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The Problems Faced by the Students and Teachers of Early Child Care and Education (ECCE) in Balasore Districts of Odisha

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Abstract

The study conducted on the district of Balasore, Odisha having sample blocks Soro and Khaira. Each block having many Anganwadi centres from which only 10 Anganwadi centres from each block are taken as sample. One Anganwadi worker (teacher) and all the students from the centre are included in this study. Total 20 AWWs and approximately 360 students are included in this study. The objectives of the study are to study the problems faced by the students and the teachers in ECCE programme in Balasore district. Tools are used like Checklist on the various aspects of holistic development of the child. Interview schedule is used for the AWWs and Focused group discussion for the students. Descriptive survey method is used in this study. Multiple systemic barriers hinder effective ECCE implementation. Excessive non-academic workload (100%) and poor infrastructure (90%) emerged as the most frequently cited problems. These include dilapidated buildings, lack of sanitation facilities, absence of electricity, and inadequate play areas. Insufficient teaching and learning materials (80%), lack of training (70%), and health-related issues (50%) further aggravate the situation. These findings clearly underscore the disconnect between policy expectations and ground-level realities, with AWWs shouldering multiple roles beyond their teaching responsibilities. There are various further studies require on this area of research for the holistic development of the early age students.

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1. Introduction

Early childcare and education (ECCE) play a vital role in shaping a child's cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. Nevertheless, to express that the social and emotional upbringing started from the stage of Early childcare and education. Research has shown that high quality early childhood education program contributes to better academic performances, improve socialization and long-term development of adulthood. As societies continue to recognize the importance of investing in young children, practices and policies on ECCE, it has gained significant attention from educators, policy makers and researchers to strengthen the crucial part of education in life as early childcare and education.

2. Rationale

As Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) is implemented through various programs and a lot of resources are being invested, the quality of the interventions remains a major issue to be managed. Considering the impact of early years on

the child's development, it becomes very important to ensure that ECCE made available to the age group of 3 to 6 years is of good quality. Research studies conducted by psychologists and educationists all over the world have shown that an adequately enriched environment in early childhood brings about development in various aspects. Hence pre-school education is to be given special importance by the educationalists as well as planners. It is expected that pre-school education centers will cater to the needs of such children.

3. Review of Related Literature

Acharya and Sigdel (2024) have conducted a study Assessing the School Management Decision Practices: Insights from the Policy Provisions. The role of local government has crucial in the overall development of community schools in Nepal. Implementing effective school management practices can greatly enhance the development of the school and ensure the delivery of high-quality education. The authors analysed the policy requirements on community school management

decisions and practices. According to the policy provisions, the school head teachers, school management committee (SMC) members, and teachers' representatives are actively engaged in management decision practices. This study reveals that the head teacher and school management committee hold the authority over important aspects of school management decision-making, such as teacher recruitment, school development planning, and teaching learning activities.

Apriyansah C. *et al.* (2024) have conducted the study on "Early Childhood Education: Integrative Holistic Early Childhood Development Program Implementation" This study emphasizes Integrative Holistic Early Childhood Development Program implemented in ECCE units. A descriptive, qualitative research design is used for the study. Qualitative descriptive analysis methods are applied in this research. The data analysis includes stages like data reduction, data visualization, conclusion drafting, and data verification. The PAUD unit in Bogor Regency hosted the study for three months, from March to May 2024. The study's findings revealed that principals and teachers, the government, non-governmental organizations, parents, and the private sector worked together with a positive attitude towards PAUD HI. However, the challenges for PAUD HI in ECCE units are the lack of funding, facilities, and teaching staff, as well as a lack of resources for the learning environment and parent involvement. To overcome these obstacles, the above personnel and institutions must work together actively.

Krafft (2012) in his article, "Is early childhood care and education a good investment for Egypt? Estimates of educational impacts, costs, and benefits" showed that Early Childhood Care and Education can significantly and substantially enhance the Egyptian educational system. ECCE has long-term benefits that extend well beyond primary school. ECCE can make important contributions to the educational success and life opportunities of Egyptian youth. Investing in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) has

the potential to yield educational benefits that outweigh the associated costs. Consequently, expanding access to kindergarten for all Egyptian youth would be a commendable policy for the Egyptian government to pursue.

