



MGNREGA'S impact on women income and employment in Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

The MGNREGA's programme aims to providing employment of 100 days to rural households; it made a lot of positive economic aspects of rural households based. This research is examining the MGNREGA's Impact on women income and employment in Tenkasi District of Tamil Nadu. This study undertaken in 2020, the primary data were collected from 50 households; the households were selected based on simple random sample. Both quantitative and qualitative surveys have been conducted for this research. The study results show that the MGNREGAs have created more employment days and the earnings of households have also increased. Majority of the respondents participated in the programme and particularly, a highest number of women worked in this programme. It is found that the regular number of days of employment have increased after the introduction of MGNREGA. It is also clear that with the implementation of the MGNREGA scheme, the income has significantly increased to all the participating households, and the monthly expenditure has increased optimistic livelihood of women. The impact on income resulted to increased savings, repayment of loans and ultimately reduction in indebtedness. The study concluded that MGNREGA's created positive impact on women employment and income generation.

Keywords: women, MGNREGA, employment, income & livelihood

Introduction

Implementing the rural employment and income generation programmes India has vast experience in after independence. The concept of creating employment from 1970 onwards in public works is not novel: rural employment the Maharashtra model state has existed since the 1970s. The most vital difference now is that people's privilege, by law, to employment, is mandated through MGNREGA for the whole country. However, in the past 30-odd years has not much changed in the form and substances of the public work programmes. In many ways the MGNREGA is a replication of earlier schemes in letter and spirit, of course, with a legal guarantee. So, past failures do haunt the MGNREGA. Began in the 1970s, the first set of programmes of the Rural Landless Employment Programme and the National Rural Employment Programme, as clones of the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Implication of Mgnrega

Endeavor of the MGNREGA to achieve as enunciated; Indian constitution (article 41) - *giving citizens the right to work*. The act is significant due to the following reasons; while the earlier wage employment programmes did not provide any guarantee of job, this act provided guarantee for wage employment is now uniformed all over the country like never before. It is a development initiative, chipping in which essential public investment for creation of durable assets, without which the growth can't be possible in the most backward regions of rural India. The NREGA programme was launched in 2006, were allocation based rather than demand is considered to be unique from this standpoint.

MGNREGS was enacted by legislation on 25 august 2005 it is one of the flagship poverty alleviation programmes contacted by the Government of India. The scheme provides at least one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of Rs. 120 per day in 2009 prices with legal guarantee. If they fail to do so the government has to pay the salary at their homes.

Statement of the Problem

The numbers of studies were taken in this area which looked into the MGNREGA impact on different parameters and also examined its number of implementation issues. Few studies found substantial positive impact of MGNREGA on wage rate, food security, migration whereas some studies reported minimum wage payment, non-payment of unemployment allowances, failure in halting migration, errors in wage calculation, corruption etc. The majority of the studies were centered on systemic defects rather than probing the impact on beneficiaries. Thus, a mixed bag of opinions was reported for the level of impact and function of MGNREGA. Indicate that clear picture on function and effectiveness of act has yet to emerge. Further, there are many women right from faced issues and challenges in MGNREGA.

Review of Literature

Instigate of the MGNREGA had an impact on private sector wages which have increased much faster than the increase in the wages offered by the government for public works. The increase in incomes has possibly led to huge withdrawals of women from the labour force. The survey of Rangarajan *et al.* (2011) ^[7]

provides evidence of a significant improvement in wages of both rural-urban and male-female. Klaus Deininger and Yanyan Liu (2017) study found that the benefits are most pronounced for the poor and scheduled castes and tribes households. They also concluded that increased income from casual labourers the primary channel through which the effects are realized. No evidence that MGNREGA participation has resulted in higher private investment in land improvement. Rakesh Tiwar *et al.* (2019) research undertaken the MGNREGA in Chitradurga district, Karnataka, were assessed for their potential to enhance and provide environmental services. The status of environmental services before and after implementation of the activities was examined and vulnerability of women indices were constructed and compared. The programme has increased women's material independence and there is evidence that women exercise autonomy on how to spend MGNREGA wages, indicating greater decision-making powers within the household (Pankaj and Tankha 2010; Pellissery and Jalan 2011). The MGNREGA activities were found to have reduced the vulnerability of agricultural production, water resources, uncertain rainfall, water scarcity and livelihood of women. In sum, although MGNREGA has appeared to afford some much needed employment for India's most marginalized workers, a major limitation of the scheme to date has been its ability to create employment to meet the demand for work.

Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the respondents
2. To find out the level of involvement and participation of women in MGNREGA.
3. To analyze the MGNREGA's impact on women employment, income and asset generation.

Methodology

This research is undertaken in 2020, the primary data were collected from 50 women respondents. The study carried out in the Tenkasi district, Tamil Nadu and the households were

selected with simple random sample method. Both quantitative and qualitative surveys have been conducted for this study. The secondary data were collected from the published source of Central and State Government reports and documents of NITI Aayog data.

Results and Discussion

The MGNREGA scheme provides employment opportunities to any Indian above the age of 18. Anybody above 18 years of age can enroll himself/herself in this scheme. They are entitled 150 days of employment for a year. The age of the working population directly influences the output of the economy. The scheme will benefit people who are unemployed seasonally and structurally from the evidence of the table even old people can contribute their earnest efforts in rural building.

Table 1: Age of the Respondents

| Age (in years) | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|----------------|--------------------|---------|
| 20-30 | 7 | 14 |
| 31-40 | 13 | 26 |
| 41-50 | 26 | 52 |
| 51 and above | 4 | 8 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

In the table 1 describes, the age of the respondents has been categories into four groups. This pattern of classification would help in examining the ages of the women respondents and their involvement in taking up the employment through this scheme. Of the survey 50 women respondents, 14 percent of them belong to the age of 20-30 years, the majority of 52 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group of 41-50, followed by 26 percent of the respondents belong to 31-40 years and only 8 percent of the respondents are belong to 51 and above years. In common, the younger age groups which take up the employment in the local areas as well as in the far-away places.

Table 2: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

| Educational Qualification | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Primary | 13 | 26 |
| Secondary | 19 | 38 |
| Higher Secondary | 6 | 12 |
| Illiterate | 12 | 24 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

From the above table 2 presented the education status is categories into three group inclusive of illiterates. In total 50 respondents, 24 percent of the respondents are illiterate, the majority of 38 percent of them belong to the level of Secondary education and 26 percent of them in Primary education and 12 percent of them Higher secondary education level. Illiterate and level of education is a basic indicator of the level of development achieved by a society. Spread if Illiterate is generally associated with important traits if modern civilization. Hence it is concluded that Higher Secondary and Undergraduate are not willing to join this schemes.

Table 3: Details of Wage under MGNREGA

| Wage per day | No. of Respondents | Percent |
|--------------|--------------------|---------|
| 180-220 | 50 | 100 |

The table 3 shows that almost all the village workers know the basic provisions of the scheme such as 150 days employment 80 percent, minimum wages 180 and equal wage for men and women 100 percent one third of job seekers are women they should receive wages monthly. The study result shows that through this scheme 100 percent of the respondents who reported that they got the wages from 180-220. Visits to the worksite revealed the range of wages realized by workers, the details of

the same are given in the table below most stringently it can be seen that in each of the states, there were no observable differences in the wages received by male and female MGNREGA workers. Thus establishing that the clause of equal

wages for men and women under MGNREGA is in fact being adhered to nevertheless, the disparity in the wages across states is stark.

