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A study on implementation of MGNREG Scheme in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

The current study focus on the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) should look at this poverty alleviation program only in this context. This paper seeks to implement the beneficiary awareness level especially on MGNREGS in Andhra Pradesh (Guntur District). To analyze the above, the survey was conducted, the questionnaire method using the interview schedule was adopted for data collection and statistical tools were used for analysis. The data are explained and ideas for running the programs well are presented in suggestions.

Keywords: implementation, awareness level, MGNREGS, Guntur district

Introductions

The present study on evaluation of the MGNREG Scheme is intended to assess the overall scenario i.e., the pros and cons associated with the scheme itself, the operational bottlenecks, the efficacy of social audit, and at last to assess the impact of the scheme on the targeted beneficiaries of the program. An analysis of mechanism of job card registration of workers and work allocation procedure under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme could be examined to find out the problem and prospects in executing the work. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme stipulates to provide basic facilities such as crèche, first aid, drinking water, and shed for workers in the work site. An analysis required to what extent such facilities are provided in the work site and it can be assessed from the point of view of household beneficiaries. There is a need to examine the modes of dissemination of information, detailing the work allocation so as to inform all the households falling in the jurisdiction of Gram panchayat. Attention is needed to analyze the household data pertaining to average number of days of work provided to each and every household, time lag between application for job and allocation of job. In this study an attempt is made to analyze the mode of wage provision, impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on wages, income and quality of life and impact on out migration.

Implementation of Mgnregs in Andhra Pradesh

MGNREGS is a centrally sponsored scheme. The Ministry of Rural Development (MORD) is the nodal agency for implementation of the scheme at the central level. There is Central Employment Guarantee Council (CEGC) to advise Government of India on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) related matters. The Act requires every State to formulate a State Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (SREGS), which should confirm to the minimum features specified under the Act. For the purposes of regular monitoring and reviewing the implementation of this Act at the state level, every State government shall constitute a State council to be known as the State Employment Guarantee Council (SEGC). The SEGC was constituted in Andhra Pradesh on 14.8.2006.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) offers 100 days of work to unemployed families in rural areas. Adults of a household who are living in a rural area and willing to undertake unskilled manual labour for which they receive the minimum wage, which varies from State to State and cannot be less than Rs. 60 are eligible for the work. According to the Act, rural households have a right to register themselves with the local Gram Panchayats (GPs), and seek employment. Work is to be provided within 15 days from the date of demand, failing which the state government will have to pay unemployment allowance at the stipulated rates.

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At least one-third of persons to whom work is allotted have to be women. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight. Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 kms radius of the village or else extra wages of 10 per cent are payable. Worksite facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided. Social Audit has to be done by Gram Sabha and grievance redressal mechanisms are put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process. Each state determines the method of implementation. In many places, a Field Assistant is hired to oversee the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) worksite and to issue pay slips, and a Technical Assistant is hired to provide technical input (Sheela Reddy. C, 2013:108-109).

Need for the Study

This study aims at analyzing the performance of National rural Employment Scheme of Government of India. This scheme is implemented to provide a guarantee of 100 days employment for the benefit of poor households in a financial year. It is a major rural employment scheme of United Progressive Alliance Government. Initially this scheme was implemented in 200 districts in India and later extended to all the rural districts of India from the financial year 2008-09. Consequent upon this situation the government of India has increased 144 percent of financial allocation for the scheme. In order to implement the scheme, the government of India has been spending crores of rupees. An analysis of performance of the scheme is highly useful for planning commission. This type of analysis enables the members of implementing authorities to identify the defects and problems in the existing system of implementation and such problems and defects will be corrected through proper government intervention. The study of effectiveness of the scheme is highly useful to the planning commission members to identify the procedures of implementation of the scheme and to what extent guidelines in the act is adhered in the process of implementation. If guidelines are not properly followed an appropriate policy suggestions can be initiated. The scheme implementing authorities can learn to what extent expectations of rural households are fulfilled through the scheme. The report of the study will identify the problems and prospects of implementation of National Rural Employment Scheme and impact of the scheme on wages, income and quality of life of rural households and also impact on out-migration. Such type of identification enables the planners to frame a suitable rural development planning in general and rural employment planning in particular.

