



A STUDY OF MGNREGS IN WALAJAH BLOCK, VELLORE DISTRICT

R. Annadurai

Assistant Professor of Economics, Govt. Thirumagal Mills college, Gudiyattam.

Abstract

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Act has come into force with effect from February 2006. The Act was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on 2nd October 2009. This paper examines the impact of the MGNREGS in Walajah Block of Vellore District. The Act is an important step towards realization of the right to work and improving quality of life of rural households in India through the wage employment scheme. It is expected to enhance rural people's livelihood in a sustained status, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas.

Concept of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (NREGA) guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Act has come into force with effect from February 2006 in 200 districts of India from the financial year 2008-09. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) renamed as MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) came in to effect from October 2, 2009.

Significance of the Study

This study attempts to analyze the living conditions of the rural wage workers and to know how the NREGS Provide assistance for the rural poor..National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has been devised keeping in view the positive aspects and deficiencies of the earlier programmes. The earlier programmes were originally viewed as complimentary to each other to achieve the larger and goal of wage workers alleviation.

Statement of the Problem

Government of India implemented the programme through Planning Commission, the rural development programme since 60 years and implemented all the states in India. The various rural development programmes were not effectively implemented and the benefits of the programmes are not reached to the rural people.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of sample households who participated in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).
2. To examine the nature and function of 100 days Employment Scheme in sample villages.
3. To find out the impact of the 100 days employment Generation Scheme among sample household.

Methodology

The Methodology consists of the research design used, the techniques used in the selection and construction of tool, the manner in which the required data were collected, the tabulation, analysis and interpretation and presentation of the research report.

Field and Pilot Study

The researcher has chosen Walajah Taluk, of Vellore district. The Block consists of 36 villages. The main Occupation of the rural households is agriculture, agricultural labour and other labourers. Pilot study was conducted before the data collection in order to collect the baseline data from the field as well as to get the basic knowledge about the field. During the pilot study the researcher at and discussed about the 100 days scheme.

Selection of Households

The respondents were selected from the lists of rural beneficiaries under the scheme of National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme activity-wise during the year 2005 to 2009. 100 samples are selected from the table given below. This depicts number of registered households, number of job card holding persons, community wise job card holders and number of men and women.

Table 1, Number of MGNREGS Job Card Holders in Sample Villages

Name of the Village	No. of registered		Sc		ST		Others		Male	Female
	Househ olds	Persons	Househ olds	Persons	Househ olds	persons	Househ olds	Persons		
Kadapperi	620	1204	314	574	5	11	301	619	469	735
Sikarajapuram	543	802	107	138	6	12	430	652	307	495
Total	1163	2006	421	712	11	23	731	1271	776	1230

The respondents include the women from different socio-economic strata of the sample villages most of them were dependent mostly on family work and at the same time doing some agricultural work.

Selection of Sample

The researcher has selected two villages namely Kadapperi and Sikarajapuram in Walajah Block. 100 samples were selected from two villages (50:50 ratio). samples respondents were collected, by using convenient sampling method..The samples are selected from the NREGS register were maintained by Makkal Nala Paniyalar of the respective sample villages. The registered job card holders also verified with NREGS web site. The study covers a period of 2009-2010.

Tools of Data Collection

The researcher collected the primary data by using interview schedule. The actual data collection was carried out during November-December 2010. In the survey period in Sikarajapuram desilting of road work in Anna Nagar, desilting of Panchankuttai Eri Kalvai and Channel supply work were undergone. In Kadapperi desilting of irrigation supply Channel work were undergone. The researcher collects the required information from the NREGS beneficiaries in the work spot.

Limitations

- Since the research was conducted only micro level in Walajah Block, therefore this study may applicable to similar situation to other parts of the area.
- Since the research was conducted in the particular Area, the results cannot be generalized.

Analysis and Interpretation of field Data

In the study first section cover the socio-economic conditions of households. Section two deals the function of NREGS. Final section explores the effect on NREGS in sample villages. All respondents are MGNREGS job card holders. Majority of the sample respondent 38.0 percent were fall in the age group of 31 to 40. 37 percent of sample respondents belong to age group of 41-50, 23 percent of the respondents belongs to the age group 21-30 and rest were fall under the category of below 20.