Table 4: Monthly Income of the Respondents

| Income (in Rs.) | Before MGNREGA | | After MGNREGA | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| | No. of Respondents | Percent | No. of Respondents | Percent |
| Below 1000 | 1 | 2 | - | - |
| 1001-2000 | 8 | 16 | 4 | 8 |
| 2001-3000 | 23 | 46 | 16 | 32 |
| 3001-4000 | 11 | 22 | 21 | 42 |
| 4001 and above | 7 | 14 | 9 | 18 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |

The above table 4 explains that sources of monthly income of the respondents before and after MGNREGA scheme is concerned the majority of the respondents did not earn from the sources of daily wage self-employment the highest percentage of respondents income earned from daily wages.

The implementation of MGNREGA scheme, household income gradually increased, especially the landless, agricultural and daily wage workers. The table 4 explains that the annual income has increased after joining MGNREGA. It shows that 42 percent of the respondents get 3001-4000 followed by 18 percent of the respondents earn 4001 and above. Hence it is concluded that none of the respondents earn below 1000 after joining MGNREGA scheme, they are having that much of income from all sources particularly MGNREGA Scheme. The respondents said that the scheme is help to us in different and help to overcome the economic issues and their livelihood.

Table 5: Savings Level of the Respondents

| Savings (in Rs.) | Before MGNREGA | | After MGNREGA | |
|------------------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| | No. of Respondents | Percent | No. of Respondents | Percent |
| Below 500 | 26 | 52 | 3 | 6 |
| 500-1000 | 17 | 34 | 16 | 32 |
| 1000-1500 | 6 | 12 | 24 | 48 |
| 1500-2000 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 10 |
| 2000 and above | - | - | 2 | 4 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |

The table 5 shows that maximum respondents were able to save income before MGNREGA, but after MGNREGA 100 percent were able to save. Further, the table shows that all the respondents reported every month they are able to save amount at least below Rs.500 and maximum of 2000 an above per month through post office, bank or self. Apart from the wages the impact of the works undertaken in MGNREGA would also show impact in the household's overall income.

Saving pattern of the people of the rural area is very much unorganized and the rural savings is also very low. The amount of money that an individual can save is directly related to her income. According to the latest Indian government data in rural areas the average per capita income is very low. The lower level of purchasing power among individuals will lead to lower savings. The pattern of lower purchasing power among rural masses is a basic characteristic of developing nations.

Table 6: Respondents Assets Creation in a Year

| Amount (in Rs.) | Before MGNREGA | | After MGNREGA | |
|-----------------|--------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|
| | No. of Respondents | Percent | No. of Respondents | Percent |
| 10000-20000 | 12 | 24 | 2 | 4 |
| 20000-30000 | 33 | 66 | 11 | 22 |
| 30000-40000 | 5 | 10 | 25 | 5 |
| 40000-50000 | - | - | 9 | 18 |
| 50000 & above | - | - | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |

The above table 6 shows that the assets creation of the respondents in after and before MGNREGA. The study reported that after MGNREGA the assets predation was increased 100 percent. While the amounts of Rs.10000 to 50000 and above the respondents have bought any kind assets in after MGNREGA since the women have a tendency in savings. Hence it is concluded that, before and after asset creation of the household highly increases on after MGNREGA most of the respondents spend on high amount of bought Jewellery, household goods and etc.

Summary

The study has revealed that the socio-economic condition of women working regularly under the MGNREGA scheme is relatively better than the other similar households in the rural area. Though the socio-economic conditions of women have been improving gradually, to fasten the rate of improvement some developmental initiatives can be integrated with the scheme for long periods.

Conclusion

The study has found that MGNREGA has created more employment days and the earnings of women have increased. The majority of respondents participated in the programme and particularly, a higher percentage of female respondents worked in this scheme. All the sample respondents particularly women utilized this scheme and worked as labourers. Most of the respondents have a primary and secondary level of education. This research shows that there is an increase in the woman days of employment under MGNREGA. Moreover is clear that after the implementation of MGNREGA scheme the income has significantly increased to all the households. However, it is

concluded that there is a positive impact on the employment opportunities and income generation for women. The success has to be continued, a sustained monitoring and social audit of the scheme is inevitable.

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