



AWARENESS LEVELS OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME WOMEN RURAL WORKERS AND ITS FUNCTIONING IN ANANTAPURAMU DISTRICT

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Abstract

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has truly a positive impact on women empowerment, in so far as it has addressed a number of practical gender needs. The study is trend of women taking membership in MGNREGS is definitely increasing after becoming a part of MGNREGS, women cultural activities has increased from 66 to 93% after participating in MGNREGS. The majority of the women respondents 68.3% are using MGNREGA income to satisfy their family food consumption. MGNREGA has becomes a powerful instrument for women empowerment in rural India through its effect on livelihood security and democratic governance and social protections. Women participating in the scheme said they had become less dependent on their husbands for money and didn't need to submit the entire amount they earned to their mother in laws. The present paper highlighted that the functioning of MGNREGS and women awareness levels in Anantapuramu district of Rayalaseema Region.

Key Words: Rural Women, Awareness, Facilities and Monitoring.

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme - that the Act appears to be quite meaningful and powerful for rural development in general and women empowerment in particular for the entire nation . Role of women's in MGNREGA is still in a distant dream in Kashmir women . Women are seen to be contributing actively to the economy and their contribution to economic activity becomes more visible. Additionally, female participation in vigilance committees under the MGNREGA may, over time, allow women to take advantage of such provisions, and make their own space in public and social life. Wage equality for men and women helps to reduce the gender difference to some extent. Women get additional respect from their society and family. Women are promoted individually because they are able to earn self-sufficiently and use some cash for their own needs, and contribute in their family expenditure. Women who are earning member of the family are the beneficiaries of the scheme including all rural people. These programmes were introduced by the central and state government in India. The women spent wages earned at MGNREGA works on regular food and buyer goods. Women have registered their real contribution to the household's income. Women speaking in the gram sabha and also women having access to post offices and banks are new developments. The rural development, women authorization and employment generation policies conversed above are of enormous help for the rural women so as to start income generating activities independently or give at least 100 days of employment for the rural women.

Review of literature

Debasish Biswas (2014) he concluded that the level of performance of MGNREGA in Jalpaiguri district in West Bengal is quite satisfactory. In this study area 100 working days employment is very much

satisfactory. Participation in this district is also above 40 per cent. At present 92 per cent fund has been utilized for planning, implementation and mentoring of MGNREGS. The average number of day's employment in Jalpaiguri district is 64.11 days.

Padma (2015) she conducted a study on "performance of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh". In her study found that the fact that job cards are not issued to 100 percent households and also the fact that very few households completed 100 days work through MGNREGA indicates that there is no scarcity of labour in rural areas (www.mgnrega.nic.in). Even if scarcity exists it is not due to MGNREGA but some other factor, which we have to look out. MGNREGA through wage employment and assets creation, which improve agricultural productivity, enhanced the demand in rural areas. Besides, public investment in employment and asset creation is necessary to compensate the deficiency of private investment to revive agrarian economy. MGNREGA is not only necessary but also it has to be strengthened through convergence of various departments to pool technology, skill and resource for efficient delivery. MGNREGA created employment and hence income to hitherto excluded sections and thereby it lead to achieve inclusive growth in rural areas. MGNREGA not only delivered economic benefits but also many social benefits to the society to attain sustainable development. Hence, financial allocations to MGNREGA should not be curtailed but it should be strengthened by removing any pitfalls in its implementation. The continuation of MGNREGA is essential to curtail excess migration to urban areas and given the literacy rate in rural areas.

