

A Study of Awareness Aboutmgnrega in Jawhar Taluka in Palghar District of Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

The Census 2011 highlights that around 70% of the total population lives in rural areas with basic necessities. About 54.5% of total population is dependent on agriculture for livelihood. Majority of agrarian population carry subsistence agriculture. With most of them being dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. At present the rural economy is facing shortage of tangible assets and social infrastructure like water harvesting facilities, irrigation facilities, logistic support and storage facilities. The agriculture in India is depended on erratic monsoon pattern which affects the crop pattern and yields. Due to stagnant agriculture productivity, low income and fluctuation in wage earnings a trend of rural-urban migration has been witnessed. The section of population which migrates include youth, landless farmers, sharecroppers, women and men. To avoid such migration, provide wage employment in area nearby their residence and create tangible and intangible assets in rural economy the government initiated National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2004 across India which was later on renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) after Constitutional Amendment.

Key Words : MNREGA, Wage, Employment, Migration, Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

The basic and fundamental problem of Indian economy even after 70 years of Independence is poverty and stagnancy in growth rate of agriculture sector. Around 29.8% of the total population lives below poverty line as per the government report. The Census 2011 highlights that around 70% of the total population lives in rural areas with basic necessities. About 54.5% of total population is dependent on agriculture for livelihood. Majority of agrarian population carry subsistence agriculture. With most of them being dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Rural economy shelters landless farmers, marginal land holdings and rich farmers. The agriculture sector is witnessing declining public investment and lack of social infrastructure. At present the rural economy is facing shortage of tangible assets and social infrastructure

like water harvesting facilities, irrigation facilities, logistic support and storage facilities. The agriculture in India is depended on erratic monsoon pattern which affects the crop pattern and yields. So, in the most of the areas there is only 1 season crop. This fluctuation directly affects the rural income and rural consumption pattern of rural population. So, for the rest of the year they don't have formal option to earn wages. Hence due to stagnant agriculture productivity, low income and fluctuation in wage earnings a trend of rural-urban migration has been witnessed. The section of population which migrates include youth, landless farmers, sharecroppers, women and men. Such kind of rural-urban migration increases pressure on existing scarce resources. To avoid such migration, provide wage employment in area nearby their residence and create tangible and intangible assets in rural economy the government initiated National Rural

Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2004 across India which was later on renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) after Constitutional Amendment.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005), later renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one of the most significant interventions on employment-poverty of the Government in post-Independent India. Aiming at addressing the principal causes of poverty and employment in rural areas, the Act ensures to the poor that they can expect to earn a living wage, without loss of their dignity, and demand work as their right. In addition to the immediate impact in terms of poverty reduction, the program has the potential to lead the economy in labor intensive growth path through the creation of assets. However, the positive achievements of the intervention have been lost in the noise of critical reports and anti-MGNREGA propaganda. The productive value of MGNREGA work has been criticized as a futile attempt “to play with mud, to create road that goes from nowhere to nowhere, to dig ditches that will be wasted away in the next monsoon”.

Basic key features of MGNREGA includes:

- Primary objective of guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment per year to rural households.
- Legal right to work: Unlike earlier employment guarantee schemes, the Act provides a legal right to employment for adult members of rural households. At least one third beneficiaries have to be women. Wages must be paid according to the wages specified for agricultural labourers in the state under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, unless the central government notifies a wage rate (this should not be less than Rs. 60 per day). At present, wage rates are determined by the central government but vary across states, ranging from Rs. 135 per day to Rs. 214 per day.
- Time bound guarantee of work and unemployment allowance: Employment must be provided with 15 days of being demanded failing which an ‘unemployment allowance’ must be given.
- Decentralised planning: Gram sabhas must recommend the works that are to be undertaken and at least 50% of the works must be executed by them. PRIs are primarily responsible for

planning, implementation and monitoring of the works that are undertaken.

- Work site facilities: All work sites should have facilities such as crèches, drinking water and first aid.
- Transparency and accountability: There are provisions for proactive disclosure through wall writings, citizen information boards, Management Information Systems and social audits. Social audits are conducted by gram sabhas to enable the community to monitor the implementation of the scheme.
- Funding: Funding is shared between the centre and the states. There are three major items of expenditure – wages (for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled labour), material and administrative costs. The central government bears 100% of the cost of unskilled labour, 75% of the cost of semi-skilled and skilled labour, 75% of the cost of materials and 6% of the administrative costs.

