Knowledge and Impact of Digitalization on Anganwadi Workers Workload and Well-Being.

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Abstract: *The integration of digital media in Anganwadi services has transformed the way Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) operate, bringing both opportunities and challenges. The digitalization of Anganwadi services, spearheaded by the Poshan Tracker app has significantly impacted the workload and well-being of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs). While the app aims to streamline data collection and improve nutrition delivery, AWWs have reported increased workload due to manual and digital data entry duplication. This shift has transformed their role from primary caretakers to data collection agents, adding to their existing responsibilities. AWWs face challenges such as poor internet connectivity, inadequate smartphones, and lack of digital literacy, further exacerbating their struggles. The added workload and technical issues have taken a toll on their mental health and well-being. Despite these challenges, digitalization has brought some benefits, including improved transparency and tracking of beneficiary data. To mitigate the negative impacts, it's essential to provide AWWs with adequate training, support and resources to effectively manage their digital responsibilities.*

Key Words: *AWW, digitalization, workload, well-being, caretaker, mitigate.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The integration of digital media in Anganwadi services has revolutionized the way Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) deliver healthcare and nutrition services to rural communities. Digital tools and platforms have been introduced to streamline data collection, improve monitoring, and enhance service delivery. This shift towards digitalization has significant implications for AWWs, influencing their workload, skills, and interactions with beneficiaries. As AWWs navigate the digital landscape, it's essential to explore the impact of digital media on their work, identifying both benefits and challenges. The impact of digitalization on Anganwadi Workers' (AWWs) workload and well-being is multifaceted.

Positive impact of digitalization on Anganwadi Workers (AWWs)

Digital tools have transformed the way Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) operate, bringing numerous benefits. Here are some positive impacts:

 Digital technology automates administrative workflows, reducing paperwork and enabling AWWs to focus on more critical tasks. This includes digital attendance and nutrition tracking, automated report generation, and real-time data monitoring. Digital tools provide AWWs with access to pre-planned activity ideas, interactive teaching aids, and age-appropriate digital stories and rhymes. This enhances the quality of teaching and learning outcomes. Digital milestone tracking and progress visualization tools enable AWWs to monitor child development more effectively. This helps identify learning gaps and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. Digital tools like the Poshan Tracker app facilitate the early identification and tracking of children with disabilities.

This enables AWWs to provide targeted support and referrals to specialized services. Digital tools provide AWWs with real-time data, enabling them to make informed decisions about their work. This includes tracking beneficiary data, monitoring nutrition delivery, and identifying areas for improvement. Digital tools can reach remote areas, enabling AWWs to access training, resources, and support. This bridges the gap in rural healthcare and education. Digital tools

empty AWWs to deliver better services, enhancing their skills and confidence. This, in turn, improves the overall quality of care and support provided to beneficiaries.

Digital Literacy Challenges:

Many AWWs struggle with digital literacy, making it difficult for them to effectively use apps and digital tools. Poor internet connectivity and inadequate smartphones further exacerbate the challenges faced by AWWs. AWWs spend a significant amount of time entering data on apps like Poshan Tracker and state-specific trackers, taking away from their primary caregiving responsibilities. They have to maintain multiple registers and update data on various platforms, leading to duplication of efforts and increased workload. The added pressure to meet digital targets and adhere to app guidelines has resulted in stress and anxiety among AWWs. AWWs spend more time entering data on apps like Poshan Tracker, taking away from their primary caregiving responsibilities. They have to maintain multiple registers and update data on various platforms, leading to duplication of efforts and increased workload.

The emphasis on digital data entry creates pressure on AWWs to meet targets, potentially leading to errors, fake data entry, and strained relationships with beneficiaries. Poor internet connectivity, inadequate smartphones, and lack of digital literacy hinder AWWs' ability to effectively use digital tools, further exacerbating their workload. AWWs' role has transformed from caregivers to data collection agents, which can be overwhelming and affect their morale.

