program into three major categories: (i) Insufficient resource allocation; (ii) ineffective governance; and (iii) programming limitations (Gangbar et al., 2014). According to a recent study Programme Evaluation Organization (PEO), 2011 completed by the planning commission, ICDS services have insufficient coverage and poor quality of service. It discovered that Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) are overwhelmingly overworked, underpaid, and untrained, which had a negative impact on the overall functioning of the program. And the

final report by Centre for advanced Research and Development, 2010, it noted that adolescent girls have a low level of service participation and their health and nutritional requirements are not seriously influenced. A study made by (Murcia et al., 2009; Theorell & Ullén, 2016) it is found that psychophysiological methods such as music, musical experiences, and dancing also appear to have a significant health impact. According to Hansen et al., 2011 described those social relationships are important in encouraging health-related activities. Several studies have revealed that social engagement (cultural, religious, and social activities) is connected with life and health and participation in cultural activities may also be associated with personal growth and the development of one's own identity (Bygren et al., 1996; Matarasso, 1997; Lutgendorf et al., 2004).

There is still a scarcity of research into the prospective consequences of other, or more particular, activities. Investigations into various activities and their links with education must be conducted in the context of a defined knowledge or understanding of what kind of perform the activities we need to acquire knowledge about (e.g., reading book, playing an instrument, participate and audience at sports events). Moreover, if activities need to be used to promote good health or other public interests, it is essential to understand who will benefit from them, what types of activities will have an impact, what level of participation will be required, and what motivates people to engage in such activities, among other things. This shows that various activity may be important in society, community and public health measures including young and adults, and it emphasises the need for additional research, knowledge, and practical skills to support this claim.

Objective

Despite the numerous efforts made by the Indian government, adolescent girls in various parts of the country are underutilised in terms of these services. Because of this, the purpose of this study was to find out the different activities of programme and utilization under ICDS scheme are being implemented to prepare for school dropout adolescent girls to re-join at the school.

Hypotheses

For the purposes of this study, it was hypothesised that the various activities of the programme would be ineffective in getting school dropout adolescent girls to return to school due to a poor utilization of its activities.

Materials and methods

A large city in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, Gwalior is one of the country's most populated cities. It is the third most populous city in Madhya Pradesh, with a population of more than one million people (Census of India, 2011). Adolescent girls aged 11 to 18 who have dropped out of school and are registered in the AWC under each of the five ICDS blocks are the only focus of the current study. Random sampling methods are used to select 395 participants at random for the purpose of compiling the required data. An interview method based on a pre-tested questionnaire and observation methods are used to obtain data on the respondents' consumption of ICDS activities. The information gathered is examined in an Excel spreadsheet utilising frequency and percentage counts.

Results and discussion

A total of 395 adolescent girls participated in this study. The present study is based on the school dropout adolescent girls between the age group of 11 to 18 years who are registered in the Anganwadi Centre under ICDS scheme. *Table 1* provides the details of respondents' attendance at the AWC who are included in the data collecting procedure of the five blocks which is labelled as P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5 respectively. The study notes that maximum numbers of respondents 203 (51.39%) are found to be attend the centre sometime and a smaller number of respondents 93 (23.55%) are found to be attended every day. However, 22 (5.57%) respondents are found that they have never attended till now. As a result, the study found that respondents' willingness to participate in the AWC is extremely low in the study area for a variety of reasons, including family matters, financial restrictions, and a lack of interest in studies.

Table 1. Respondent attendance at the AWC

Items	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	Total	%
Once in a week	15	18	11	7	26	77	19.49
Everyday	20	20	18	6	29	93	23.55
Sometime	43	46	41	7	66	203	51.39
Never attended	5	2	4	2	9	22	5.57
						395	100.00

The ICDS programme for school dropout adolescent girls includes a variety of different types of activities for them to participate in. Seven different sorts of activity have been identified as being conducted in the research region, each of which is described below. The study has highlighted cultural and arts activity as the most active and influence by maximum of respondent whereas it also found that activity on learning on public service have a very poor

participation and least active in the research region. Details statistical arrangement is given below *Table 2*.

