Universe International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research
(International Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal)
DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434

© UIJIR | ISSN (O) – 2582-6417
NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

JOB PERFORMANCE OF ACCREDITED SOCIAL HEALTH ACTIVIST(ASHA) AND PROBLEMS FACED BY THEM IN A SELECTED DISTRICT OF ODISHA: A MIXED METHOD STUDY

Author's Name: Miss. Anjali Rani Dey[1], Sasmita Kumari Padhi[2]

Affiliation:

1. Senior Lecture, Mrinalini Devi College of Nursing, Nimtala, Bolpur, India.
2. Govt College of Nursing, Berhampur, India.

Corresponding Author Name and Email ID: Anjali Rani Dey, anjalidey341@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

One of the key connections between the community and health services is the Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA). ASHA being the grass root level worker, the success of NHM depends on how efficiently is ASHA able to perform. The main objectives of the study were to assess the job performance of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) and problems faced by them. Both quantitative and qualitative approach with sequential design was adopted for the research study. Total 338 Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) by using purposive sampling technique were selected for quantitative approach and for qualitative part 7 Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) were chosen from Ganjam district, Odisha. Data collection was done by using structured rating scale and structured in-depth interview guide. The results of the study showed that most Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) were performing well. The primary issues raised by ASHAs were tight deadlines, workload during new programs, limited supervision, heavy workload. Drawn from the study was a need to strengthen the grass root level interventions in terms of enhancing traning, ensuring timely payments and improving support system.

Keywords: ASHA, Job performance, Problem faced, workload

DOI Link : https://doi-ds.org/doilink/12.2024-64277322/UIJIR

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NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

INTRODUCTION

One of the main measures of the National Rural Health Mission's effectiveness in India is ASHA. They have poured their heart and energy into providing the general public in rural India with healthcare services. The primary concerns of ASHA employees are connected to rewards, job satisfaction, and working conditions. The biggest obstacle these qualified healthcare professionals confront is activity-related rewards. According to a research done in a southern Indian state, 83% of ASHAs did not receive any payment or acknowledgement for their accomplishments. Of them, 41% claimed not to receive incentives on schedule. The biggest obstacles are an excessive workload, long workdays, demanding training sessions, and spending a lot of time outside in the scorching sun. They also claimed that they became ill from working for all of the national health programmes. Several ASHA employees stated that their commitment and work output are impacted by their heavy workload, and that the afternoon walk during the field visit is particularly taxing and stressful. ASHAs will raise community knowledge of health issues and social factors, encourage greater community involvement in local health planning, and demand greater accountability from the current health care system. The Indian government has implemented a series of indicators, mostly related to process, outcome, and effect, to track the implementation of ASHAS

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To assess the job performance of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) in a selected district of Odisha.
- To find out association between job performance level of ASHA with their selected demographic variables.
- To explore the problems faced by Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHAs) in a selected district of Odisha.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research approach for the study was mixed-method approach with Quantitative-Qualitative sequential design. The final study was conducted in OB & G department of M.K.C.G medical college and hospital, Ganjam, Berhampur, Odisha. In this study sample was Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) and the sample size consist of 338 ASHA's who are coming to the OB & G department. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. Tools were developed and used for data collection were socio-demographic data, structured questionnaire and structured in-depth interview guide.

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NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

RESULTS

The data are organized & presented in the following sections.

Section: -1: Findings related to demographic data of ASHA's.

63% of ASHAs belong to the age group of 36 years or older, while 37% fall within the 26-35 age. 97.9% of ASHAs identify as Hindu, while 2.1% identify as Christian. Interestingly, there are no ASHAs reported as Muslim. It reveals that 44.7% of ASHAs have no formal education, while 39.1% have attained primary education. Furthermore, 10.9% of ASHAs have completed secondary education, and 5.3% have achieved higher secondary education. ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) receive total monthly performance incentives exceeding Rs. 5000. the marital status distribution among ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) is as follows: 95.6% of ASHAs are reported as married, while 3% of ASHAs are widows, and 1.5% are divorced. 29.6% of ASHAs possess 1 to 5 years of experience, while 10.4% have 6 to 10 years of experience. The majority, comprising 60.1% of ASHAs. 30.5% of families are classified as nuclear families. In contrast, a significant majority, comprising 64.8% of families, are identified as joint families. Additionally, 4.7% of families are categorized as extended families. 42.6% of families reside in urban areas, while the majority, comprising 57.4% of families.

Section: -2: Assessment of job performance of accredited social health activist (ASHAs) in a selected district of Odisha.

