



AN EVALUATION OF THE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PROBLEM FACED IN MGNREGS



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ABSTRACT

MGNREGS is one of the most significant and progressive legislations enacted by enforcing the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement in general and specifically an unique employment opportunity for ruralities without any bias based on caste, creed religion or gender. There were many potentialities in this dream project of the government like the right to apply for, demand and choose work, timely disbursement of wages, special provision to women and elderly, transparency in social audits, less exploitative, flexibility etc. However, with all such potentialities yet the scheme had to face certain constraints. Thus, this paper makes an attempt to understand the their attitudes towards the problems faced by the beneficiaries in the scheme. The sample consisted of 500 randomly selected respondents through personal interview technique from Davangere district of Karnataka state. Only those respondents were selected who had worked for atleast 75 days in last year i.e, 2013-2014. The study found that majority of the respondents agreed that there was corruption in the scheme and requested to for training to be given about handling of the tools and special provision to be given to senior citizens.

KEYWORDS: *MGNREGS, Poverty, Female Labours, Villages, Rural Areas, Development Goals*

INTRODUCTION

A large proportion of people depends on agriculture which is characterized by low productivity, un-stability of monsoons, fluctuations of income, gender bias, sexual harassment, family pressure etc., besides the other poor and non agricultural female labours are forced to take other sorts of domestic work in rich families who are paid with a meager income and stale food. Thus poor women in rural areas are encountered with many problems. Since time immemorial we find that there is inequality and vulnerability of women in all spheres of life where in she faces a lot of humiliation that she is a female, burden to the family and her sorrows extends if there is poverty in the family

Development strategies, the world over, have long suffered under the weight of institutionalism, bureaucracy

and red-tapism and have manifested as misinformed, misused or misguided charity. Past policies to address poverty were based on the faulty premise that the poor are neither creditworthy nor able to save. The emphasis was largely on “giving and forgiving” loans. These development initiatives involved credit transfers and have had a history of “doubtful coverage of the poor, with a never-ending need for injections of public resources to keep rural state-driven, top-down banks and cooperatives from collapsing”. In the past fifteen years poverty-reduction has become an integral part of development paradigms: it has emerged as a World Bank objective in the 1990s and was adopted as one of the UN Millennium Development Goals in 2000. Further, in recent years, empowerment of women has been recognized as a central



issue in determining the status of women. Since independence, the Government of India's policy on women's development has undertaken various shifts of emphasis. Under successive five year plans of the country several measures have been initiated in India to provide employment and training to women.

Thus the solution to all these major problems is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme can be considered as a boon in the history of India and a much promising intention can be seen from the perspective of poverty reduction and women empowerment. One of the important features of MGNREGS is that it protects employment as the fundamental right of the individuals with all its rules which is equal to both the gender Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is one of the largest public programme launched by the government. It is an important step towards the concept of right to work which enhanced the rural people's livelihood security and also developed the infrastructure of rural areas. The scheme has potentially given a new dimension of work culture by developing the concept of glocal and social change instrument as it has developed a kind of social responsibility where in the people put more efforts as they were paid for the developmental activities of self and their villages also which not only empowered the ruralities personally but the entire village was empowered through the scheme. This scheme also curbed migration, as it provided employment during lean season which made people to work with full dedication and determination. However, the scheme has to be seen from another perspective. MGNREGS is not free from problems and unresolved issues. The scheme had to face the criticisms of intinely wage payments, corruption, nepotism, interference of other members, lack of proper awareness etc.

In the words of Bagchi KK "The MNREGA is a multiplier-based demand stimulus in this time of recession. To explain, multiplier is the Keynesian concept where the money put in the hands of the people results in greater output through each consecutive round of spending. The rural population has a higher propensity of consume; so, the effect of the multiplier is greater. This, combined with public investment through the NREGA would stimulate private investment through the accelerator. The accelerator is another Keynesian concept where a spiraling output also ends up resulting in higher rates of private investment. This typical multiplier accelerator interplay would affect the impact of NREGA. Such synergy would lead to a spiral of growth that is sustainable in economic and ecological terms". (Bagchi K K)

PROCESS

Adult members of rural households will submit their name, age address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his/her photo. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to panchayat or to Programme Officer. The panchayat/ programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work wilt he sent to the applicant and also displayed at panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid.