4. Objective of the Study

- To study the problems faced by the students and the teachers in ECCE programme in Balasore district.
- To ask the suggestive measures from the early child care and education (Anganawadi) teachers in Balasore District.

5. Methodology

The study follows descriptive survey method. Research is systematic and intensive process of carrying on an in-depth method of analysis. It intends to find out what exist at present in a particular context. The qualitative research design, sampling and the data collection strategies that were used in this research are discussed in the present chapter.

6. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The researcher collected data through an interview containing some specific questions from the Anganwadi workers in a systematic manner. By this the researcher gets semi structured data from the interview. The interview schedule is fixed with five questions, which are described below in detail. The answer was open-ended, so the data gathering and data transcriptions were done in an effective manner. All interview responses were transcribed and organized into key themes using qualitative data analysis. Data were gathered from 20 Anganwadi workers and encoded with their words what they said.

- The table below shows the details of question number: 01. What is the major focus of early childhood education at your Anganwadi? This is based on their major focused area.

Table 1: Focus Theme wise frequency table of the interview data on the major of early childhood care and education at Anganwadi center

S. No	Theme	Some Words/Codes from the Interview	Frequency of the Replied AWW	% of Total AWW
01	School readiness	Encourage group work, Foundational literacy and numeracy, basic mathematics, discipline practices etc.	16	80%
02	Health and nutrition area	Regular Drill classes, outdoor games, indoor games, Mid-day-meal, food supplement with medicine supply, regular health check-ups etc.	18	90%
03	Social and emotional area	Playing in groups, class monitor, respecting others, play based activities,	19	95%
04	Cognitive Development	Problem-solving, puzzles, memory games, NUA ARUNIMA wise teaching, memory games with various TLM etc.	15	75%
05	Other focused area	Moral teaching, braveness training, self-cleanliness, protection from harmful objects, preparing for the future etc.	17	85%

Total twenty AWW was replied on this

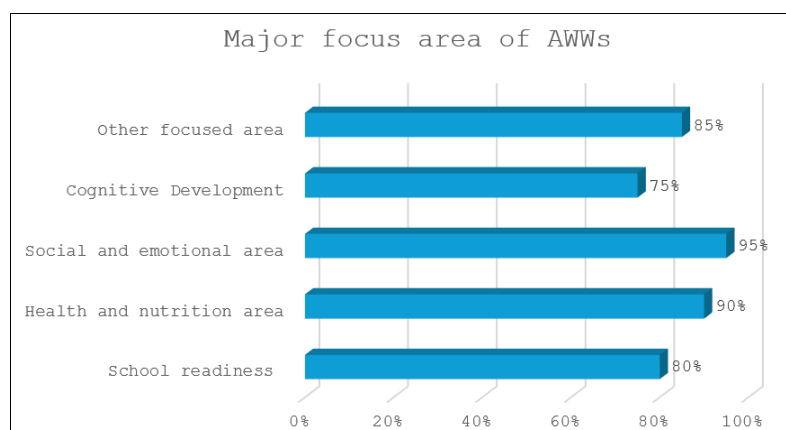


Fig 1: The major focus of early childhood education at Anganwadi center

Table 1 shows that the major focus of early childhood education at Anganwadi centers in Balasore district, which is described in 5 themes. After coding the interview data, five types of themes are prepared and the major focus area of the AWW in preschool education. This is based on their major focused area besides the general working conditions as a government employee.

Table 1 reveals that there are 5 sections of themes sectionized, these are School readiness, health and nutrition area, social and emotional area, cognitive development and other focused areas in which the numbers of Anganwadi workers majorly focused 16,18,19,15 and 17 respectively out of 20 numbers of AWW.

Table1 and figure 1 reveal that the major focused areas are 'Social and emotional areas of the learners' and 'the health and hygienic area' of preschool children. These two sections are majorly focused by 95% and 90% of the preschool institutions (AWCs) in Balasore district.