Various studies undertaken have recognized the benefits derived from the implementation of MGNREGA in terms of increased income and expenditure by women from rural households, better and higher standard of living, empowerment, decision making, etc. The MNERGA under 11th Five Year Plan received highest budgetary allocation which created multiplier effect in successfully empowering and strengthening the role of women towards social transformation. Various experts and economists have time and again talked about importance of MNERGA in supporting inclusive growth bringing holistic development of rural society and ensuring socio-economic and political benefits.

The objective of the present study is to take a more informed look at the MGNREGA to assess the effectiveness of the assets created in Jawhar Taluka in Palghar District of Maharashtra. Jawhar Taluka is chosen because it is one of the Tribal dominated taluka is the Maharashtra and where ratio of population living below poverty line is much greater than other tribal dominated talukas and it is one of talukas which is greatly affected with migration of labourers and where highest amount of fund has been spent under MGNREGA.

Objectives of research :

1. To audit whether jobs created under MGNREGA has been actually offered to the needy people in Jawhar Taluka in Palghar District.

2. To understand the effectiveness of MGNREGA on migration of the people in Jawhar Taluka in Palghar District.

Hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1:

H₀-There is no significant relationship in migration and employment received under MGNREGA.

H₁-There is significant relationship in migration and employment received under MGNREGA.

Hypothesis 2:

H₀-There is no significant difference in effectiveness of assets created under MGNREGA and their actual utility.

H₁-There is significant difference in effectiveness of assets created under MGNREGA and their actual utility.

METHODOLOGY

Universe of study:

The study will be carried out in Palghar district which is situated in western part of Maharashtra, however it will be confined to the Jawhar Taluka only.

Procedure of sample selection:

For the selection of respondent first purposive sampling will be done. Quota for each Gram panchayat will be decided on the basis of number of people who got employment under MGNREGA.

Identification of beneficiaries for evaluation of asset creation:

For work done on private lands, wells, etc. one beneficiary of the work will be interviewed- the owner/ user of the land on which the work is located.

Sample size:

100 samples have been selected on random basis. 5

Sources of Data Collection:

Data will be collected through primary as well as secondary sources of data. Primary data will be collected from beneficiaries of MNREGA. Questionnaire will be prepared in Marathi consisting of 50 close ended questions. Audio-visual accessories like audio recorder and video recorder will be used for collecting data.

The secondary data will be collected from official website of MGNREGA, policy documents, published

reports of similar research, journals. Secondary data will be considered for period 2012-2017.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Around 39% of the respondent are from age between 41-50 years, 30% of the respondent are from the 51 years and above, 24% of the respondent are from age between 31-40 years, 7% respondents are from the age between 18-30 years. The reason behind the small number of youngsters in respondents is that there is still issue of migration. Most of the people between 18-30 years migrate to Mumbai or nearby industrial belt in Gujarat for employment (Fig. 1).

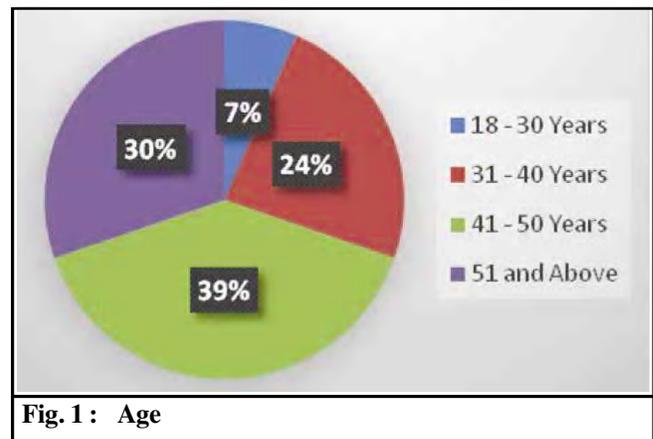


Fig. 1 : Age

Around 78% respondents are Male and 22% respondents are Female (Fig. 2).

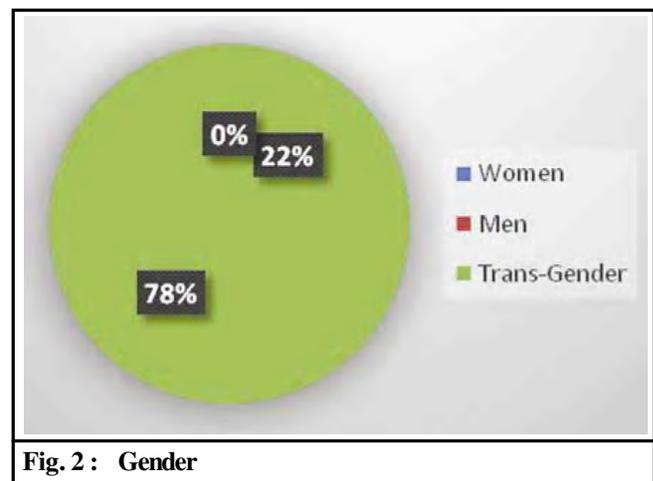


Fig. 2 : Gender

67% of respondents belong to illiterate category, 26% of the respondents have done their matriculation, 2% of the respondents have done their 12th, only 5% respondents

