

**ORGANISATION & WORKING OF WORKING WOMEN
HOSTELS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
KURUKSHETRA & PANCHKULA DISTRICT**

**A
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CHAPTER - 5

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter has been divided into two sections. First section deals with the major findings of the study and second section deals with the suggestions made on the basis of the study.

5.1. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Based upon the analysis of the responses of the two categories of respondents, observations and discussions held during the process, the followings are the major findings of the study:-

- An analysis of the organizational and administrative patterns at various levels reveals that there are a number of organizational and administrative deficiencies in the social welfare system in Haryana. The in-depth study of organizational and administration pattern at central level depicts that under the umbrella of social welfare, women welfare has gone from ministry to ministry like a ping pong ball till the International year of Women, when at last a separate Ministry of Social Welfare came into existence. Women hostel which forms part of the welfare schemes, could not thus remain unaffected by this development.
- The study highlights that women welfare services, at union level, were split up among the various central government ministries, several ministries were dealing with some identical programmes. There is a considerable organisational overlapping in the activities undertaken by various administrative agencies. Due to this there is a total lack of consented action between various administrative agencies at union level. Owing to the peculiar nature and popular appeal of child welfare, a plethora of various administrative agencies had come forward to operate in this field. There is also no cohesive administrative plan which could fully associate each of the administrative agencies in the pursuit of common target and objectives.
- Secondly, it has also been found during the study that the visits of the higher authorities in the hostels are very occasional. Thirdly, the internal meetings of the

hostels are very rare. These all indicates that there are administrative problems in the hostel administration. It has also been observed that there is no regular annual inspection of the hostels either by the State Government or by the Central Government. Only about 50 percent of the hostels were inspected so far by the Inspection Committee appointed by State/Central Government.

In view of the above findings, the hypothesis that ‘the working women hostel scheme might be facing some organizational and administrative problems stands fully validated’.

- The organizations running the working women's hostels have followed the norms prescribed by the Government for construction of building, provision of amenities and facilities in the hostels, appointment of hostel staff and constitution of hostel management committees, maintenance of records of assets created out of Government grants and reservation policy in admission of inmates.
- In the majority of the cases the Government Grants have been utilized for the purpose for which they were sanctioned. The Hostel Management Committees are functioning properly in the majority of the hostels. However, only about 50 percent of the managements are submitting quarterly report to the Government.
- About 91 percent of the working women Hostels are not getting any maintenance grant from the government. As a result the managements are charging higher fees and collecting charges at higher rates from the inmates.
- It has been found during the course of the study that implementation of the District Sector scheme is entrusted to Zila Panchayats through the Deputy Directors at the district level in each district, who is assisted by an Assistant Director, a programme officer and ministerial staff for the proper and effective implementation of the schemes and programme of the department. The state sector scheme is implemented directly through the Deputy Directors of the districts.
- An analysis of the welfare policy and schemes for women welfare at various levels reveals that there are a number of policies and programmes implement by centre and state Government. The planning process has also been evolved over the years from purely ‘welfare’ oriented approach to a specific “women welfare”, recognizing women’s centrality in the development process, cutting across all sectors.

- Various policies and programmes have been evolved for the benefits of women in Haryana, yet the women are not able to make its use of these programmes. Due to poor facilities for communication, beneficiaries have to face many difficulties in having access to these welfare facilities. The Beneficiaries who wants to avail any of the benefits has to approach the authorities not the other way round.
- Majority of the residents are moderately satisfied with the messing facilities. In case of the staff, majority of them are highly satisfied with the messing facility in the hostels. A significant proportion of respondents from both the categories have been found with low level of satisfaction also. This is very serious concern and need to be taken care of by the hostel management.
- Majority of the respondents from residents, are moderately satisfied with the facilities of room service, sanitation and electric & water supply. In case of staff, there are an equal proportion of respondents who are highly and moderately satisfied.
- Majority of the residents are moderately satisfied with the facilities of guest room, common room and visitors' room. Only a marginal proportion of respondents from both the categories exhibit high level of satisfaction.
- Majority of the residents are highly satisfied with the facilities of day-care centre and play ground. In case of staff, majority of them are moderately satisfied with these facilities.
- On the availability of canteen, communication media and parlour, the respondents from residents' category were approximately equally divided.
- All the hostels are run by the government. It can be generalized that to avoid various eventualities and circumstances, the government has taken the initiative in running the hostel, itself. It is perhaps felt that other type of managements would not be able to provide the facilities to the working women as this is a social service and require huge amount of investment in running such services.
- Majority of the respondents from residents are of the view that government representatives attend the meetings of the hostels, occasionally. It reflects that the government is not paying much attention to the hostel facility and is not serious about this social welfare scheme.

