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**AN EVALUATION STUDY OF 'ASHA' IN PROVIDING ACCESS  
TO HEALTH SERVICES AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS  
UNDER NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION: WITH REFERENCE  
TO THE STATE OF KARNATAKA**

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**ABSTRACT**

National Health Mission (NHM) is a government organization which works for uplifting the health sector in urban areas as well as in rural areas. In spite of many changes and development in the various sectors, health is one sector which has always been a major concern of the society. To improve the health conditions, NHM has laid certain strategies which are<sup>1</sup>:

1. Increasing Community ownership by vesting responsibility with PRI's.
2. Decentralized village and district level health Planning and management.
3. Appointment of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) to facilitate access to health services.
4. Strengthening the public health delivery infrastructure, particularly at village, primary and secondary levels.
5. Mainstreaming of AYUSH etc.



**Need for ASHA Intervention**

Increase in the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR), shortage of doctors and nurses at village level, Inability of Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANM) to provide health services at the door steps etc. are some of the major reasons for the establishment of ASHA. These health activist can provide and mobilise the community especially women and weaker sections of the society and to improve the present health services in the community.

**Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) ASHA**

In the year 2005, The Government of India launched National Health Mission (NHM) to improve the conditions of public health of rural areas. ASHA is one of the core strategy proposed by NHM.

ASHA refers to the women health workers of village level who works to improve the condition of health at grass root level of mothers, infants, old aged, sick and disabled people. The success of NHM lies, according to ASHAs functioning. Each ASHA is set up over 1000 population. ASHA acts as a link between a community and the health provider. Earlier ASHA was established in almost 18 states of India as the government has focused on these states to improve the health

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1 Retrieved 04, May, 2015 from, <http://nrhmrajasthan.nic.in/Programmes.htm#ai>

conditions and infrastructure (Figure1) but now, National Health Mission has fulfilled its promise of one ASHA in every village of the high focus states. With 9, 04,195<sup>2</sup> (Figure2) ASHAs in the programme, there is one for every 1000 population in almost every part of the country.

### ASHA

ASHA is recognised as ASHA in Karnataka. She is a worker who works in the PHC and Anganwadi center with an Anganwadi worker to provide its service door to door related to health and education. work is somewhat similar to ASHA so to avoid duplication of work it was decided at the state level that there will be only one worker with PHCO /HIO Anganwadi worker and later a new name was derived that came to be known as ASHA. And they are appointed by the community through Gram Panchayat.

In Karnataka there are 42,000 ASHA working in the state in order to aware and to provide counselling to rural people on related health issues. ASHA are workers whom are provided with 8 days induction training in order to cater better health facilities and further they are provided with compensation and performance based incentives according to the work performed by them. Recently, Government has recently launched ASHA Soft software through which online payments are being paid to activist.

### Eligibility for ASHA

- ASHA Sahyogini should be literate at least till eighth grade.
- She should be resident of that area, Married/Widow/Divorcee.
- Age should be between 21-45 years.
- She should have adequate communication and leadership skills.

### Work load: ASHA (1000 Population.)

Beneficiary category:<sup>3</sup> Expected number in an Year

S.No.	Beneficiaries	No. of Beneficiaries (Per ASHA)
1	Pregnant	30-31, out of which 4-5 may have complications and 50 % shall have anaemia
2	New Born	27-28 Children
3	Children in 0 - 1 Year	30 ( 3 % of the population)
4	Children 1-5 years	130, (13 % of Population)
5	Eligible couples	16-17% (15-45 years )
6	Eligible for Vasectomy/Tubectomy	5-7% of Eligible couples
7	Eligible for spacing Methods	11-12% of Eligible couples

### Evaluation – A Conceptual Framework

Evaluation can be defined as a process of assessing the information for providing the suitable feedback about some object. Here 'object' is refer to a program, policy, technology, individual, need, activity, and so forth. Evaluation main purpose is to evaluate the quality of program which further helps in decision making furthermore helps in emerging future needs. Evaluation alludes to an

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved 29 ,April,2015 from <http://nrhm.gov.in/communitisation/asha/asha-data.html>

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved 29 ,April,2015 from <http://www.sihfwrajasthan.com/ppts/full/ASHA.pdf>

intermittent methodology of social event information and after that examining or requesting it in such a route, to the point that the subsequent data can be utilized to figure out if your association or project is successfully completing arranged exercises, and the degree to which it is accomplishing its expressed goals and expected results.<sup>4</sup>

While evaluating we need to have certain questions in mind such as:<sup>5</sup>

- What would it be advisable for us to assess?
- For what reason do we assess,
- Who ought to assess?
- At what level one ought to assess,
- Upon what criteria do we assess?

### Importance of Evaluation<sup>6</sup>

- Helping to ensure that objectives are met.
- Identifying successes.
- Identifying problems and weakness so they can be rectified.
- Providing information to aid further development.
- Providing evidence of the benefits and impacts of technology.
- Identifying staff training and development needs.
- Guiding future plans.
- Providing information for stakeholders.
- Developing guidelines which may be useful.

### Evaluation of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA)

ASHA is very crucial and is one of the core strategies of National Health Mission. Therefore, evaluation of Accredited Social Health Activist is an imperative need in order to measure the various parameters and to provide useful feedback and recommendations in order to improve the further functioning of ASHA.

Evaluation of ASHA will be done on broad parameters such as socio-demographic profile and working profile, performance, the impact of training, the impact of technology, satisfaction level and impact on beneficiaries.

### Review of Literature

Literature reviews are the scholarly or published articles, papers or reports in which certain knowledge related to topic is available. It also includes information related to objectives, findings and tools of methodology used in the study.

### Some sources from which review of literature can be obtained:-

- Published Journals
- Books
- Internet

### Purpose for Review of Literature

- To fill the gaps in the literature.
- To find out the information and ideas that are relevant to our project

<sup>4</sup> Retrieved 05, May, 2015 from <https://www.guidestar.org/rxa/news/articles/2005/importance-of-evaluation.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> Retrieved 05, May, 2015 from [http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/3731/12/12\\_chapter%203.pdf](http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/3731/12/12_chapter%203.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Retrieved May, 05, 2015 from <http://www.evalued.bcu.ac.uk/tutorial/importance.htm>

- To identify, appraise and select the high quality evidences and arguments related to our project.
- To increase the depth knowledge in the particular field.
- To put our work in right direction

Note –APA Style has been used for reference of review of literature.

### Significance of the Study

The success of the National Health Mission (NHM) lies in the performance of ASHAs. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate and compare the performance of ASHAs. This study will be a significant contribution for development of future policies and guidelines of NHM for ASHAs in Karnataka. It will be a valuable aid in identifying problems and weakness of ASHAs in Karnataka, providing evidence of the benefits and impacts of technology on working of ASHAs, identifying their training and development needs etc. It will help in providing a valuable feedback on ASHA to NHM, programme managers and other stakeholders. It will thus, help them to strengthen the ASHA programme and also define her role in the future.

To the best of knowledge and conviction, no research work from this angle has been attempted by anyone till now. This motivated the researcher to select this as a topic of her research.

### Objectives of the Study

- To identify socio-demographic and working profile of ASHA .
- To evaluate and compare the performance of ASHA using technology and those not using technology in Aland Block of Kalburgi District. State Karnataka
- To analyse the impact of ASHA on the condition of beneficiaries in Kalburgi and Yadgiri District
- To find out the level of job satisfaction of ASHA
- To identify the challenges faced and support needed by ASHA

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