have done their graduation. This shows MGNREGA is successful in providing employment to the unskilled, illiterate people, which is aim of MGNREGA (Fig. 3).

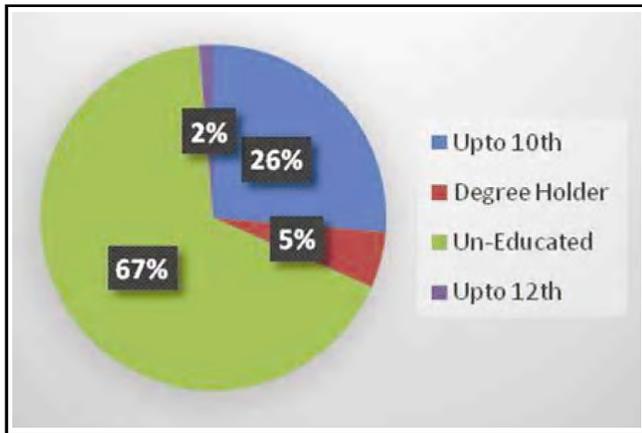


Fig. 3 : Education status

96% of the respondents are depend upon agriculture for their livelihood. There is no irrigation facilities in this area so if there is bad monsoon, these large chunk of population have to migrate (Fig. 4).

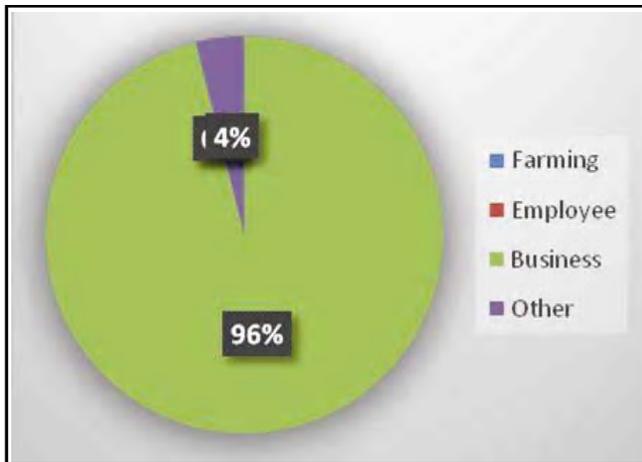


Fig. 4 : Income source

Indicator for Below Poverty Line in rural area is Rs. 26 per day per person. If we assume family of 5 persons annual income comes to Rs. 47000 p.a. Nearly 83% of the respondents have annual income between Rs.10,000-50,000, which is at par or below to the BPL indicator. It shows 83% respondents are below poverty line and MGNREGA is successful in providing employment to them (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5 : Annual income of the family

86% of the population is aware about MGNREGA Scheme (Fig. 6).

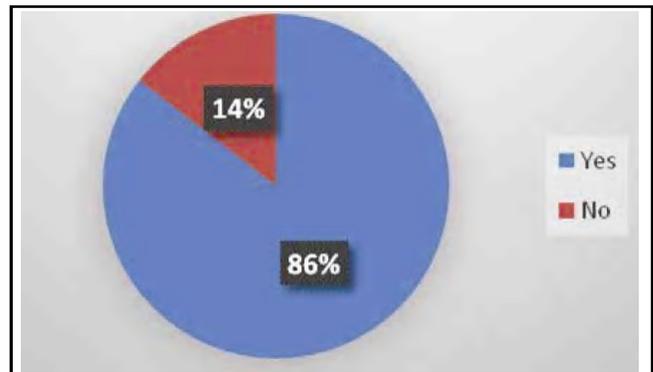


Fig. 6 : Do you know about the 'one year employment scheme'

About 86% respondents have received their job card within 1 month (Fig. 7).