- Majority of the respondents among residents and staff have reported that they are not provided with furnished rooms to live in. Only a marginal proportion of the respondents have reported that they are provided with furnished accommodation. This is a very sad state of affairs in the modern times.
- Nearly one-fifth of the respondents taken together from both the districts, have reported that no rules have been framed by the management for the hostel. Rests of the respondents in both the categories of respondents have reported that the management has framed such rules and regulations and they are in place. However, a significant proportion of the respondents under resident category have also been found undecided on this issue.
- Majority of the respondents in both categories of the respondents are of the view that hostel management keeps the record of all its assets, activities and correspondence. This is a very good sign. A significant proportion of respondents have the opposite view also
- Overall, majority of the respondents have stated that they are permitted to use the assets of the hostel. A significant proportion of respondents from both the categories have denied this fact, also.
- On the number of meetings held during the last four years, the respondents were equally divided. They numbered them between two to four during the last four years.
- Majority of the respondents taken together from both the categories of the respondents have confirmed the existing of an inspection committee to inspect the working and other affairs of the hostel. Overall, majority of the respondents from both the categories of the respondents have stated that the inspection committee undertakes two inspection visits in a year. No respondents have reported these visits to be more than three. There is a need to increase the number of visits of the inspection committee in order to make the administration active.
- On the question of the major problems of the hostels, majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents are of the opinion that the major problem faced by the Hostel administration is lack of Grants by the government. Political interference has also been named by a significant proportion of the respondents from both the categories.

In view of the above findings my hypothesis, ‘The State Government has not provided much needed attention and support for working women hostel scheme stands validated’.

- No indoor games are held in the hostels but majority of the respondents from both the categories have stated that Annual activities are held in the hostels. This means that the activities are not frequent. There is a need to increase them in order to make the life interesting in the hostels.
- A significant proportion of the respondents under both the categories of respondents do not follow the general guidelines made by the administration for running the hostel smoothly. Reluctance on the part of the users of the hostel facility is very serious and can cause obstacles in the smooth administration of the hostel facility.
- Overall, majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents are of the view that surprise visits in the hostels are occasional only.
- Majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents have reported that there is a system of grievance redressal in the hostels. However, a significant proportion of the respondents did not express their opinion on this issue.
- Majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents have reported that the booking in/out register is maintained all the times. A considerable proportion of the respondents have also reported that though the register is available but it is not maintained all the times. Overall, majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents have reported that they are allowed booking in/out as per their requirements and situations. A considerable proportion of respondents from both the categories of respondent have also indicated that they are not allowed late night booking in and out.
- All the respondents from both the categories of respondents from Panchkula and Kurukshetra district have reported that there are three types of accommodation available in the hostels. These are; single seated, double seated and three seated. Thus, there is no difference in the opinions of the respondents on this question.
- Huge majority of the respondents from the resident category have reported that the behaviour of the staff with them is cordial. A significant proportion of the

total respondents from both the district have also reported that the behaviour of the staff with them is not cordial. In the same way huge majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents have expressed that they have cordial relationship among them. However, a significant proportion of respondents have denied such cordial relationships.

- Huge majority of the respondents from both Kurukshetra and Panchkula district are of the view that the behaviour of the staff with the visitors is cordial, however, a significant proportion of the respondents are of the view that the behaviour of the staff with the visitors is not cordial. This may happen incidentally.
- Majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents came to know about the hostel from their colleagues or friends. Thus, friends and colleagues are very important source of information for working women. The other sources are electronic and print media, internet and family members.
- Majority of the respondents from both the categories have reported that there is an arrangement for the stay of the visitors in the hostel. However, a significant number of respondents from both the categories of respondents have stated that there are no arrangements for the stay of the visitors in the hostel.

In view of the above findings my hypothesis the beneficiaries of the scheme might have experience some positive impact in promoting their interest in their respective field' stands fully validated.