Table-1: Level of job performance among ASHA **N = 338**

Job performance	Score	F	%
Poor	1-16	0	0
Low	17-32	0	0
Average	33-48	9	2.7
Good	49-64	325	96.2
Very good	65-80	4	1.2

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NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

Maximum score: 80, Minimum score: 1

Table-2: Association between levels of job performance among ASHAs with selected dem0ographic variables

Demographic Variable	Chi-Square	DF	p -value	Significance
1. AGE	.462	2	.794	Not Significant
2. RELIGION	3.792	2	.150	Not Significant
3. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	4.570	6	.600	Not Significant
4. TOTAL MONTHLY PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES(In rupees)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
5. MARITAL STATUS	18.331	4	.001	Significant
6. WORKING EXPERIENCE	5.516	4	.238	Not Significant
7. TYPE OF FAMILY	3.130	4	.536	Not Significant
8. NATURE OF POPULATION SERVED	4.315	2	.116	Not Significant

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SECTION III: Association between level of job performance of accredited social health activist (ASHAs) with selected demographic variable.

TABLE-3: Frequency and percentage between levels of job performance among ASHAs with selected demographic variables

N=338

Demographic Variable		Poor		Low		Average		Good		Very good	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1. AGE	18-25yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	26-35yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	3.2%	120	96.0%	1	.8%
	≥36	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	2.3%	205	96.2%	3	1.4%
2. RELIGION	Hindu	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	2.4%	319	96.4%	4	1.2%
	Muslim	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Christian	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	14.3%	6	85.7%	0	0.0%
	Any other specify	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
3. EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION	No formal education	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	2.6%	146	96.7%	1	.7%
	Primary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	5	3.8%	124	93.9%	3	2.3%
	Secondary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	37	100.0%	0	0.0%
	Higher secondary	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	18	100.0%	0	0.0%
	Graduation & above	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
4. TOTAL MONTHLY PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES(In rupees)	< 2000	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	2001-3000	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	3001-4000	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	> 5000	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	2.7%	325	96.2%	4	1.2%
5. MARITAL STATUS	Married	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	1.9%	313	96.9%	4	1.2%
	Widow	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	20.0%	8	80.0%	0	0.0%
	Divorce	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	20.0%	4	80.0%	0	0.0%
6. WORKING	1 yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

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EXPERIENCE	1-5 yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	99	99.0%	0	0.0%	
	6-10 yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	34	97.1%	1	2.9%	
	>10yrs	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	3.9%	192	94.6%	3	1.5%	
7. TYPE OF FAMILY	Nuclear family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	1.9%	101	98.1%	0	0.0%	
	Joint family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	7	3.2%	208	95.0%	4	1.8%	
	Extended family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	16	100.0%	0	0.0%	
8. NATURE OF POPULATION SERVED	Urban	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	.7%	142	98.6%	1	.7%	
	Rural	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	8	4.1%	183	94.3%	3	1.5%	

SECTION-4:-QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF PROBLEMS FACED BY ASHA

N= 07

Sl No		Frequency Count	Sentiments analysis	Sentiment	Sentiment overview
1.	Workplace Management	**7**	1.A1-Describes workplace management positively, feeling proud, and able to manage workload.	Positive	-Positive Sentiments: 3 out of 7 responses. - Neutral (Mixed) Sentiments: 4 out of 7 responses. -The sentiments about workplace management
			2.A2- Describes workplace management positively, hopes for government consideration after 18 years of service.	Positive	
			3.A3- Describes workload and time pressure, faces difficulties in travelling, and suggests better support.	Neutral (mixed)	

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www.uijir.com

					vary, with a mix of positive and neutral responses. - Some express pride and satisfaction, while others highlight challenges and the need for improvement.
			4.A4- Describes workplace challenges, sometimes feels the pressure, and highlights the need for more knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			5.A5- Describes workplace challenges, feels burdened due to a large population, and mentions financial support.	Neutral (mixed)	
			6.A6- Describes workplace challenges, mentions workload, and emphasizes the need for more knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			7.A7- Describes workplace management positively, proud to serve, and mentions financial improvements.	Positive	
2.	Relationship with authority	**7**	1.A1- Cooperative and supportive authorities, informative about work, satisfied with ASHA's work.	Positive	-Positive Sentiments:4 out of 7 responses. - Neutral (Mixed) Sentiments:3 out of 7 responses. -The Relationship
			2.A2- Respectful relationship, authorities provide information, chance to participate in programs.	Positive	
			3.A3- Overall good relationship, authorities support but sometimes pressurize for timely work.	Neutral (mixed)	

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			4. A4- Good relationship, authorities share information, occasional pressure regarding work.	Neutral (mixed)	with Authority (RA) is generally positive in most cases, with some instances of mixed sentiments where there is occasional pressure or dem ands.
			5. A5- Authorities provide information, occasional praise for timely work, sometimes assign more tasks.	Neutral (mixed)	
			6. A6- Authorities share information, acknowledge work, but sometimes demand more.	Neutral (mixed)	
			7. A7- Authorities are cooperative, share work-related information, and express satisfaction with ASHA's work.	Positive	
3.	Team dynamics	7	1. A1- Describes a supportive team, seniors providing assistance, and sharing knowledge.	Positive	-Positive Sentiments: 6 out of 7 responses. - Neutral (Positive) Sentiments: 1 out of 7 responses. -Team Dynamics (TD) is predominantly positive, with most responses expressing a supportive and
			2.A2- Highlights a good relationship with the team, learning from each other, and working collaboratively.	Positive	
			3. A3- Mentions working together in a program, sharing knowledge within the team.	Neutral (positive)	
			4. A4- Describes working as a team, sharing knowledge, and expressing the need for more knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			5. A5- Describes teamwork, sharing knowledge between team members.	Positive	
			6.A6- Highlights working together as a	Positive	