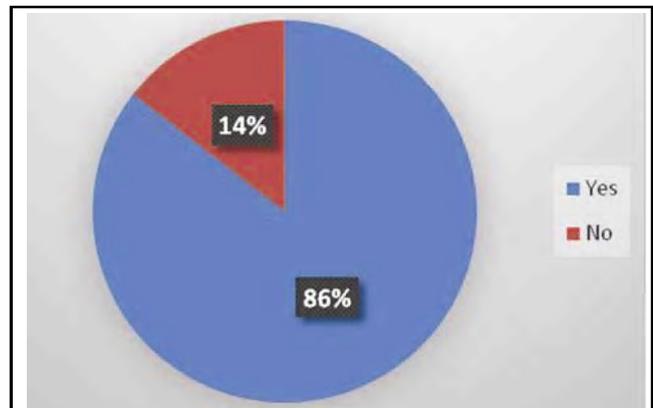


Fig. 7 : Did you get the 'Employment Booklet' within a month from registration?

All the respondent have agreed that, there is increase in the income of the household because of MGNREGA (Fig. 8).

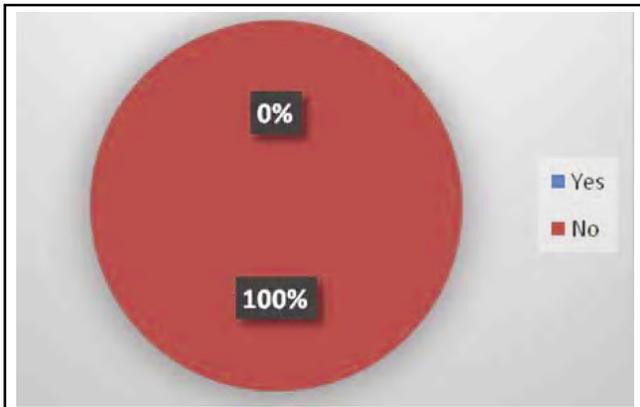


Fig. 8 : Did this scheme has any effects on your Annual Family Income?

All the respondents believe this is important and it should be reached to the more people (Fig. 9).



Fig. 9 : Kindly provide your opinions about the '100 Days Employment Scheme'!

Findings:

The labourers have faced problem of not getting employment within 5km area of residence and later not being paid travelling allowance.

Most of the labourers have said work has been done by them only without use of any machinery, which is the main moto of the MGNREGA.

According to MGNREGA Act, there is provision to provide various on site facilities like toilets, drinking water, leisure, crèche facility, it has been observed that at many

places the above mentioned facilities are not provided which make MGNREGA workers vulnerable to various health related and other issues.

Infrastructural facilities created under MGNREGA is sometimes found to be of low quality roads and irrigation facilities created by MGNREGA are seen to be incomplete or of low quality. This can be attributed to corruption involved in the implementation of programs with the factor of chronic corruption prove self defecting and pose challenge in achieving various aims set out by it.

Women are also suffering from one of the important shortcomings of MGNREGA which is absence of flexible and convenient work schedule, delay in wage payment and assets creation. Most of the women labourers have faced the problem of crèche facility.

Conclusion:

Public works program has been an important tool in securing social protection and creating employment to large population in developing economies. In the above mentioned context, MGNREGA has emerged as significant public works program in attaining various goals set by it. Subsequent governments, since the inception of this program have largely recognized the contribution of this scheme. MGNREGA has been substantially successful in providing fixed days of employment in rural areas. There are certain issues which have depressed the effectiveness of MGNREGA. The issues pertain to labour participation, women working conditions, wage disbursement leakages, assets creation and administrative efficiency.

MGNREGA is aimed to provide guaranteed employment with an aim to reduce poverty, migration to urban areas, better living conditions. A lot is depended on effective implementation of the program to achieve various goals, however, in many parts of the country, MGNREGA suffers from poor implementation and thus, not been able to attain its stated goals.

Various studies have shown plethora of loopholes in implementation of the scheme at times the program has been hampered by chronic corruption in the ground level. Panchayat plays an important role in implementation as well as spreading message of MGNREGA among the rural population, corrupt practices in implementation of MGNREGA by Sarpancha's and other village level officials have marred the very essence of the program. Often MGNREGA workers are not paid equal wages by

the Gram Panchayat's for the equal work done by all.

Thus one can conclude that through MGNREGA has resulted in various positive changes such as, improved income, employment and overall standard of living in rural areas, work needs to be done to overcome various shortcomings to further ensure effective implementation of the program.

Scope for further studies:

There are various aspects of MGNREGA like income level, financial inclusion, job creation, migration of population on these aspects one can research further.

Limitation of study:

The geographical limitation of the primary data collection is confined to Jawhar taluka only. Respondents' opinion can be biased.

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