Table 1 and figure 1 reveal that 'cognitive development' and

'the school readiness' area are in normal focused area of the AWWs in Balasore district. These two areas focused majorly on 75% and 80% respectively by the AWWs. More attention is needed in this area to develop preschool education in the district.

Table 1 and figure 1 reveal that 'other focused areas' are responded by 17 AWWs out of 20. The percentage of this score is 85%. We can see that the

B. Anganwadi workers are focusing on nutritional value of their students, and the emotional and social values are considered as main area of their focus. The table below shows the details of question number: 02. How are you trying for holistic development of the learners? And question no 03. What are the activities undertaken by you to inculcate holistic development of the learners? As question numbers 02 and 03 are much correlated the data are likely same to be analysed in one frame and in similar themes. The following table and figure are based on these questions.

Table 2: Actions taken by the AWWs for holistic development of the learners

S. No	Theme	Some Words/Codes from the Interview	Frequency of the AWW	% of Total AWW
01	Physical development	Exercise, outdoor play, Health check-ups, hygiene lessons, Drill Yoga etc.	18	90%
02	Social development	Group play, teamwork, cultural activities, leadership quality, acting, enhancement etc.	19	95%
03	Mental development	Problem-solving, memory games, puzzles, color games, NUA ARUNIMA book covers, counting books etc.	16	80%
04	Emotional development	Emotional support, communication, discipline activities,	17	85%
05	Creative development	Art, music, toy-based activities, picturing, paper cutting, individual development etc.	13	65%

Total twenty AWW was replied on this

Below figure is based on the above table to explain more clearly. The above table no 2 is figured in bar diagram in below figure no 2. These table and figure show that the activities conducted for holistic development in the Anganwadi centers in Balasore district in Odisha.

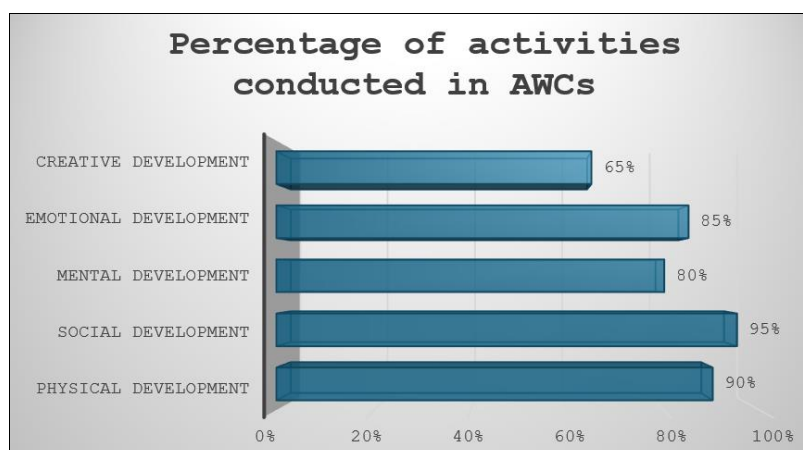


Fig 2: Activities conducted for holistic development by the AWWs in at Anganwadi center in Balasore district

Table 2 shows that the Activities conducted for holistic development of the learners at Anganwadi centers in Balasore district, which is described in 5 themes. After coding the interview data, five types of themes are prepared and the activities conducted for holistic development of learners by the AWW in preschool education.

Table 2 reveals that there are 5 themes are sectionized, these are Physical development, social development, mental development, emotional development and creative development in which the numbers of Anganwadi workers majorly focused 18, 19, 16, 17 and 13 respectively out of 20 numbers of AWW.

Table 2 and figure 2 reveal that the main activities are conducted in 'social development' and 'physical development'. These two sections are majorly focused by 95% and 90% respectively of the preschool institutions (AWCs) in Balasore district.

Table 2 and figure 2 reveal that 'mental development' and the 'emotional development' activities are conducted in the AWWs in Balasore district. These two developmental activities were conducted 80% and 85% respectively by AWWs. More attention is needed in this area to develop preschool education in the district.