Impact on Well-being:

The increased workload and pressure to meet digital targets have taken a toll on AWWs' mental health and well-being. AWWs have expressed feelings of burnout, stress, and frustration due to the added workload and lack of support. The shift from caregiving to data collection has also led to a sense of disillusionment among AWWs, who feel that their role is being redefined.

Benefits of Digitalization:

Digital tools like Poshan Tracker can help streamline data collection and improve monitoring of beneficiary data. Digitalization can enable real-time tracking and monitoring, allowing for more effective service delivery and supportive supervision. Training and up skilling AWWs on digital platforms can empower them to effectively utilize technology and improve their work performance. Digitalization brings numerous benefits to Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), enhancing their ability to deliver healthcare and nutrition services effectively. Some key advantages include:

Improved Data Management: Digital tools enable AWWs to efficiently manage beneficiary data, track growth, and monitor nutrition delivery, reducing paperwork and increasing accuracy. Digitalization facilitates real-time monitoring of service delivery, allowing for timely interventions and better decision-making. Digital records promote accountability and transparency in AWWs' work, enabling better monitoring and evaluation. Digital tools can reach remote areas, enabling AWWs to access training, resources, and support, bridging the gap in rural healthcare and education. Digitalization automates administrative workflows, reducing the time spent on manual reporting and enabling AWWs to focus on critical tasks. Digitalization can lead to improved health outcomes by enabling AWWs to track beneficiary health, identify gaps in care, and provide targeted support.

Government Initiatives:

The government has initiated programs to upgrade Anganwadi services, including providing smartphones and tablets to AWWs. The Ease of Doing Business Division (EoDB) has invited applications for pilot projects to digitize Anganwadi services and improve rural healthcare. The government aims to empower AWWs through digital literacy and training, enabling them to effectively utilize technology and improve service delivery. The Indian government has initiated programs to leverage digital technology and upgrade Anganwadi services, including:

Saksham Anganwadis Scheme: Aims to empower AWWs through digital literacy and training, enabling them to effectively utilize technology and improve service delivery.

Digital Literacy Workshops: Organizations like Saksham Sanchar Foundation conduct workshops to enhance AWWs' digital skills, promoting effective use of digital media and online platforms.

Objective: To assess the knowledge and awareness about the use of digital tools and technology of AWWs.

To assess the workload and well-being of AWWs after digitalization.

2. Methods and Materials

Mixed method approach is used by researcher to collect qualitative and quantitative data. First of all this study is limited to Himachal Pradesh in District Solan. So researcher select Solan Block to collect data from respondents. Researcher conveniently choose 60 AWCs and AWWs to collect information from respondents. Researcher used observation, survey and interview method to collect primary data from respondents. By using digital tools researcher collect data online in the google form. Researcher also visited some Anganwadi Centre for interview of Anganwadi Workers and by observation method collect data from records prepared by AWWs.

Researchers can develop structured questionnaires to collect data on AWWs' demographics, digital literacy, experiences with digital tools, and perceived benefits and challenges of digitalization. Researchers develop semi-structured interview guides to facilitate in-depth discussions with AWWs Researchers   develop guides to facilitate FGDs, ensuring that discussions remain focused and productive. Researchers   develop checklists to guide observations of AWWs using digital tools.

Researchers use digital tools, such as mobile apps or online surveys, to collect data from AWWs. Researchers can use mobile apps, such as ODK or Survey CTO, to collect data from AWWs. Researchers can use online survey tools, such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey, to collect data from AWWs. Audio or Video Recordings: Researchers can use audio or video recordings to capture data from interviews or FGDs.