- Huge majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents have reported that the location of the hostel is convenience friendly.
 - Although majority of the respondents taking together both the categories of respondents feel safe and secure in the hostels, yet a significant proportion of the respondents also feel insecure. Management does not allow women late night booking in and out. This is all due to the insecure circumstances.
- Secondly, majority of the respondents have reported that the major problem faced by the hostel is 'lack of funds.. Due to this various problems take birth. The management has to raise the hostel fees in order to meet the expenses. This again indicates failures on the part of the management.

In view of the above findings my hypothesis, ‘Some problems like absence of security, lack of finances might be responsible for ineffective performance of the working women in the hostels stands fully validated.

- Overall, majority of the respondents from residents have opined that the hostel scheme has been successful in providing them full relief while a significant proportion of the respondents have opined that the scheme has provided them a ‘little relief’ only. A significant proportion of the respondents have also reported that the scheme has ‘not at all’ been successful in providing relief to them. This again is not a good indicator. The schemes are meant for providing relief to a certain categories of people but if people did not derive any satisfaction from these schemes, then there is no logic to continue with them. The failures should be investigated so that remedial actions are taken.

5.2. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the observation, feedback received from the respondents and discussions, the following suggestions may be made to improve the performance of working women hostel.

Visit of the Higher Authorities

During the study it has been found that the visits of higher authorities in the hostel are very occasional. Hence, it is recommended that the authorities of the Department of women and Child Development should give at least one visit in a year and conduct on-spot inspection of each hostel. Surprise visits in this regard can play an important role.

Sufficiency of the Funds

A number of WWH are charging high fees for the services provided in the hostel. This is mainly due to the fact that sufficient funds are not available at the disposal of the management. Moreover, only a few hostels are getting maintenance grants from the government and that is not sufficient to meet the expenditures on the maintenance. It is, therefore, suggested that the respective state Governments should give at least 50 percent of the total expenditure incurred on the maintenance of hostel. The funds should be provided liberally and there should be no interval between the instalments as breaks leads to increase in the cost of maintenance.

Records of the acquired assets

Though most of the organization to whom grants were released for construction of working women hostels have maintained a proper record of the assets acquired out of grants, the formats under which such record is made are not uniform in all the hostels. Hence, it is suggested that the format in which the records of acquired assets are maintained be prescribed by the department of women and child Development and all the managements be asked to keep the record of assets in this format only.

Single Occupancy Rooms

Most of the rooms in the hostel are three-seater. The occupants feel uncomfortable due to the interruption in privacy. Due to difference in occupation and working hours, all the occupants of a room may not be able to synchronize their timings. To avoid disturbances and ensure privacy, it is recommended that there should be single occupancy accommodation in the hostels.

Uninterrupted Electricity Supply

Many hostel occupants complained that there is no smooth electric supply in the hostels. The breaks in electric supply affect the provisioning of other facilities also. To take care of interruptions and cuts in electric supply, inverters should be provided so that small equipments and apparatus of the occupants can work. A generator can also be provided in the hostel so that uninterrupted power supply is available in the hostels.

Cleanliness and water supply

Working women also face problems related to cleanliness and water supply. Cleanliness and water is the most important part of life. Many times it happens that the sweeper takes several days off in a row, the management should arrange another worker in its place. Unclean and unhygienic conditions lead to sickness among the residents and staff. Therefore, the management should pay more attention to cleanliness and hygiene. The problem of the water supply should also be addressed which is the basic need. Water filters should be provided to ensure safe drinking water.

Provide *wifi* connection

In working women hostels, the government should also provide *wifi* facility because there are women in working women hostel who cannot afford to spend money on internet connections. Sometimes physical connection is not viable in the hostels, individually. If the facility of *wifi* is available, then they can work more efficiently utilizing their spare time at the hostel even after working hours. It would increase their productivity and bring them more income.

Attitude of the Warden towards residents.

When women leave their homes for jobs and come out of the house they have to face a lot of problems. If the hostel does not bring them homely feelings, the very purpose of living in isolated place away from the home is defeated. The warden should be cooperative who understands the problems of the residents. Minor allowances should be extended to them while booking in and out late for genuine purposes. He/She should treat the residents in a cordial manner. The warden should be friendly with the residents so that the residents can tell their problems to the warden without hesitation. The problems of the residents should be resolved as soon as possible. This will help in building long lasting relationship between the warden and the residents.

Provisioning of a Library in the hostel

Libraries are very important in the life of a student and a worker. There are many women who are not satisfied with their jobs and they want to study further to enhance their job opportunities. For this, library is a place where they can study to build their career. Library is also important for a working woman as it inculcate a habit of reading among them.