MGNREGS: A GLANCE**TABLE No: 1 - MGNREGS: A GLANCE**

		FY 2013-2014	FY 2012-2013	FY 2011-2012
Total no of Districts		644	636	635
Total No. of Blocks		6576	6568	6378
Total No. of GPs		247643	247643	247643
Total no of Villages		778134	778134	778133
Total No. of HH Registered(In Cr)		12.9	12.9	12.6
Total No. of Workers in Job Card(In Cr)		28.3	28.6	27.8
Number of GPs with NIL exp		36165	25761	25065
Number of Ongoing Works(In Lakhs)		98.7	80.2	53.2
Total No. of Works Takenup (New+Spill Over)(In lakhs)		109.4	106.5	80.8
Total Exp(In Cr)	Wages(Rs. In Cr.)	17237.8	27133	24306.2
	Material and skilled Wages(Rs. In Cr.)	5585	10377.2	10650.5
	Adm Exp:			
	GP Level	136.3	307.6	301.8
	Block Level	696.7	1327.8	1191.7
	District Level	282.6	482	514.4
	State Level	87.561	32.936	108.055
	Total Adm Expenditure	1203.2	2150.4	2116
	Total Exp(Rs. in Cr.)	24026.1	39660.6	37072.7
	Labour Vs Material(%)	75.5	72.3	69.5
Admin Exp(%)	5	5.4	5.7	
Wage Employment Provided(in lakhs)	Households	372.6	498.3	506.4
	Individuals	542.1	796.2	820
	Men	276.2	421.6	446.6
	Women	265.9	374.7	373.3
	SCs	127.4	181.3	185
	STs	93.2	142.6	147.4
	Persons with Disability	3.4	4.1	4
Person days(In Cr)	Total as per LB	259.4	278.7	199.6
	Persondays Generated so far	129.7	230	218.8
	% of Total LB	50	82.5	109.6
	% as per Proportionate LB	62.8	105.7	155.8
	SC persondays	30.4	51.1	48.5
	ST persondays	20.1	40.8	40.9
Average Wage rate per day per person		129	121.4	114.5
Average days of employment provided per Household		34.8	46.1	43.2
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment(In Lakhs)		12.1	51.5	41.7
% payments generated within 15 days		68	58	57.8
% of payments Disbursed through EFMS		15.9	0.9	0

Source: narega.nic.in – the ministry of Rural Development- Government of India

In the initial year this scheme was introduced only in 200 districts in 2006 but by 2013-14 the scheme was introduced in 644 districts. In Financial Year 2009-10, 45.1 million household were benefited with the scheme and by 2010, 619 districts were covered under the scheme on which 49.0 million households were benefited. In 2011-2012 635 districts were covered and in 2012-2013 636 districts are covered and the recent updates in 2013-

2014 644 districts are covered. Total person days was created 2513 million, of which 737.9 million (30 percent) were Scheduled Castes, 540.3 million (22 percent) were Scheduled Tribes, 1210.5 million (49 percent) were women and 1224.8 (48 percent) were others in 2010 increased to three fold and this is evident from the above Table No.- 1. Persons with disability were also given importance and we find that their number accentuating. The above table

illustrates the successful development of the scheme with every year

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The main purpose of the review of literature pertaining to the evaluation of performances of NREGS in Karnataka is to give a proper orientation and perspective to the present work. A survey of literature places a significant role in establishing the backdrop for any research work in social sciences. It is felt that justification of present study can be made by reviewing the available literature on the subject. Therefore, an attempt has been made to review the literature on the subject so as to establish the relevance of the present study.

Employment-related programmes and schemes for the rural masses have been designed not only with generation of income in mind but also to revive the failing agricultural sector. Agricultural unemployment is caused by a number of factors such as the very seasonal nature of agricultural work, the decay of cottage industries, lack of alternative work in the rural areas, sub-division of land holdings, etc. R.K. Mukharjee has said in his "Rural Economy of India" that an average cultivator in north India does not remain busy for more than 200 days in a year. Studies have revealed that of the total population in the rural areas only 29.4% of the people are self supporting, 59% are non-earning dependents, and 11.6% are earning dependents. This means that 29.4% people not only support themselves but they also support the remaining 70.6% people as well. In order to improve this situation the Government enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (rechristened as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) in September 2005. Under this programme 100 days of employment is guaranteed to one able bodied person from each rural household. The act also mandates 33 percent participation for women.

Indira Hirway (2006) in her working paper titled "Enhancing Livelihood Security through the National Employment Guarantee Act Toward Effective Implementation of the Act," reveals that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of 2005 is a major development in the history of poverty reduction strategies and rural development policies in India. Though the successful passage of the Act is due to the long struggle by NGOs, academics, and some policymakers, its successful implementation is a much bigger challenge. Effective implementation of the Act requires that labor-intensive works be planned for the needy poor on a continuous basis; that the right kind of assets are undertaken to promote the development of the local/regional economy;

and that the labor-absorbing capacity of the mainstream economy be raised and assets maintained well and used productively to generate benefits for the poor, as well as to promote pro-poor economy growth. The past experiences of wage employment programs in India, however, suggest that there are several challenges ahead. These include strengthening the planning component of the program, particularly planning for infrastructure and natural resource management; coordination and conversion of the Employment Guarantee Scheme with ongoing programs; ensuring supply of labor on EGS works; promoting equity in the ownership of the assets; and using assets to improve the employment generation in the long run. Thus the working paper discusses the challenges and observes that the Employment Guarantee Act should not be treated as one more poverty alleviation program, but should be seen as an opportunity to eradicate the worst kind of poverty and to empower the poor and promote pro-poor growth of the Indian economy.

