A STUDY OF BEHAVIOURAL ATTITUDE OF ASHAs IN PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRES OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK OF KANPUR NAGAR

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ABSTRACT:

Objective : 1. To assess the bio-social characterstics of ASHAs.

2. To analyse behavioural attitude of ASHAs.

3. To suggest measures for behavioural changes and further strengthen the NRHM programme implementation at grass-root level.

Study Design : Cross sectional

Study Period : March 2009- March 2010.

Statistical Analysis : Percentage and Chi-square test.

Methodology : All the 135 ASHAs of randomly selected CDB Kalayanpur, Kanpur Nagar were studied by questionnaire method.

Observations : Predominantly ASHAs belonged to age group of 30-35 years (45.2%), Hindu religion (99.3%), OBC caste (54.1%), educated upto 8th class (57.8%) and Social Class IV (68.9%). Amongst all the ASHAs, the behavioural attitude of majority of them (88.1%) was found communicative.

Conclusions : In view of above observations, it is concluded that higher education level of ASHAs increases positive behavioural attitude other than their own temperament.

Introduction :

Under NRHM programme ASHAs are the main grass root level workers to strengthen the services of already existing Govt. health service providers. The behavioural attitude of these workers may affect their performance as expected by the Govt., therefore the present study was planned with following objectives-

1. To assess the bio-social characterstics of ASHAs.

2. To analyse behavioural attitude of ASHAs.

3. To suggest measures for behavioural changes and further strengthen the NRHM programme implementations at grass-root level.

Methodology :

A cross-sectional study was carried out amongst all the 135 ASHAs of randomly selected CDB Kalayanpur, Kanpur Nagar. All the study units were personally interviewed by visiting their field work areas and relevant informations were collected on predesigned and pretested questionnaire.

Results :

Predominantly the ASHAs belonged to age group of 30-35 years (45.2%), Hindu by religion (99.3%), OBC caste (54.1%), educated upto middle standard (57.8%) and from Social Class IV (68.9%) (Table-1).

Amongst all the ASHAs, the behavioural attitude of majority of them (88.1%) was found communicative (Table-2).

Overall 88.1% of ASHAs were found communicative in their attitude, however out of Intermediate level ASHAs 94.4% were communicative whereas all graduate (100%) were communicative (Table-3).

ASHAs having higher age group (40-45yrs) showed higher communicability (100%) (Table-4).

Discussion :

1. Bio-social Characteristics

Majority i.e., 45.2% and 40% were from age group 30-35yrs and 35-40yrs. Although in the selection criteria of ASHAs (according to Training Module of ASHA Workers-NRHM 2005-2012), the minimum age of selection is 25years but in our study group, the ASHAs in age group of 25-30yrs were only 8.1%. Predominantly 99.3% ASHAs were Hindus by religion and only 1 (0.7%) was Muslim. More than half i.e., 54.1%, ASHAs were belonging to OBC caste followed by 25.2% Scheduled Caste and 20.7% General Caste. More than half i.e., 57.8% ASHAs were educated upto middle standard only, which were the minimum educational criteria laid down for their selection. Next in order were high school 23%, intermediate 13.3% and graduate 5.9% only. This indicates that lesser number of higher educated women opted for this task.

Srivastava D.K. (2009)[1] also found 95% ASHAs educated upto class 8th or above in his study.

P. Ram Milan et al. (2009)[2] found that more than 3/4th ASHAs of study sample were from the younger age group (<30 and 30-35 yrs) and only a few ASHAs(4.3%) were from age group ≥ 40yrs. Most of the ASHAs (97.3%) were Hindus and Muslim ASHAs constituted only 2.7% of the total sample. Amongst Hindu ASHAs, 42.7% were belonged to Scheduled caste while about 40.0% were OBCs followed by 17.5% were from general category.

The above finding of bio social characteristics is almost similar to our finding.

No ASHAs was found to fall in category of social class I and II. 68.9% ASHAs of social class IV were in preponderness followed by social class III (30.4%) and only ASHA worker (0.7%) was social class V.

These observations indicate that majority of ASHAs were from lower socio-economic class.

Level of education and socio-economic profile of ASHAs showed that nearly 2/3rd of ASHAs (66.7%) belonging to social class IV were educated upto middle standard only, whereas remaining, about 1/3rd were high school and above. In social class III high school and above educated constituted about 2/3rd of ASHAs and middle level educated were only 36.6%. This shows a higher proportion of educated ASHAs in social class III in comparision to social class IV.