Sport and Games

Everyone feels mentally tired after a job. Playing is the best therapy to relieve mentally fatigue. Residents can be protected by mental depression if some sports are provided along with the facility of play ground in the hostel. Sports would keep the residents physically and mentally fit, relieving them from the boredom of a job.

Grievances redressal mechanism

During the course of their stay in the hostel, women may face certain administrative and harassment related problems. There should be a mechanism where they can lodge

their complaints and grievances and find the resolution. Government has also made a rule that at every workplace there should be a women cell who would entertain the complaints and grievances of the women. If the grievances are resolved in time, it would lead to mental peace and the culprits would be brought to justice.

Guest room

Although modern hostels have guest rooms and visitors' rooms, but they are not maintained properly. Where the hostels are old patterned, they should be modified with addition of a guest room. The family members or relatives of the residents would be able to stay there for short periods when they come to meet them.

The size of room

Most of the hostels have three-seater rooms. These rooms are too small to take care of three persons. Either the size of the room should be increased or there should be a single occupancy hostels so that privacy is maintained. In multiple occupancy rooms, various problems are noticed.

Management of the hostel

The hostel should be managed properly. There should be rules in place to take care of most of the things. The staff of the hostel should be sufficient and disciplined. The arrangements should be proper and without chaos. The rules should be followed by all without any favouritism. Any deviations should be dealt strictly according to the rules framed by the management.

Late Night booking in/out

Many times it happens that after the closure of the hostel, the residents have to go out for some requirements. For this they need permission to go out. The rules should be such that in case of any exigency or immediate requirements, they are given permission. There should be some flexibility in the rules. The warden should understand the problems of the residents and act according to the situation.

Parking Place for visitors

Most of the times, the area of the hostel is not so vast. Only the vehicles of the residents and staff can park there. Due to the limited size, many a times there is a rush in the compound of the vehicles of the visitors. To care of the parking of the visitors,

separate arrangements of parking should be made. Otherwise, the hostel compound is meant for the vehicles of the residents and staff only.

Location of the hostel should be convenient

The location of the hostel also remains a major issue. If the location is convenient, it saves a lot of time of the residents. The hostel should be at such a place where the means of travelling can easily be found. It should be very convenient in all respects. It should be easy accessible. Secondly, there should not be any safety threat if any resident has to reach it in late night hours. The new hostels which are being opened should be opened after carefully examining the threats of security and taking into consideration the convenience.

The government should provide long run relief to women

Government makes many schemes for the welfare of women. Some has been successful while others have been unsuccessful and the government has to abandon them. Therefore, the government should start those schemes which are really beneficial to them. Those which are started merely for political gain are doomed to fail. Therefore, to avoid the wastage of public money, the pro and cons of the schemes should be examined before they are floated.

Women friendly working hours

The timing of hostel and entry and exit are fixed by the management after a lot of consideration. But during the study it has been found that sometimes women are not allowed to late book in and out. Therefore, the hours of the hostel should be such that they take convenience of the residents and the staff. There should be some allowance of flexibility keeping in view the circumstances and situations of the women.

Staff should be sufficient

It has been observed during the visits to the hostels that the hostel does not have sufficient staff. Due to this, the efficiency of the administration decreases. It creates mismanagement. It is suggested that the vacant posts should be filled as and when they fall vacant. New posts should be created taking into consideration the workload and various other issues. If a post is not filled due to immediate recruitment problems, they should be filled by hiring contractual staff so that the administration is not hampered.

We therefore suggest that the Department of women and child Development should prescribe a staffing pattern applicable to all the hostels.

Meetings should be regular

It has also been found during the study that the meetings of the hostel management committee are not regular. In the absence of such meetings, many issues remain pending to be resolved. Consequently, it leads to malfunctioning and maladministration. The Hostel Management Committees are constituted in majority of the hostels but on an average the number of meetings conducted in a year is around two. It is necessary that the Hostel Management Committees meet monthly to review the regular working of the hostels.

Inspections should be frequent

The State/Central Government exercises control over the hostel management through Inspections. These inspection teams consist of experts in many areas relating to the hostels and such types of institutions. But it has been observed that these inspections are very occasional. Hence, it is suggested that for proper and efficient working of the hostels the Inspection Committee should visit the hostels every year as a routine and should also conduct specific inspection when a need arises.