In a review like this the prime motive would be to thrash out significant theoretical issues which could be brought to bear upon the empirical fact for the purpose of validation of existing knowledge which in turn provides relevance and meaning for the findings of the present scientific inquiry. In addition to these a review provides us with the necessary insights into the current issues and themes under investigation. In the sociological circles the findings of the present study could find a meaningful place. However, the author is aware of the limitation of time and resource which act as constraining factors in making adequate justice to the existing literature concerning the present theme, i.e., addressing agrarian crisis in MGNREGA by farmer's challenges faced by them and poverty alleviation strategy as well as social change with the impact of national agricultural policies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study intends to examine the experience and attitude towards the scheme present study has inter-disciplinary approach and relevance as the study would focus on identifying the social, economic and political potentiality and challenges of the scheme as experienced by the farmers in overcoming the agrarian crisis.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Karnataka in Davangere district with 2 taluks were taken and simple random sampling method of 504 sample size was adopted for the study. Only those beneficiaries who had worked for minimum of 75 days in the year 2013-2014 were selected for the study. Data was collected through structured interview schedule. The paper analyses about the problems faced by the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The problems faced from the scheme can be seen from two perspective that is at the government level which is encountered with issues like poor planning, political interferences, lack of timely release of funds, lack of proper evaluation of programme, corruption and from individual level there is lack of awareness about the basic

structure of the scheme, fake muster rolls are created, job cards are passed on from hands to hand. During the study it was found that people did not have full fledged idea about the scheme. Further the programme is implemented through Ministry of Rural development while its progress is monitored through Planning commission.

Table No : 2- Attitudes about the problems faced

Sl.No	Problems Faced	Response	Frequency	Per cent	Total
1	Non Availability of regular and continuous work	Yes	15	3.0	100.00
		No	489	97.0	
2	Political Interferences	Yes	117	23.2	100.00
		No	387	76.8	
3	No special provisions for village elders	Yes	465	92.3	100.00
		No	39	7.7	
4	Over Interference by village members	Yes	27	5.4	100.00
		No	477	94.6	
5	Corruption	Yes	438	86.9	100.00
		No	66	13.1	
6	Nepotism	Yes	38	7.5	100.00
		No	466	92.5	
7	Non Availability of work site facilities	Yes	43	8.5	100.00
		No	481	91.5	
8	Some works are of not good quality	Yes	49	9.7	100.00
		No	455	90.3	
9	No proper guidance and counseling	Yes	393	78.0	100.00
		No	111	22.0	
10	No special training for the works given	Yes	476	94.4	100.00
		No	28	28	
11	No special provision for skilled and semi skilled	Yes	441	87.5	100.00
		No	63	12.5	
12	Very exhaustive manual labour	Yes	117	23.2	100.00
		No	387	76.8	
13	Agricultural labours became costly	Yes	27	5.4	100.00
		No	477	94.6	
14	Harassment by officials	Yes	28	5.6	100.00
		No	476	94.4	
15	Percentage share to be given to others	Yes	12	2.4	100.00
		No	492	97.6	
16	Low awareness of entitlements	Yes	22	4.4	100.00
		No	482	95.6	

Non availability of regular and continuous work: From the above Table No.1 it is found that majority of the respondents got regular and continuous work. It as found during the study that the scheme was really a boon to many landless farmers as during the lean season the scheme gave them the job. Thus there was financial flow through out the year and the ratio of unemployment was comparatively less

No special provision for elders: the project gave job to the adults while it was much in favour of the senior citizens, as the work required many a time manual work and this could not be done by the old age people. Further

there were no proper rest place or other required facilities and this made the old aged to keep them selves away from the scheme. Thus, in this scheme many agreed that there were no special facilities for the elders.

Corruption: Majority of them (86.9 %) agreed that there was lot of corruption in the scheme. The field investigators observed that there some irregularities in terms of job cards, muster rolls, distribution of money, amount paid, work done at the site etc.

No proper guidance and counseling: Majority of the respondents (78 %) blamed that there was no proper counseling or guidance by the official people. People lacked

knowledge about availing the job cards, demand for work, availability of work etc.

No special training for the works given: There were no proper training given in terms of handling the instruments, or the work to be done. Being naïve to the work it landed them in trouble by harming themselves at the work site. Majority of the respondents expressed that training to be given for the smooth functioning of the scheme.

No special provision for skilled and semi skilled workers: There was no major difference in payment between skilled and semi skilled workers. The respondents felt that this created no gap between both sort of workers and payment needs to be done on the quality and quantity of work done and should not be concentrated only on duration or structure of work.

However, the beneficiaries agreed that with the implementation of the scheme it was difficult to find agricultural laborers and if found also they demanded more wages. Thus this scheme made the landlords to pay more for the workers in order to make their work complete.

CONCLUSION

Thus it was found that majority of the respondents agreed that there was corruption and nepotism in the scheme while special training was required for certain work to be completed.

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