The conditions of rural people especially agricultural laborers and small and marginal farmers are quite deplorable. Besides, rural areas like Rayalaseema wherein droughts & famine situations are frequently occurring. Large number of small and marginal farmers in these areas are committing suicides due to frequently failure of crops. On the other hand, agricultural laborers are migrating to nearest towns for their livelihood and living & leading a miserable life. Keeping in view all these factors, policy -makers in India introduced various wage employment guarantee programmes. But they failed to yield desired results. The new UPA coalition government at the centre in its Common Minimum Programme promised that it would enact a legislation, which guarantees right to work for unskilled rural people. As promised, the MGNREGA legislation got passed in parliament. But unfortunately, soon after its implementation, various studies and reports noticed several drawbacks in the scheme. There are a few studies on NGREGS, but they have not focused more on women development in rural areas through MGNREGS, hence, this present study is an humble attempt in this direction.

Objectives of the Study

- To know the concept of rural development programme .
- To study the awareness levels of women on rural development programme and its implementation.
- To draw the conclusions.

Methodology

The methodological aspects of the study such as the area of the study, the universe of the sample, sources of data, analysis of data and the plan of the study have been hereunder.

The data of the study is based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources material related to the field are collected through interview schedule from sample beneficiaries relating to the implementation and eliciting their opinions on various aspects of the scheme in the Anantapuramu

district of Andhra Pradesh. The secondary data were collected from various sources like journals, DWMA, MPDOs Office, and other government reports etc.

Area of the Study

The MGNREGS programme was formally launched in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh in February 2006. The district is the driest part of the state, wherein the rainfall is recorded below district normal. The dry condition of the district often results in the loss of crops, which in turn forces the agricultural labour as well as small and marginal farmers to migrate to different parts of the state, some times to the neighboring States like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka etc., for livelihood. Under these dire conditions, the launching of MGNREGS is considered by the labourers as a boon for their livelihood. As such, the district was purposely selected for the study to examine the pros and cons of the new wage employment programme.

For collected study of the impact of the programme on beneficiaries, purposeful random sampling method was followed. For the collection of respondent's views and ideas on the impact of the MGNREGS scheme. In the first stage one Revenue division were selected in Anantapuramu district. The district has divided into five revenue divisions. In second stage, one mandal were selected from each revenue division and third stage three revenue villages selected from each mandal. Altogether, 15 revenue villages were selected in five mandal and from each village 25 beneficiaries were selected based on random sampling. Thus, the total sample constitutes 375 beneficiaries.

Awareness about the facilities

Table 1, Opinion of the women worker on facilities under the MGNREGS in Anantapuramu District

S.No	Facilities	Opinion	
		Yes	No
1	Mineral Water at work site	300(80.00)	75(20.00)
2	Shed for rest	287(76.67)	87(23.33)
3	Arrange of first aid box	362(96.67)	13(03.33)

Source: Field Survey

The table 1 clearly shows that, the higher proportion of selected sample respondents (96.67 %) are reported that the provision of first aid box is being provided by the concerned officials during the times of execution of MGNREGS works in the study area. Regarding the implementation of the provision of safe drinking water is being providing by the concerned officials during the times of execution of MGNREGA works in the study area are represented 80 per cent. It is also found that, in work place shade for small children and period of rest facilities are provided and it's represented 76 per cent of sample respondents.

Table 2 ,Opinion of the MGNREGS women workers on sources of information seeking

S. No	Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	Neighbors	37	10.00
2	Government people	222	59.33
3	Both print and electric media	30	08.00
4	Political leaders at village level	23	6.00
5	Village president	63	16.67
	Total	375	100.00

Source: Field Survey

The information relating to the source of information through which the sample respondents received information about MGNREGS was found in the table 2. Of the surveyed sample, 59.33% learned about MGNREGS from officials who are directly associated with the programme, 16.67% learned about it from their village sarpanchs, 10% through their neighbors, and 6 through their village leaders. These findings suggest that officials and village leaders play a prominent role in disseminating information about MGNREGS in this study area.

Table 3, Opinion of the women MGNREGS workers on duration of issuing job cards

S.No	Days	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	Lessthan ten days	305	81.33
2	Ten-Twenty	45	12.00
3	Twenty one and above	25	06.67
	Total	375	100.00

Source : Field Survey

Table 3 - The number of days an individual received their job cards. The majority of respondents received their job cards within ten days. About 12% of respondents received them in between 11-20 days, while the percentage of respondents who had received them in more than 20 days was almost negligible at 6.7%.