Review of Literature

Gaiha Raghav (2004)^[1] reported that overall participation in the Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) in Maharashtra fell sharply over the period 1980-97. Some of this reduction was due to expansion of irrigation facilities leading to expansion of farm employment. Alongside, expansion of non-farm employment led to a further reduction in the demand for the EGS. Although there was a slight rise in participation in subsequent years, it was dampened by a change in the composition of the EGS. Specifically, substitution of community assets as alternative employment options are few and far between, the dependence on the EGS is unavoidably high for those who are able to participate in it. If the overall participation rates are low, it

is partly a consequence of the nature of projects undertaken and low outlays and not so much a result of slackening of demand for the EGS.

Erlend Berg, Sambit Bhattacharya, Rajasekhar Durgam and manjula Ramachandra (2012)^[2] tested the impact of the Indian government's major public works programme, the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG), on agricultural wages. The rollout of NREG in three phases is used to identify difference –in-difference estimates of the programme effect. Using monthly wage data from the period 2000-2011 for a panel of 249 districts across 19 Indian states, the authors found that on average NREG boosts the real daily agricultural wage rates by 5.3 percent. It takes 6 to 11 months for an NREG intensity shock to feed into higher wages. The wage effect appears to be gender neutral and biased towards unskilled labour. It is positive across different implementation stages and months. It remains significant even after controlling for rainfall; district and time fixed effects; and phase-wise linear, quadratic, and cubic time trends. The validity of our identification strategy is confirmed by statistical tests. The authors argued that since most of the world's poor live in rural areas, and the poorest of the poor are agricultural wage labourers, rural public works constitute a potentially important anti-poverty policy tool.

Raghbendra Jha and Raghav Gaiha (2012)^[3] evaluated India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) according to four criteria a) average number of days of employment per household, b) percentage of households, b) percentage of households completing 100 days of employment under NREGS, c) percentage of expenditure against total available funds, and d) percentage of work completed. Performance across all four criteria has been disappointing and, except for percentage of households completing 100 days of employment, has actually deteriorated over time. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the NREGS has not performed well. The paper makes a number of policy suggestions to improve the performance of the NREGS.

Usha Rani Ahuja, Dushyant Tyagi, Sonia Chauhan and Khyali Ram Choudhary (2011)^[10] investigated the impact of implementation of MGNREGA in two districts one agriculturally –advanced (Karnal) and the other agriculturally –backward Mewat in Haryana. Besides demographic characteristics, the Paper has investigated the difference in the employment characteristics, the paper has investigated the difference in the employment status, income, landholding size, herd size and other assets of the sample farm households in these two districts by taking 120 farm families. 60 from each district. The impact of MGNREGA within a district has also been studied in terms of income and employment security, migration, debt repayment, extent of participation in MGNREGA works, socio-economic status, etc, by seeking information from 30 participating and 30 non participating households in MGNREGA works in each district. A significant difference has been found in the extent of employment under MGNREGA works in agriculturally-advanced Karnal (13.7%) and agriculturally-backward Mewat (24.6%) districts. The study has observed that despite being a source of employment, MGNREGA has not been able to check the migration from the developed region because of higher market wage rates at destinations. The study has concluded that farmers owning large size of landholdings and more

number of animals are not much interested in participating in MGNREGA works.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the awareness level of beneficiaries on MGNREGS in the Guntur district.
2. To offer suggestions based on findings of the study.

Research Methodology

For the present study, data was collected from both primary sources as well as secondary sources. The secondary data were collected from the various journals, books, periodicals and web. The primary data has been collected through a self well thought-out feedback form, including both open and close ended questions. The questionnaire was controlled upon purposively selected beneficiaries and stakeholders of the scheme. Interview schedule was the essential and most significant instrument used during the data collection. It helped in gathering the beneficiary's purpose and thoughts etc. The Guntur District for appraisal of MGNREGS was selected in consultation with the government officials, based on the criteria that district which has experienced significant good impact under MGNREGS in terms of no. of mandays of employment generated.

The information was collected by administering an interview schedule to 120 Beneficiaries who were selected from 6 villages in two mandals of Guntur District. The Total Sample Size is 120. The Beneficiaries were selected on the basis of Multi –Stage Random Sampling Method. For analyzing the findings and to draw the inferences, the statistical tools have been used like percentage method and one One-Simple 't' test etc.,

Data Analysis

Awareness level of the respondents on MGNREGS

Ha₁: The beneficiaries have a significant level of awareness on MGNREGS.