Majority of ASHAs from all caste were belonging to middle level educated group. However lowest level strata (middle level) was found maximum in Scheduled Caste category (76.5%) followed by OBC (54.8%) and general category (42.5%). Graduate level ASHAs were maximum in General caste category (14.3%) followed by OBC (5.5%) and none in Schedule Caste category. High school level educated ASHAs were also found in increasing order with increase in

level of caste. Intermediate level educated ASHAs were maximum in OBC category (29.4%). The above pattern showed that the level of caste and level of education of ASHAs was directly proportionate in its trend.

All caste groups i.e., Scheduled caste, OBC and General caste categories of ASHAs predominantly belong to social class IV i.e., 76.5%, 67.1% & 64.3% respectively, but a higher strata of social class III, the general caste ASHAs contributed maximum (35.7%) and minimum (23.5%) by scheduled caste category. This trend indicates that lower caste ASHAs workers were more likely to fall in lower social class.

2. **Behavioural Attitude:**

Behavioural attitude of studied ASHAs was found predominantly communicative 88.1% and only 11.9% were reserved type.

This attitude profile was further studied in relation to educational level of ASHAs and it was found that all 8 (100%) graduate ASHAs were communicative in their behaviour followed by intermediate level (94.4%). The proportion of reserved type ASHAs was relatively higher in middle and high school level educated ASHAs in comparision to intermediate and graduate. It was evident that level of education may have an influence on behavioural pattern of ASHAs besides their own temperament.

On average (81.8%) ASHAs were having positive behaviour attitude and were found communicative but age group wise data revealed that higher age group ASHAs belonging to age group 35-40yrs & 40-45yrs were relatively more communicative (87% & 100% respectively). This showed elderly ASHAs exhibit better behavioural attitude.

Bhatnagar R (2009)[3] also revealed that almost 50% in the blocks were covering population ranging from 1000-1500 and all the ASHAs have good coordination with local community and they were participating in community meeting regularly.

Table 1

DISTRIBUTION OF ASHAs ACCORDING TO THEIR BIO-SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Bio-Social Characteristics	Number	Percentage
AGE GROUP (yrs)		
25-30	11	8.1
30-35	61	45.2
35-40	54	40.0
40-45	9	6.7
Total	135	100.0

Table Contd.

RELIGION		
Hindu	134	99.3
Muslim	1	0.7
Christian	0	0
Sikh	0	0
Total	135	100.0
CASTE		
SC	34	25.2
OBC	73	54.1
General	28	20.7
Total	135	100.0
EDUCATION		
Middle	78	57.8
High School	31	23.0
Intermediate	18	13.3
Graduate	8	5.9
Total	135	100.0
SOCIAL CLASS (according to modified B.G Prasad Classification, AI CPI, April 2010)		
III	41	30.4
IV	93	68.9
V	1	0.7
Total	135	100.0

Table 2

DISTRIBUTION OF ASHAs ACCORDING TO THEIR BEHAVIOURAL ATTITUDE

Behavioural Attitude	Number	Percentage
Communicative	119	88.1
Reserved	16	11.9
Total	135	100.0

Table 3
BEHAVIOURAL ATTITUDE WISE AND EDUCTION PROFILE OF ASHAs

Behavioural Attitude	Education				Total
	Middle	High School	Intermediate	Graduate	
Communicative	68 (87.2)	26 (83.9)	17 (94.4)	8 (100)	119 (88.1)
Reserved	10 (12.8)	5 (16.1)	1 (3.6)	0 (0)	16 (11.9)
Total	78 (100)	31 (100)	18 (100)	8 (100)	135 (100)

Table 4
AGE GROUP WISE BEHAVIOUR ATTITUDE PROFILE OF ASHAs (n=135)

Age Group of ASHA Workers		Behaviour Attitude			
Age Group	Number	Communicative		Reserved	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
25-30	11	9	81.8	12	18.2
30-35	61	51	83.6	10	19.6
35-40	54	47	87.0	7	14.9
40-45	9	9	100	0	0
Total	135	116	85.9	19	14.1

χ^2=18.97, C.I=95%, df=3, p<0.05

References:

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