Table 2. Types of activities provided at the AWC

Activities	Items of information	Total	%
Cultural and Arts	Yes	354	89.62
	No	41	10.38
	Total	395	100.00
Sports for health development	Yes	87	22.03
	No	308	77.97
	Total	395	100.00
Learning on public service	Yes	2	0.51
	No	393	99.49
	Total	395	100.00
Environmental work	Yes	14	4.30
	No	378	95.70
	Total	395	100.00
Learning on home management	Yes	329	83.29
	No	66	16.71
	Total	395	100.00
Health issues and hygienic	Yes	246	62.28
	No	149	37.72
	Total	395	100.00
Life skill education	Yes	21	5.32
	No	374	94.68
	Total	395	100.00

Cultural and arts activity

Arts and literature are examples of cultural expression, but other aspects of culture such as lifestyle, ethics, and tradition are also included (UNESCO, 1982). The study reveals that cultural and arts activity 354 (89.62%) is found to be most contributing activity and strongly participated by maximum of respondents as shown in *Table 2*. In this particular activity, it includes curriculum like rangooli, dance, handcraft, painting, drama related with education and time to time competition. According to a research paper from the Norwegian HUNT Study, cultural participation was connected with improved health and quality of life, as well as decreased levels of anxiety and depression in individuals, suggesting that this may be used in health promotion (Cuypers et al., 2012). Some governments believe that a policy of employing cultural activities to encourage involvement in society has the potential to enhance health (Cuypers et al., 2011), and they are considering implementing such a policy. As a result, it is revealed that the majority of school-dropout adolescent girls are greatly influenced by this activity, which is successful in helping them to learn and obtain knowledge about education,

health, and life to a certain level. Furthermore, the study found that participation in cultural and artistic activities resulted in enhanced empathy, more positive behavioral activity, diminished boredom, improved emotional expression and self-esteem, among other benefits.

Learning on home management

Home management is the activity of conserving and protecting one's property, as well as upgrading and managing it. Even though most of us consider home management to be a cleaning procedure, it is actually a process of making the most of our living space. Adolescent girls should understand how to manage their finances, their time, and their day-to-day activities. When they reach adulthood, this will eventually assist them in better managing their own homes when they are on their own. Budgeting, saving, running the household, gender sensitivity, schooling of children, and other topics are covered in the training activities designed for adolescent girls in order to provide them with the necessary information and skills for effective home administration (Scheme for Adolescent Girls, 2018). From *Table 2*, the overall data collected from the respondent, activity on learning on home management come in second spot with 329 (83.29%) respondents who are found to be participated.

Health issues and hygienic

The provision of ongoing knowledge on nutrition and health issues will result in improved health status for the girls, which will in turn lead to an overall improvement in the health of the family, as well as the breakdown of the terrible continuous cycle of malnutrition. All adolescent girls in the AWC receive health issues, which is provided jointly by the ICDS, health officials, and resource persons/field trainers from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs). According to the findings of the current study, 246 (62.28 %) of the school dropout adolescent girls are found to have participated in health and hygiene activities in the research region as given in *Table 2*. Personal cleanliness, supporting healthy traditional practises and debunking harmful myths, physical activity, the use of safe drinking water, first aid, menstrual hygiene, and women empowerment are all part of the curriculum for these activities.