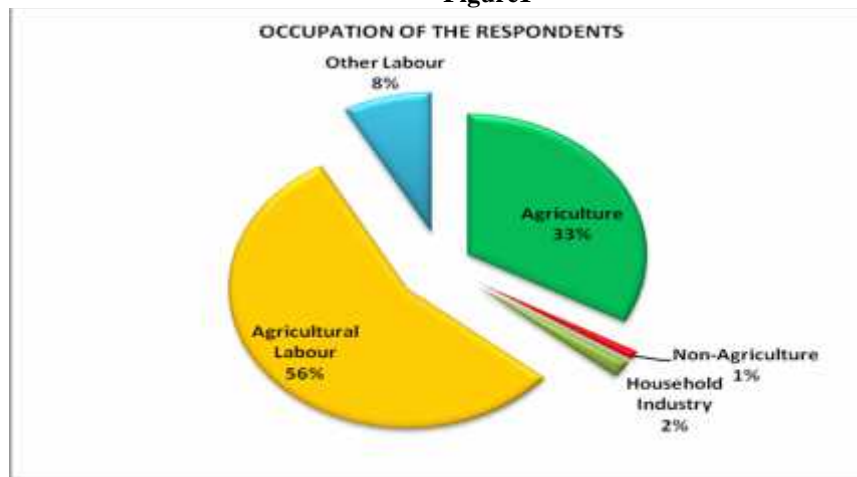
The Gender perspective of nregs, out of 100 samples 60.0 percent of the sample respondents were female and remaining 40.0 percent were male. All the respondents' belongs to Hindu religion. The first largest caste was belonging to Most Backward Castes (MBCs), the second were Scheduled Castes (SCs), third were Backward Castes (BCs) and least caste were Schedules Tribes (STs).

In the view of literacy and educational status of the sample respondents, 78 percent are literate, out of this 3 percent were completed higher secondary, 14 percent were completed secondary education and the large numbers of respondents were completed primary education which was 61 percent. Rest of 22 percent was illiterate.

The average family sizes of the respondents were 3.53 of the 100 sample respondents family. Total adults were 282. Similarly, the number of children of the sample family was 71.

The primary occupational status of the 100 NREGS sample respondents family were 56.0 percent respondent occupation were agricultural labour, 33.0 percent of respondents belong to land holding community. 2.0 percent families are having household industry, 1.0 percent is non-agricultural family and 8.0 percent were other labourer.

Figure1



Regarding possession of land the study reveals 62 percent do not have any land .The small land holding groups were 33 percent and medium landholding family was 5 percent. This clearly indicated that the poorest section of people had participated in MGNREGS.

The nature and condition of house is one of the better economic indicators. In the study, 98.0 percent of respondents had owned house and only 2.0 respondents had rented house.

For types, 43 families having tiled house, 38 families having thatched house and 19.0 families having concrete house . All the households having electricity connection.

II .Function of MGNREGS

This section deals with household function of MGNREGS work in two villages of Walajah block. The table2 below shows total number of job card among 100 sample respondents families were 197. Majority of the sample families (66 percent) are having two job cards.

Table 2,Job card holders in the Family

S. No	Job card holders in the Family	No. of Respondents	Total job card Holders in the Family	Percentage
1	1 Member	23	23	11.68
2	2 Member	65	130	65.99
3	3 Member	6	18	9.14
4	4 Member	4	16	8.12
5	5 Member	2	10	5.07
	Total	100	197	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Among the 100 samples, 97 percent of the household got their job cards through Makkal Nala Paniyalar. Only one percent of the surveyed people got the job card through Panchayat Clerk and 2 percent by the Panchayat President. Opinion was also sought about the cost of receiving job card and indirectly examined recording corruption involved in issuing job card. The result found that there is no corruption and the job card issued free of cost.

According to the guidelines of the scheme, within a maximum period of 15 days of applying for job in writing, wage employment has to be provided. However, Out 100 beneficiaries, 29 percent of them did not get the employment within the 15 days. At the same time 71 percent of wage worker got employment with in 15 days.

This study tries to capture the household data pertaining hours of work per day. 40 sample respondents worked 8 hours per day, 35 sample respondents worked 7 hours per day, 18 sample respondents worked 6 hours per day and 7 sample respondents worked 3 hours per day. This shows there is a wage variation among NREGS job card holders.

The Act under NREGA stipulates to provide basic facilities such as crèche, first aid, drinking water and shade for workers at the work site. An attempt was also made to enquire work site conditions such as first aid box, creche and drinking water facilities. The result found that the 88.0 percent respondents' positive about first-aid box, drinking water and 2 respondents said creche facilities are provided.

An attempt was also made to enquire with the beneficiaries whether there are any general nature of grievances or complaints regarding works allocation, registration procedures, and job card allocation etc. These grievances do not contribute to any particular local officials but the views and opinions of beneficiaries expressed during interaction with the investigators. Further, the officials do not provide any information regarding grievance cell phone number. 67 sample respondents knows about grievance cell phone number is provided by the Govt. Number is 1299 and 33 respondents say No.

Recording of attendance at the work site is another important step in the overall process of carrying out works under NREGS. An attempt was made to arrived the awareness about the registration of attendance and 81.0 percent of participants could put their signature and remaining 19.0 percent were used thumb impression.

All the respondents aware the minimum wage rate of Rs.80. But a single person could not get the wage of Rs.80. 20.5 percent of beneficiaries received wage Rs: 77, 8.5 percent of beneficiaries received wage Rs.75, 24 percent of beneficiaries received Rs.50, 6 percent of beneficiaries received Rs.40 and 41 percent of beneficiaries received Rs.30. It is very interesting to note that single worker could not get the minimum wage under NREGA. At the same time 99 percent of beneficiaries agreed that the NREGS wage is better than to local prevailing wage rate.