Ho₁: The beneficiaries do not have a significant level of awareness on MGNREGS.

The One-Simple 't' test was used in the study to find out the significant level of awareness of the respondents on MGNREGS when compared to the average level and also it was used to test the hypothesis. Test value was fixed at 10 based on the average mean of a subject who can score maximum 20 for a set of question of a variable. In the study totally seven variables such as the Registration for employment, employment, wage payment system, facilities at work place, Records in the workplace, Casually at the work site, Grievance Redressal mechanism were selected for this analysis. A low significance value ($p < 0.05$) indicates that there is a significant difference between the test value and the observed mean. If the confidence interval for the mean difference does not contain zero, this also indicates that the difference is significant. If the significance value is high ($p > 0.05$), negative 't' value and the confidence interval for the mean difference contains zero, then it cannot conclude that there is a significant difference between the test value and the observed mean. In the statistical results, the significant difference indicates the significant awareness level of the variable and no significant difference indicates the insignificant awareness level of the variable. The details of the awareness level of the respondents of the variables of rules and regulation of MGNREGS are show in table 1

Table 1: One- Sample t- test for awareness level of the Respondents on MGNREGS

| Variables | Test Value =10 | | | | | 95% confidence interval of the Difference | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|-----|-----------------|---|---------|
| | Mean | Mean Difference | T | Df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Lower | Upper |
| Registration for employment | 15.9250 | 5.9250 | 54.348 | 499 | 0.000** | 5.7109 | 6.1391 |
| Employment | 16.4500 | 6.4500 | 82.656 | 499 | 0.000** | 6.2967 | 6.6033 |
| Wage payment system | 14.8250 | 4.8250 | 77.125 | 499 | 0.000** | 4.7021 | 4.9479 |
| Facilities at work place | 15.1000 | 5.1000 | 56.159 | 499 | 0.000** | 4.9216 | 5.2784 |
| Records in work place | 12.4750 | 2.4750 | 39.106 | 499 | 0.000** | 2.3507 | 2.5953 |
| Casually at the work site | 10.8250 | 0.8250 | 7.954 | 499 | 0.059 | 0.6213 | 1.0287 |
| Grievance Redressal Mechanism | 8.8250 | -1.1750 | -15.168 | 499 | 0.000 | -1.3271 | -1.0229 |

** Significant at 0.05 level of confidence

Significance P value is less than 0.05, the hypothesis(Ha₁) is accepted at the 5% level of significance with regard to the variables of Registration for employment, Employment knowledge, Wage payment system, Facilities at work place and Records in the workplace. At the 0.05 level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that there is a significant level of awareness of the above variables. Hence, the hypothesis (Ha₁) is accepted with regard to the above variables. The results of the study proved that the respondents of beneficiaries have a significant level of awareness on MGNREGS in the above five variables.

Since P value is higher than 0.05, the hypothesis (Ha₁) is rejected at the 5% level of significance with regard to the variable of Casualty at the work site. At the 0.05 level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that there is an insignificant level of awareness on the above variable. Even though there is a significance difference ($P < 0.05$) in the variable of Grievance Redressal

Mechanism, the mean difference indicates the negative value. The negative value denotes the retreat level of awareness on the variable. Hence, the hypothesis (Ha₁) is rejected with regard to the variables of Casualty at the work site and Grievance Redressal mechanism. The result of the study reported that the respondents have insignificant levels of awareness on MGNREGS in the above two variables.

Suggestions

Creating awareness

Seven years after the enactment of the MGNREG Act, many beneficiaries are still unaware of its provisions. Therefore, it is suggested to create awareness among the rural people about MGNREGS. Furthermore, to create awareness about MGNREGS, it was suggested to hold some training sessions to train the workers. They are also trained on the payment method of the bank or post office to speed up the process.

Season Based Work Plan

MGNREGS works and farm works are working at the same time exacerbating the problem of labor shortage in agriculture. MGNREGS advised to avoid work during peak agricultural months. Last but not least, the ban on contractors should be strictly enforced. Ideal action should be taken against the contractors involved in the MGNREGS as well as the workers who cooperate with them. The withdrawal of contractors should also be facilitated by expanding staffing, separating payment agencies from enforcement agencies and enforcing transparency security. It also helps to prioritize labor-intensive projects (e.g. earthworks) as contractors look for projects with a high material-labor ratio.

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