Table 2 and figure 2 reveal that the least activities are conducted in creative developmental aspects. The score is just 13 out of 20 that responds just 65% in Balasore district. This developmental aspect needs the most attention in preschool education.

C. The table below shows the details of question number: 04. What are the problems do you facing in your Anganwadi centre to achieve holistic development of the learners?

Table 3: Obstructions regarding the achievement of holistic development of the learners

S. No	Theme	Some Words/Codes From the Interview	Frequency of the AWW	% of Total AWW
01	Poor infrastructure	Not availability of building, unhygienic thatched house, no electrification, drinking water problem, no playground etc.	18	90%
02	Insufficient resources	Insufficient TLM, no almirah for record keeping, no stock room, less activity books etc.	16	80%
03	Public issue	No Parent support, no proper management committee, less support from local leaders, no awareness programs etc.	08	40%
04	Poor attendance	Distance from locality, less attendance for health issues, due to unhygienic atmosphere etc.	06	30%
05	Other workloads	More workers and helpers needed, whole day duty, varieties of responsibilities, Leave problems, somewhere helper not available, internet related work etc.	20	100%
06	Insufficient training	Less training on preschool, No leave rule, service condition problems, less training but more duty etc.	14	70%
07	Frequent Health problem	No latrine and toilet, no boundary wall, AWC is far from the residence, parental awareness on cleanness etc.	10	50%

Total twenty AWW was replied on this

Below figure is based on the above table to explain more clearly. The above table no 3 is figured in bar diagram in below figure no 3. These table and figure show that the problems to inculcate holistic development in the Anganwadi centers in Balasore district in Odisha.

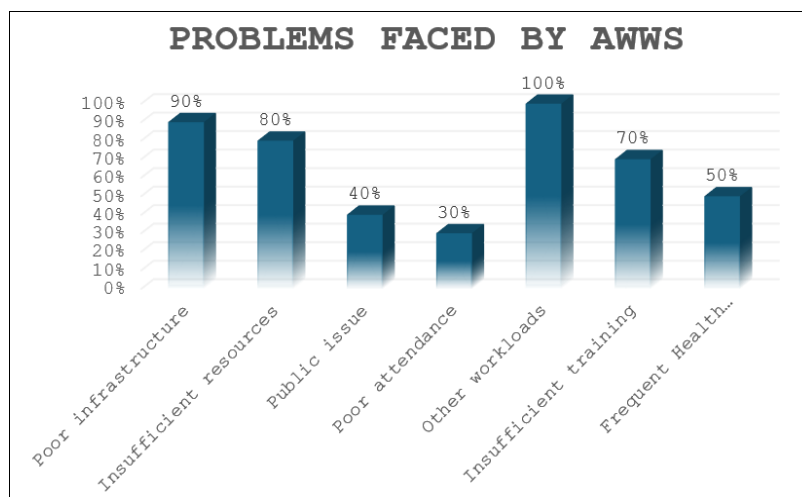


Fig 3: Problems to inculcate holistic development of the learners at Anganwadi center in Balasore district

Table 3 shows that the obstructions regarding the achievement of holistic development of the learners at Anganwadi centers in Balasore district, which are described in 7 themes. After coding the interview data, seven types of themes are prepared, and this is from the interview data from the AWWs in Balasore district in Odisha.

Table 3 reveals that there are 7 themes that are sectionized, these are Poor infrastructure, Insufficient resources, public issue, Poor attendance, other workloads, Insufficient training and Frequent Health problem in which the numbers of Anganwadi workers stated that they face the problems and the frequency is 18, 16, 08, 06, 20, 14, and 10 respectively out of 20 numbers of AWW in Balasore district.

Table 3 and figure 3 reveal that the main problems are faced on the area of 'workloads other than academic activities at Anganwadi centers' and 'poor infrastructure in Anganwadi

centers. These two sections are mainly stated by 100% and 95% AWWs respectively.

Table 3 and figure 3 reveal that 'insufficient resources' and the 'insufficient training' problems are raised an average number of AWWs in Balasore district. These two problems were voiced by 80% and 70% respectively by AWWs. More attention is needed in this area to develop preschool education in the district.