An opinion the payment of wage paid with in a week only. Payment of wage is done either at worksite, public place, panchayat office and other place. It is interesting to note that 83 percent of beneficiaries got wage at worksite itself, 8 percent of respondents received at public place, 7 percent from panchayat office and only 2 percent from some other parts.

III. Impact of MGNREGS

One of the major objectives of the scheme is to improve the income levels and enhance the quality of life of village people. This section is trying to bring out the impact of the scheme on various important attributes which contribute to the enhancement of quality of life such as (i) income levels before and after the scheme were implemented (ii) distribution of means of income of beneficiaries e.g., agriculture, daily wage, petty business etc. (iii) shift in expenditure pattern on food items after income generation through the present scheme, (iv) expenditure pattern on non-food items before and after implementation of the scheme, details of livestock creation prior to and after utilizing the scheme.

One of the objectives of NREGA is to arrest the migration of rural labour from rural to urban. 32 percent of the respondents said it prevents migration and 68 percent of the respondents said it does not restrict or arrest the labour migration. One of the important aspects of impact assessment is rise in income levels of the beneficiaries. Annual income of the beneficiaries is categorized into four groups .such as (a) less than Rs. 5,000, (b) between Rs. 5,001 and 10,000, (c) between Rs. 10,001 to 15,000 (d) between Rs. 15,001 but less than 20,000, (e) between Rs.20, 001 to Rs.25, 000 and (f) above Rs.25,000. This grouping is done based on the feedback from the beneficiaries and after confirming that all the beneficiaries' income level.

Table 2, Annual income of the Family before joining NREGS

S. No	Annual Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than Rs. 5000	4	4.0
2	Rs.5001-10000	9	9.0
3	Rs.10001-15000	20	20.0
4	Rs. 15001-20000	56	56.0
5	Rs.20001-25000	8	8.0
6	More thanRs.25001	3	3.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey

After joining NREGS, annual income 2 respondents were less than Rs. 5000, an 6 respondents were Rs. 5001-10000, 12 respondents were Rs. 10001-15000, 30 respondents were Rs. 15001-20000, 10 respondents were more than Rs. 25001 and the majority of the 40 respondents annual income were Rs. 20001-25000 in the study area. Therefore after joining nregs the income status of the sample household have increased. The table 3 explains monthly expenditure of respondents before joining nregs.

Table 3, Monthly Expenditure of the Family before joining NREGS

S.No.	Expenditure (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than Rs.500	1	1.0
2	Rs. 501-1000	1	1.0
3	Rs.1001-1500	2	2.0
4	Rs.1501-2000	43	43.0
5	Rs.2001-2500	53	53.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey.

Table 4 ,Monthly Expenditure of the Family after joining NREGS

S.No	Expenditure (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Rs.1001-1500	1	1.0
2	Rs.1501-2000	9	9.0
3	Rs.2001-2500	90	90.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey

The above tables 4 reveal that changes in expenditure of sample households before and after joining nregs. Apart from this other sources of income like agriculture, petty shop, and household industries.

Before joining NREGS the saving position of sample respondents were 98 respondents said there is no saving. Rest of two, one has post office saving and another one in private chit funds before joining nregs. The table 5 shows saving position after joining nregs.

Table 5,Saving Positions after joining NREGS

S.No	Savings	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	No savings	36	36.0
2	Gold	1	1.0
3	Bank Deposits	2	2.0
4	Post Office	47	47.0
5	Private Chit	12	12.0
6	Others	2	2.0
	Total	100	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Summary and Conclusion

NREGA is the most significant act in the history of Indian polity. Important of the Act is to improve the quality of life of the rural households who are vulnerable to out-migration in search of daily wage employment by channelizing the workforce towards developmental activities at the village level.

Main Findings

- The levels of literacy among respondents were 78.0 percent.
- The occupational status depicts 56.0 percent of the respondents were agricultural labour, and 8.0 percent were other labour. This clearly indicated that the poorest section of people have been participating in NREGA.



- The total number of job card holders was 197. Nearly 66.99 percent of households are having two job cards. Out 100 beneficiaries, 29 percent of them did not get the employment within the 15 days. At the same time 71 percent of wage worker got employment with in 15 days.
- As per the guidelines of NREGA, the work site should not be more than 4 km away from the residence of the beneficiaries. 57 percent of the beneficiaries' worksite with in 2 to 3 km and 43 percent of beneficiaries with in one km.
- Recording of attendance at the work site is another important step in the process of carrying out works under NREG Scheme. 81.0 percent of participants could put their signature and remaining 19.0 percent were used thumb impression. This shows the literacy level of the respondents.
- All the respondents aware the minimum wage rate of Rs.80. But a single person received wage Rs.80. The maximum amount wage received was Rs.77. At the same time 100 percent of beneficiaries agreed that the NREGA wage is better than to local prevailing wage rate. After wage employment the Respondents income, expenditure, saving pattern have been improved.
- Past seven years one of the important issues is Labour scarcity in Agriculture.
- This problem can be solved while utilizing NREGS worker in Farmers Land apart from 100 days assured employment by the central Government.

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