

## Community involvement strategies in non-formal education service of ICDS: An unique experimental development

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Received: 14.01.2012; Revised: 09.02.2012; Accepted: 12.04.2012

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present research was taken up with the objective of planning various strategies of community participation in the non-formal preschool education service of ICDS in the Anganwadis in the Village namely, Netaji Nagar, Chandan Nagar, Anandpur Colony and Kotha Narayanpur. Opinions of the community were obtained on the planned strategies and implementations of strategies opined by the community were done. The rationale for the selection of this research was that "If you give man a fish, he will eat for a day; so teach him to fish, he will eat life long". The qualitative research has been done, taking total sample of 160 respondents. Community people were mobilized to participate and two Anganwadis were established by researchers with community support in proposed ICDS Blocks. After experimentation of strategies, it was found that the level of community participation was improved and seen different for both proposed and functional ICDS blocks. The findings of the study signified the importance of creating awareness of the programmes among community as well as community be made aware of type of involvement needed from them and be motivated to participate in the programme for the successful running of the programme.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Non-formal pre-school education, Experimental development, Community support

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Shukla, Anshu and Ahuja, Abha (2012). Community involvement strategies in non-formal education service of ICDS: An unique experimental development. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 7 (1) : 64-67.

The young child holds an important place today in the society. His physical and psychological wellbeing is of unprecedented parental and community concern. The prediction made some eight decades before that this century would be the century of the child seems more than a wish. Today the progress and prosperity of a nation are intimately related to the optimum growth and development of its children. Research studies and investigations conducted in the field of child development have shown that the early years are the most crucial for the growth and development of children and that the environment exercises its maximum effect during the period of early childhood. The provision of pre-primary education would ensure a favourable environment conducive to the development of the pre-school children. Over the years, the child psychologists have also proved that there is continuity between infancy, early childhood and late childhood. During the past few decades, there has been an

accumulation of scientific evidences that has strengthened the conviction that the first few years in the child's life are crucial time for learning. Increasing attention has been drawn to cognitive development in infancy, early childhood and to the role of early stimulation in intellectual development.

Keeping these facts in mind, the government of India envisaged an ICDS Scheme, which would emphasize on total development of the child. The scheme was launched on October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1975 on an experimental basis in 33 projects- 17 rural, 12 tribal and four urban with a budget provision of three crores. Today the ICDS scheme is an important national programme for the welfare of women and children through these packages of services :

- Non-formal preschool education
- Health checkups
- Immunization
- Supplementary nutrition