3. Discussion and finding

- ❖ The training for digitalization for Anganwadi Workers is important. About 56% Anganwadi workers agreed that they get proper training about digitalization. The training programs should focus on building their digital literacy, familiarizing them with digital platforms like the Poshan Tracker app and providing hands-on experience with data entry and management. Additionally, the training should emphasize the benefits of digitalization, such as improved data accuracy, real-time monitoring, and enhanced transparency. Ongoing support and refresher training can help AWWs stay updated with the latest digital tools and technologies, ensuring successful implementation and sustainability of digitalization initiatives in Anganwadi centers.
- ❖ 69% Anganwadi workers agreed that they used Poshan tracker app in Anganwadi centre. Rest of Anganwadi workers faced various challenges to operate this Poshan app.
- ❖ About 84% of AWWs admit that digital tools have a dual impact on Anganwadi Workers' (AWWs) workload and well-being. On one hand, these tools streamline data collection, improve monitoring, and enhance transparency in their work. For instance, the Poshan Tracker app enables efficient management of beneficiary data, tracking growth, and monitoring nutrition delivery. However, on the other hand, digital tools can increase AWWs' workload due to the added pressure of data entry, potential technical issues, and the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life. Furthermore, AWWs may experience increased workload due to the expectation of constant availability and responsiveness, potentially disrupting their work-life balance.

S. No.	Description of items	Agree	Disagree
1.	Have you received training on digital tools?	56%	46%
2.	Can you used Poshan Tracker app?	69%	31%
3.	Has digitalization affected your workload and well -being?	84%	26%
4.	Have you experienced any challenges while using digital tools?	88%	12%
5.	Has digitalization improved your ability to track beneficiary data?	80%	20%
6.	Do you think digitalization has enhanced transparency in your work?	90%	10%
7.	Have you noticed any improvements in service delivery due to digitalization?	85%	15%
8	Do you think additional training would be beneficial?	90%	10%
9	Do you think digitalization has improved your job performance?	96%	4%

Table – 1.1

- ❖ 88% Anganwadi workers face numerous challenges in digitalization, including lack of digital literacy, poor internet connectivity, and inadequate smartphones, which hinder their ability to effectively use digital tools like the Poshan Tracker app. The added pressure of data entry and meeting digital targets has increased their workload, taking away from their primary caregiving responsibilities. Moreover, the emphasis on digital data collection has transformed their role from caregivers to data collection agents, leading to stress, anxiety and burnout.

- ❖ 80% of AWWs admit digitalization has significantly improved the ability to track beneficiaries' data in Anganwadi centers. The Poshan Tracker application, launched in March 2021, facilitates monitoring and tracking of all Anganwadi centers, workers, and beneficiaries on defined indicators. This digital platform enables real-time data collection, dynamic identification of stunting, wasting, and underweight prevalence among children, and effective delivery of services to beneficiaries.

- ❖ 85% of AWWs admit that digitalization has significantly improved service delivery in Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) through various initiatives. The Poshan Tracker application, launched in March 2021, facilitates real-time monitoring and tracking of AWCs, workers and beneficiaries on defined indicators.

- ❖ 90% of AWWs agreed that additional training would be highly beneficial for Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) to enhance their digital literacy, improve their skills in using digital tools and increase their confidence in delivering services. Most of the AWWs admit that digitalization has significantly improved the job performance of Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) in various ways. Digital tools like the Poshan Tracker app enable efficient management of beneficiary data, tracking growth, and monitoring nutrition delivery. Digitalization facilitates real-time monitoring of service delivery, allowing for timely interventions and better decision-making. Digital records promote accountability and transparency in AWWs' work, enabling better monitoring and evaluation. Digitalization automates administrative tasks, reducing paperwork and enabling AWWs to focus on critical tasks.

4. Conclusion

The impact of digitalization on Anganwadi Workers' (AWWs) workload and well-being is multifaceted. While digital tools like the Poshan Tracker app have streamlined data management, improved transparency, and enhanced service delivery, they have also introduced new challenges. AWWs face increased workload due to data entry, technical issues, and the pressure to meet digital targets, which can lead to techno stress and negatively impact their mental health. Furthermore, the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life can disrupt work-life balance, contributing to burnout. To mitigate these effects, it is essential to provide AWWs with adequate training, support, and resources to effectively utilize digital tools, ensuring that digitalization enhances their work efficiency and well-being rather than exacerbating their workload and stress.

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