Periodical reports and returns

It is through various periodical reports that the government exercises control over the functioning of the hostels. These reports contain administrative and financial information which are required at the Head Office level to monitor the status of hostel administration. During the study, it has been observed that many hostels which did not submit quarterly progress reports, or annual reports to the State or central Government or the Department of women & Child Development. Although these reports are mandatory but the hostel management citing various excuses, does not submit them to the authority. As a result monitoring is hampered and the authorities sitting in the central or state head offices cannot ascertain the actual situations of the working of the hostels.

A need to open more hostels

The number of working women is increasing day by day and as a result there is a consistent demand from the women and girls for admission. The present number of

working women hostels is far less than the demand. Due to lack of accommodation in the hostels, they have to remain as a paying guest in some houses or hire a room in the city. They face various problems in the city including that of safety and security. Secondly, they end up paying a handsome amount from their salary as rent and also have to spend a handsome amount on foods.

Therefore, it is suggested that the Department of women and Child development should sanction more hostels in some cities where working women are employed. The hostel may also be opened in small towns where job opportunities are there and there is a demand for the hostels. A survey may be conducted to find out the real demand of hostels in a particular area.

Everybody should contribute in smooth Hostel Administration

Running the hostel, smoothly, is everybody's responsibility. Everyone should understand one's responsibility, whether it is a resident or a staff member. When everyone takes the responsibility and plays one's part, then there would be discipline and administration would be active. Residents should also understand the responsibility of hygiene and cleanliness. They should follow the rules and guidelines in letter and spirit. The staff should also understand the problem of the residents and play their role for which they are recruited thinking that the residents are their customers. When the residents and the staff bear their respective responsibilities, the life in hostel would be liveable.

Overlapping and duplicity

It has also been found during the study that there are overlapping in the schemes run by central and state governments. Due to this there is no coordination and coherence. Due to this there is duplicity in the functions and it causes frictions among various organs. It is suggested that the overlapping of the schemes should be done away and there is clear demarcation of the functions and responsibilities of various organs of welfare administration.

It has also been found that there is a total lack of consented action between various administrative agencies at union level. There is also no cohesive administrative plan which could fully associate each of the administrative agencies in the pursuit of common target and objectives. Therefore, there is a need to integrate various components of social welfare administration so that confusion is removed.

Information and awareness

Various policies and programmes have been evolved for the benefits of women in Haryana, yet the women are not able to make its use of these programmes. Due to poor facilities for communication, beneficiaries have to face many difficulties in having access to these welfare facilities. It is suggested that all the information relating to the welfare of women should be at a single place. Women should not run here and there for the information relating to the programmes and schemes which are beneficial to them.

Safety and security of women hostel

Safety and security of the women should be on the top of the priority. Most of the working women hostels are deficient in security personnel deployed to take care of their security. Many times, even the boundary walls of the hostels are not protected well. The boundary wall and gates can be trespassed without any difficulty. It is suggested that the CCTV cameras should be installed in front, in the corridors and other places without affecting the privacy of the women.

Policy issues

Although the government has made a lot of policies and programmes for women and has implemented them, more women friendly policies should be made for working women so that they can get maximum benefits. This would help them in becoming self sufficient and independent. As they also can excel in every field, they would be prepared to do so with the help of the supporting policies and programmes. Women, who are approximately 50 % of the population, also contribute immensely in the national development. Therefore, there is a need to estimate their potential and provide them opportunities to move forward. Hostel is such a support for them.

This is not the complete list of suggestions and recommendations. There are many grey areas where improvements are desired. The conditions of the hostel are not so bad also. With little attention and consistent monitoring, the hostel facility can be made more attractive for the women. Days are not far behind when women would prefer hostels to their homes. But to achieve this, every stake holder should work hard thinking that the women belong to such section of people who have been deprived of their social rights till now.

Finally, it can be said that though the process of providing the welfare facilities to women is very slow, it is moving in the right direction. During the last few decades, the living conditions of women have improved due to the efforts of the government and support from their families. Today, they have started demanding more and more facilities for their betterment. To realise their dreams, there is a need to make the delivery system more efficient, effective and accountable so that the benefits of their welfare schemes do not remain superficial and are within their reach.

The suggestion offered above can be effective if seriously considered by the state government for implementation. It is high time that government should support a strong women work force leading to women empowerment in real sense.