

Impact of MGNREGA and Women's Participation

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Abstract

The study has examined the impact of MGNREGA and the participation of female beneficiaries in Wahipora village panchayat of Kupwara District. This study is predominantly based on the primary data collected from the selected respondents by applying the Random sampling method. The research study covered the aspects like social conditions of the respondents, knowledge, and perception regarding the performance of MGNREGA in the particular study region. The analysis concludes that MGNREGA is an important programme implemented by the Government of India in 2006 for the betterment of rural poor people by providing 100 days of wage employment and by creating self-confidence among unskilled workers mainly in females by decreasing the gender discrimination.

Keywords: MGNREGA, Better life, Self-confidence, Gender discrimination

1. Introduction

Since Independence, various employment generation and poverty alleviation programmes were introduced by the Government of India with the consent of Union territories and state governments to decrease the unemployment crisis and to increase the standard of living particularly in the rural areas. But these programmes had not worked effectively and did not yield any desired results to increase the standard of rural living particularly of women inhabitants. Therefore, the Government of India introduced National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in August 2005 and implemented in 200 backward districts of the country in February 2006. However, the Act was extended to the state Jammu and Kashmir on 11th May 2007 and covers the whole country in April 2008. The Act was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in October 2009. MGNREGA aims to enhance the livelihood security of rural India by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. MGNREGA has become an influential tool for inclusive growth in rural India and it has a widespread impact on social protection, livelihood security, women empowerment, and democratic governance. The Act also focusing on strengthen the natural resources management through the works that address the chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion and ultimately encourages sustainable development.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

MGNREGA is an important initiative taken by the Central Government towards the rural development. The Act is different from the previous rural welfare programmes and is more attractive and beneficial to the rural poor people for the reason that the Act mandates one-third of beneficiaries shall be women and providing equal work and wages for both male and female beneficiaries within the locality. In case, work is provided beyond the vicinity of 5kms extra wages of 10 per cent are payable to meet additional transportation and living

expenses. Further, the allocation of 100 days of work to the household is left to the household members which allowing space for the participation of unemployed family members including women. Thus, this study seeks to investigate the impact of MGNREGA and participation of women beneficiaries in the Langate block of Kupwara District, Jammu and Kashmir with the following objectives.

1. To identify the participation of women workers under MGNREGA
2. To find out the awareness of MGNREGA among the respondents
3. To assess the satisfaction of the respondents regarding the functioning of MGNREGA

2. Methodology

This study is descriptive in nature which enables to describe the respondent's views regarding the impact of MGNREGA and the level of women's participation in the Wahipora Village Panchayat of Langate Block, Kupwara District. The study is made by using both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected by constructing the interview schedule and the secondary data were collected from the official website of MGNREGA.

The study village panchayat consists total 299 registered registrants under MGNREGA. Out of the total 299 registered job card holders under MGNREGA, the researcher selected 20 percent i.e. 60 respondents by applying the Random Sampling method for the purpose of data collection. Finally, the collected data were properly coded, tabulated and analysed by using the simple percentage method of calculations.

3. Results and Discussion

The data has been analysed and interpreted in a simplified manner in order to know the impact of MGNREGA and participation of women in a particular village panchayat.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their Gender, Age, Marital Status and Education (N=60)

Gender	No. of the respondents		
	Male	Female	Total (%)
	41 (68.3)	19 (31.7)	60 (100.0)
Age	Male	Female	Total (%)
Below 30 years	8	-	8 (13.3)
31-40 years	9	6	15 (25.0)
41-50 years	17	8	25 (41.7)
Above 50 years	7	5	12 (20.0)
Marital Status	Male	Female	Total (%)
Married	32	16	48 (80.0)
Unmarried	9	-	9 (15.0)
Widow	-	3	3 (5.0)
Education	Male	Female	Total (%)
Illiterate	7	7	14 (23.3)
8 th -10 th	14	9	23 (38.3)
10 th -12 th	13	3	16 (26.7)
Above 12 th	7	-	7 (11.7)

The above table shows that 68.3 per cent of the respondents are males and 31.7 per cent are females. This result reveals that the majority of the respondents are males under the scheme MGNREGA. The table also states that 13.3 per cent

belongs to the age group of below 30 years and all are male respondents, 25.0 per cent belong to the age group of 31-40 years in which the highest category is of male respondents, 41.7 per cent belong to the age group 41-50 years which shows the high participation of both male and female respondents and 20.0 per cent belong to the age group of above 50 years in which there is a slight difference between the male and female respondents. However, the result reveals that the majority of the respondents belong to the 41-50 years age group.

As per the marital status of the respondents the table expresses that 80.0 per cent of the respondents are married and include both male and female respondents, 15.0 per cent are unmarried and all are male respondents and 5.0 per cent are widows. Thus, the result discloses that the majority of the respondents are married. Based on the education of the respondents 23.3 per cent are illiterates and consists both male and female respondents, 38.3 per cent studied 8th to 10th standard which shows the major portion of both male and female respondents, 26.7 per cent studied 10th to 12th standard where the male respondents dominate and 11.7 per cent studied above 12th standard and comprise all male respondents. Therefore, the result exposes that the majority of the respondents studied 8th to 10th standard level.