Table 3 and figure 3 reveal that the least problems are raised in three themes. The themes are 'frequent health problems of children', 'public issues' and 'poor attendance' scored 50%, 40% and 30% respectively. These developmental aspects are needed the most attention in preschool education.

D. The below table shows the details of question number: 05. What are the suggestions do you want to provide?

Table 4: The suggestions provided by the AWWs

S. No	Theme	Some Words/Codes from the Interview	Frequency of the AWW	% of Total AWW
01	Infrastructure development	Construct concrete buildings, provide electrification, shut out drinking water problems, provide playground etc.	18	90%
02	Supply of resources	Supply TLM, almirah for record keeping, workshop on TLM development etc.	16	80%
03	Parental support	Aware to provide Parent support, supportive management committee etc.	17	85%
04	Health check ups	Assure hygienic atmosphere, regular health checkups, good nutritional food supplement etc.	10	50%
05	Additional Staff posting	Appoint More workers and helpers, minimize varieties of responsibilities etc.	13	65%
06	Provide proper training	More training in preschool, other training for other duties etc.	15	75%
07	Job security	Make general guidelines for Leave, service conditions apply etc.	12	60%

Total twenty AWW was replied on this

We must analyze the figure to reveal the score in the themes clearly. Below figure is based on the above table to explain more clearly.

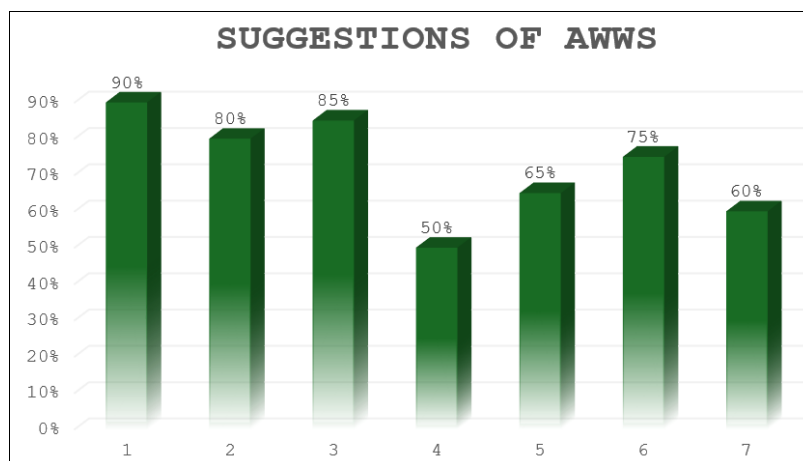
**Fig 4:** The suggestions provided by the AWWs in Balasore district

Table 4 shows that the suggestions regarding the achievement of holistic development of the learners at Anganwadi centers in Balasore district, which are described in 7 themes. After coding the interview data, seven types of themes are prepared, and this is from the interview data from the AWWs in Balasore district in Odisha.

Table 4 reveals that there are 7 themes that are sectionized, these are infrastructural development, supply of resources, parental support, health checkups, additional staff posting, provide proper training and job security in which the numbers of Anganwadi workers suggested for all-round development of the learners and good teaching atmosphere will be developed and the frequency is 18, 16, 17, 10, 13, 15, and 12 respectively out of 20 numbers of AWW in Balasore district.

Table 4 and figure 4 reveal that the main suggestions are on the area of 'infrastructural development' and 'parental support'. These two sections are mainly stated by 90% and 85% AWWs respectively. These two suggestions are major requirements in the fields of preschool education in the Balasore district in Odisha.

Table 4 and figure 4 reveal that 'Supply of resources', the 'Provide proper training' and 'Additional Staff posting' suggestions are provided from an average number of AWWs in Balasore district. These three suggestions were voiced by 80%, 75% and 65% respectively by AWWs. More attention is needed in this area to develop preschool education in the district.

Table 4 and figure 4 reveal that the least problems are raised in the two themes. The themes are 'Job security' and 'health check ups' scored 60%, and 50% respectively. These developmental aspects are needed the most attention in preschool education.

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