Table 4, Responses of women workers on who allotted to MGNREGS works in Anantapuramu

S.No	Work allotted	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	Local Gram Panchayat Office	14	03.83
2	MGNREGS Officer	16	04.67
3	Local field assistant	345	92.00
	Total	375	100.00

Source : Field Survey

92% of government works are being allotted by officials in charge of the MGNREGS, who are ultimately responsible for their execution. This analysis found that work assignments are given to workers purely based on the input of the concerned field assistant. The involvement of Panchayat Raj institutions and other institutional sources is found to be negligible.

Table 5, Opinion of the women respondents on payment period

S.No	Source	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	Weekend	295	78.67
2	Two weeks once	80	21.33
	Total	375	100

Source: Field Survey

Nearly three-quarters of the workers surveyed received their weekly wages through a weekly payment, while the remaining workers received their salaries in fifteen days. The study found that the government officials responsible for MGNREGS are trying to provide paychecks on schedule.

Table 6, Respondents responses on distance of MGNREGS works place

S.No	Distance (in Km)	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	<0.5	137	36.67
2	0.5-1	169	45.33
3	1-2	30	08.00
4	2-3	39	10.00
	Total	375	100.00

Source : Field Survey

The table shows that all of the MGNREGS-related construction projects in the research area are located within a radius of five kilometres. In the table sample, 45% of the sample respondents stated that the work location is more than one km away, while 36% of the respondents stated that the distance is less than half a kilometre. Only 18% of the sample's respondents indicated in the survey that their travel distance was between one and three km.

Table 7, Opinion of the women respondents on supervision of their MGNREGS works

S. No	Supervision	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	Secretary of panchayat office	05	1.34
2	Technical assistance from mandal	42	11.33
3	Within group representative	15	04.00
4	Concern field assistant	313	83.33
	Total	375	100.00

Source : Field Survey

The aforementioned table unequivocally demonstrates that 83% of MGNREGS employees are directly overseen by a concerned field assistant. And 11% of the sample's respondents claim to be working under a technical assistant's supervision. According to the survey, the majority of sample houses in the study area employ field assistants.

Table 8, Knowledge about different aspects of Muster Rolls by sample respondents

S.No	Particulars	Opinion	
		Yes	No
1	Have you aware of MR book	347 (92.67)	28 (07.33)
2	Are you reading MR book	130 (34.67)	245 (65.33)
3	Are you singing in MR book	290 (77.33)	85 (22.67)

Source: Field Survey

The chart shows that a large percentage of respondents (92.67%) are aware of the topic of measuring the work performed by the field assistant, documenting the measurement book, and entering the muster roll at the conclusion of each week. In the research area, a greater percentage of jobs are carried out by assigning piece rates to the workers. The workers' understanding of the practice is crucial in this situation. Only 34.67% of all respondents give a positive response to the question of whether workers at

the job site read aloud the entries in the measuring book and muster rolls. This may be due to the high level of current illiteracy among the chosen respondents. Thus, it is necessary to introduce an adult literacy campaign, particularly to the workforce in inner rural areas. Additionally, 77.33 percent of MGNREGS employees were found to be aware of the requirement to sign their muster rolls.

Conclusion

This study concludes by an observation through literature reviews on women empowerment, issues, challenges, and impact through MGNREGA, this act is really leads to women empowerment through active participation of women in this scheme. MGNREGS was not envisaged as a women's empowerment programme, yet, it has brought economic and social empowerment of women. MGNREGS has certainly empowered women workers economically and socially, "Gender - Neutral Measures" such as increase in participation of women in planning and social audits of MGNREGA implementation of better worksite facilities, proper payment of wages, planning of works in phases and speedy grievance redressed will encourage women to demand more work under this scheme.

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