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents by their knowledge of MGNREGA

Do you know the activities of MGNREGA	Yes	32	11	43 (71.7)
	No	9	8	17 (28.3)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)
Do you feel any discrimination while getting a job- card	Yes	14	12	26 (43.3)
	No	27	7	34 (56.7)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)
Do you think that MGNREGA decreases gender discrimination by providing equal work and wages for both male and female workers	Yes	32	17	49 (81.7)
	No	9	2	11 (18.3)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)

The above table denotes that 71.7 per cent of the respondents have knowledge about the MGNREGA activities and the major portion is of both male and female respondents. However, 28.3 per cent of the respondents does not have knowledge regarding the MGNREGA activities. Thus, the result states that the majority of both male and female respondents have knowledge regarding the MGNREGA and its allied activities.

As per the job card discriminations, 43.3 per cent of the respondents are discriminated and the discrimination is high

among the female respondents. However, 56.7 per cent of the respondents are not discriminated and the highest portion is of male respondents. Hence, the result affirms that the majority of the male respondents are not discriminated while as the majority of the female respondents are discriminated while getting a job card under MGNREGA.

Based on the gender discrimination, 81.7 per cent of the respondents believe that MGNREGA decreases the gender discrimination by providing equal work and wages to both male and female workers and the greater part is of both male

and female respondents. However, 18.3 per cent of the respondents does not think that MGNREGA decreases the gender discrimination. Therefore, the result proves that the

majority of both male and female respondents believe that MGNREGA decreases the gender discrimination by providing equal work and wages to both male and female workers.

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents by their perception regarding MGNREGA

		Male	Female	Total (%)
Are you satisfied with the procedure of selection of workers under MGNREGA	Yes	17	15	32 (53.3)
	No	24	4	28 (46.7)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)
Are you satisfied with the work opportunity provided by MGNREGA	Yes	14	13	27 (45.0)
	No	27	6	33 (55.0)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)
Are you satisfied with the worksite facilities	Yes	30	5	35 (58.3)
	No	11	14	25 (41.7)
	Total	41	19	60 (100.0)

The above table expresses that 53.3 per cent of the respondents are satisfied with the procedure of selection of workers under MGNREGA and the satisfaction level is high among the female respondents. However, 46.7 per cent are not satisfied with the said procedure of MGNREGA and includes the maximum number of male respondents. Thus, the result states that the majority of the female respondents are satisfied while as the majority of the male respondents are not satisfied with the procedure of selection of workers under MGNREGA. Based on the satisfaction with work opportunity, 45.0 per cent of the respondents are satisfied which includes the maximum section of the female respondents and 55.0 per cent of the respondents are not satisfied which contains the major part of male respondents. Therefore, the result declares that the majority of the female respondents are satisfied while as the majority of the male respondents are not satisfied with the work opportunity provided by MGNREGA.

As per the worksite facilities, 58.3 per cent are satisfied which comprises the highest number of male respondents and 41.7 per cent are not satisfied which encompass the major portion of female respondents. Hence, the result asserts that the majority of the male respondents are satisfied while as the majority of the female respondents are not satisfied with the worksite facilities provided by MGNREGA during the working hours.

3.1 Main Findings

From the investigation, it is clear that the majority (68.3 %) is of male respondents and the major part (41.7 %) of the respondents belongs to the 41-50 years age group. All the respondents in the study region are Muslims. Further, more

than half (80.0 %) of the respondents are married and a good number (38.3 %) of the respondents studied 8th to 10th standard level in the study area.

It is also identified from the study that the majority of both male and female respondents have knowledge regarding the MGNREGA activities. The majority of the female respondents are discriminated while getting a job card under MGNREGA. While as the majority of both male and female respondents believes that MGNREGA decreases the gender discrimination by providing equal work and wages to both male and female workers.

Based on the procedure of selection of workers under MGNREGA, the majority of the female respondents are satisfied while as the majority of the male respondents are not satisfied. As per the work opportunity provided by MGNREGA, the majority of the female respondents are satisfied while as the majority of the male respondents are not satisfied. However, the majority of the male respondents are satisfied and the largest part of the female respondents is not satisfied with the worksite facilities provided by MGNREGA during the working hours.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that the implementation of MGNREGA is an important initiative taken by the Government of India to help the rural poor people for their better life. The programme has created self-confidence among unskilled workers mainly in females by providing 100 days of wage employment and by giving the priority that one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women. MGNREGA provides remuneration directly in the hands of beneficiaries particularly to women without any

middlemen and facilitated a change in their attitudes towards life and work. So there is a visible impact of MGNREGA on beneficiaries particularly to women by making them financially stable and allowing them to put their steps to work outside. It is interesting to note that the beneficiaries have good knowledge related to the MGNREGA and its allied activities in the study area and believes that MGNREGA reduces the gender discrimination by providing equal work and wages. However, the beneficiaries face few challenges in the management process of MGNREGA in the study region which demands proper initiatives and solutions by the implementing agency.

5. References

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