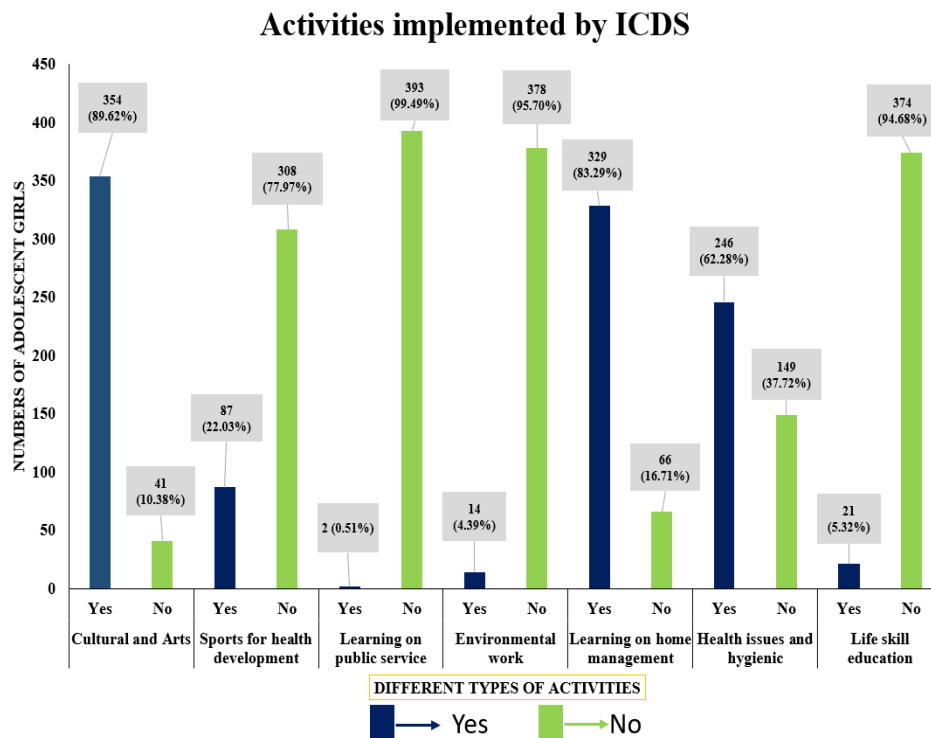


Figure 1: Bar diagram showing the different types of activity implemented by ICDS Sports for health development

In general, girls of the same age are inactive than their male counterparts, making physical activity particularly vital for them. It's an effort to encourage girls to participate in physical activity by encouraging them to participate in school sports, physical education, recreation, and other leisure time activities. Improved fitness and heart health, lower incidence of stress and depression, enhanced self-esteem, good body image, and opportunities to have fun and communicate with friends are all benefits of participating in this sport. Research in this area indicated that only 87 (22.03%) respondents are found to be active among the participants whereas the remaining 308 (77.97%) which is huge in number are found not quite popular in this activity as shown in Fig 1. Inadequate physical fitness, the idea that you can't play sports and be a "feminine" person are all reasons why teenage girls might shy away from physical activity and sports. Other possible reasons include: a lack of basic skills, embarrassment, and the fear of appearing foolish in public, especially in front of their peers.

Life skill education

A person's ability to meet the demands and problems of daily life is referred to as having "life skills." Its ultimate goal is to help adolescent girls build their own sense of self-worth. School dropout adolescent girls will be taught how to deal with stress and peer pressure by

participating in an activity that teaches life skills such as self-awareness, self-esteem, communication skill, decision-making and independent thought. Unfortunately, the results of the study noted that only a small percentage 21 (5.32%) of the people surveyed in the study location actually participated in this activity as shown in *Fig 1*.

Environmental work

Participation in any type of community awareness and engagement, as well as information exchange with others, is facilitated by an activity involving environmental work. This includes the monitoring of the surrounding region, tree and plant plantation, cleanliness of a location, involvement in any types of local awareness and interaction, as well as communication among each other. According to the findings of the study, just 14 (4.30 %) respondents were involved in this type of activity which is shown in *Fig 1*.

Learning on public service

Confidence comes from knowing what public services are available and how to obtain them. This course teaches participants how to use a currently available public service, such as opening and managing a bank account, using a post office, and filing a police complaint. Regrettably, the results of the study found that only 2 (0.51%) of the respondents surveyed in the study location actually participated in this particular activity as shown in *Fig 1*.

Conclusion

The present study specifically encourages involvement in and usage of ICDS activities among school dropout out adolescent girls between the ages of 11 and 18 years old in Gwalior Urban, with a particular emphasis on engagement and utilisation of ICDS programmes. The majority of girls are found irregularly attend the Anganwadi Centre to participate in the various types of activities offered. Seven different types of activities are identified in the study region, but only three of these activities are the most involved and highly took part in by school dropout adolescent girls. The study found that school dropout adolescent girls underutilised ICDS activities accompanied by a lack of enthusiasm with inadequate awareness being the most prevalent cause.

Recommendation

Therefore, the study strongly recommended that it is imperative to raise awareness about the services provided by the ICDS and the benefits they provide to school dropout adolescent girls through a variety of activities that can be made more exciting and creative, which will make learning simpler and results more successful, and that it is equally important

to ensure that all of the beneficiaries play an active role in all of the activities. Also highly suggested is a special vocational training programme for dropout adolescent girls who are in their late adolescent period in order to make capable of supporting themselves in the future.

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