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			team, sharing knowledge.		collaborative team environment.
			7.A7- Describes team members as seniors, supporting each other, and sharing knowledge.	positive	
4.	Financial support	**7**	1. A1- Mentions improvement in salary and financial support for travel expenses.	Positive	-Positive Sentiments: 6 out of 7 responses. - Neutral Sentiments: 1 out of 7 responses. -Financial Support (FS) is generally positive, with most respondents expressing satisfaction with incentives, TA/DA, and improvements in salary.
			2.A2- Describes receiving incentives and TA/DA on time, emphasizes working to earn.	Neutral(positive)	
			3.A3- Mentions incentives for taking patients to the hospital, no medical support	Neutral	
			4.A4- Highlights receiving incentives and TA/DA according to work.	Positive	
			5.A5- Describes receiving incentives and TA/DA for work.	Positive	
			6.A6- Highlights receiving incentives and TA/DA on time.	Positive	
			7.A7- Mentions the improvement in salary, hopes for regular salary, and pension.	positive	
5.	Balancing task	**7**	1.A1- Describes managing work-related burden, facing challenges, and effective time management.	Neutral (mixed)	-Neutral (Mixed) Sentiments: 7 out of 7 responses. -Balancing
			2.A2- Mentions planning work to meet deadlines, facing challenges in time management.	Neutral (mixed)	

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			3.A3- Describes time-consuming tasks, difficulty in transportation, and lack of time.	Neutral (mixed)	Tasks (BT) seems to be a challenge for all respondents, with all responses expressing neutral/mixed sentiments. - The common themes include facing difficulties in managing time and dealing with a high workload.
			4.A4- Expresses feeling pressure regarding work, lack of knowledge, and difficulty in managing time.	Neutral (mixed)	
			5.A5- Describes working more time to complete tasks, facing challenges in time management.	Neutral (mixed)	
			6.A6- Mentions time pressure, workload, and difficulties in managing tasks	Neutral (mixed)	
			7.A7- Describes managing work, mentions work-related challenges, and lack of time for self.	Neutral (mixed)	
6.	Challenges	**7**	1.A1- Highlights challenges such as workload, lack of knowledge, and facing difficulties.	Neutral (mixed)	-Neutral (Mixed) Sentiments: 7 out of 7 responses. -Challenges (WC) are consistently expressed as neutral/mixed sentiments, with respondents highlighting various difficulties related to
			2.A2- challenges, the need for more knowledge, and mentions work pressure.	Neutral (mixed)	
			3.A3- Expresses challenges, work-related difficulties, and the need for more knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			4.A4- challenges in managing time, facing workload, and lack of knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			5.A5- challenges in managing work,	Neutral	

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NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

			facing difficulties, and the need for more knowledge.	(mixed)	workload, time management, and the need for more knowle dge.
			6.A6- challenges related to work pressure, time management, and lack of knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	
			7.A7- challenges, workload, time pressure, and the need for more knowledge.	Neutral (mixed)	

DISCUSSION

The investigation employed a structured survey to evaluate the job performance of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and the challenges they encounter in a specific district of Odisha, utilizing a mixed-method approach. Participant demographics were gathered through descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage, outlining their characteristics. Responses underwent analysis via inferential statistical techniques like the chi-square test to unveil potential patterns or correlations in the data. Furthermore, the relationship between ASHAs' job performance levels and certain demographic factors was examined using the $\chi 2$ test, while qualitative data underwent content analysis. Results were discussed in alignment with the study objectives, offering a comprehensive understanding of the findings and their implications for clinical practice and patient care.

SUMMARY

The chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of data collection from 338 Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)at OB & G department of MKCG ,MCH, Berhampur, Ganjam, Odisha. Results shows that there is no significant association between job performance of ASHA with the selected demographic variables. The chapter deals with analysis and interpretation of data collection from 338 Accredited Social Health Activist(ASHA)at OB & G department of MKCG ,MCH, Berhampur, Ganjam, Odisha. Results shows that there is no significant association between job performance of ASHA with the selected demographic variables.

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NOV 2024 | Vol. 5 Issue 6
www.uijir.com

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2. Urvashi Mishra1, Urmila Bhardwaj2, Neha John3 1M.Sc. Nursing (Community Health Nursing) 2nd Year, 2 Professor, Principal, 3Assistant Professor, Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard (Deemed to be University), New Delhi, India.
3. Mr. Ramesh Bidari1 Dr. Suresh Kumar Ray2 ,1 Clinical Instructor, BV (DU) College of Nursing, Pune 2 Associate Professor, BV (DU) College of Nursing, Pune
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DOI Link : https://doi-ds.org/doilink/12.2024-64277322/UIJIR