

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PARTICIPATION OF THE MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MGNREGA) BENEFICIARIES IN SALEM DISTRICT

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Abstract

The study mainly focuses on factors influencing the participation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act beneficiaries in Salem district. The present study was conducted in Thalaivasal block of Salem District. Salem district has been administratively divided into twenty blocks. Out of these blocks, Thalaivasal block has higher number of beneficiaries. So, it was selected as a study area. For the selection of the respondents, proportionate random sampling technique was followed. 120 respondents were selected for this study. The data were collected from each of the respondent through personal interview with the help of schedule. The results revealed that personal factors and economic factors influenced the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA, followed by social factors and the organizational factors.

Key words: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, rural employment, rural development, etc.

1. Introduction

India is the country of villages and even today around 70 per cent of its population is residing in the villages of which 28.30 per cent live below poverty line. The rural character of the economy as stated by Mahatma Gandhi is not found in cities but in its villages. Mahatma Gandhi's human capital model of development appears to be the most suitable for labour surplus country like ours upliftment of villages will continue to be the major area of achievement in all the discussions pertaining to economic growth of our country. To overcome the above problems and deficiencies of the earlier wage employment programmes, Government of India took a historic step by enacting the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2005 by merging Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarojgar Yojana and National Food for Work Programme for providing livelihood security to rural unemployed. The law was initially called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act but was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 2nd October 2009. This Act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily

semi or unskilled work to people living in rural India, whether or not they are below the poverty line. Based on man days working on the project, the MGNREGA districts were classified into good performing districts and poor performing districts. Among the good performing districts, Salem was selected for the study.

2. Methodology

The present study was conducted in Salem district of Tamil Nadu state. Salem district has been administratively divided into twenty blocks. Out of these blocks, higher beneficiaries of MGNREGA were noticed in Thalaivasal block. Hence, Thalaivasal block has been selected for the purpose of study. Thalaivasal block had thirty-five Panchayat villages and eight villages were purposively selected based upon its maximum number of beneficiaries. For the selection of the respondents, proportionate random sampling technique was followed to select a sample size of one hundred and twenty respondents.

3. Factors influencing the participation of beneficiaries in MGNREGA

The factors, which are influencing the participation of beneficiaries in MGNREGA, were classified as economic, social, personal and organizational factors. The beneficiaries were asked to indicate the factors influencing their participation in MGNREGA. The factors were classified into greater extent, lesser extent; and not an influencing factor; with the scores assigned as 3, 2 and 1 respectively and the arithmetic mean was worked out.

TABLE 1

Distribution of Respondents According to the Overall Factors Influencing the Participation of Beneficiaries in MGNREGA

S.No.	Factors	Overall Mean
1	Economic factors	2.53
2	Social factors	2.00
3	Personal factors	2.69
4	Organizational factors	1.87

From Table 1, it could be seen that personal factors (2.698) and economic factors (2.535) influenced majority of the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA followed by social factors (2.000). The organizational factors (1.875) made least influence in making the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA activities.

4. Factors influencing the participation of beneficiaries

Many economic, social, personal and organizational factors may be responsible for the beneficiaries to participate in MGNREGA. These factors may influence the MGNREGA beneficiaries directly or indirectly. So, relevant data on the factors influencing the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA activities fewer than four major sub-heading viz., economic, social, personal and organizational factors were collected.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Respondents According to the Factors Influencing the Participation of Beneficiaries in MGNREGA

S.No.	Factors	Mean	Overall Mean
A. Economic Factors			
1	To get additional income	2.75	2.53
2	To improve savings	2.45	
3	To clear debts	2.50	
4	Guaranteed job for 100 days	2.87	
5	No delay in wage distribution	2.10	
B. Social Factors			
1	Family background	3.00	2.00
2	Due to compulsion of family members	1.00	
3	Encouragement given by friends	2.00	
4	After seeing neighbors development	2.00	
5	Societal influence	2.00	
C. Personal Factors			
1	Old age (cannot go for any other work)	2.09	2.69
2	To maintain family living	3.00	
3	To avoid migration	3.00	
4	To spend leisure time	2.25	
5	Self-reliance or independence	3.00	
6	Due to unemployment	2.62	
7	Due to discontinuance of school education	2.62	
8	As an alternative whenever there is no job	3.00	
D. Organizational factors			
1	Guidance from DRDO office	1.25	1.87
2	Guidance from BDO office	1.37	
3	Guidance from Panchayat office	3.00	
	Overall mean value		2.27

Economic factors: It could be observed from Table 2 that the economic factors viz., guaranteed job for 100 days (2.87) and to get additional income (2.75) influenced the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA.

Social factors: Among the social factors, family background (3.00) was the reason for majority of the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA.

Personal factors: Among the personal factors, maintain family living, to avoid migration, self-reliance and MGNREGA as an alternative whenever there is no job (3.00) were the factors that have influenced the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA.

Organizational factors: Among the organizational factors, guidance from Panchayat office (3.00) made the beneficiaries to take part in MGNREGA.

5. Conclusion

Gram Panchayats play an important role in the functioning of the scheme. It should be the Panchayats' responsibility to implement the scheme in an effective manner after releasing the funds. Now, the MGNREGA is providing guaranteed employment of only 100 days per family. Hence, increase in the number of days of employment per year per person would encourage more participation by the rural poor. It was found that the overall livelihood status of MGNREGA beneficiaries had improved. Hence, the government should encourage more people to participate in the scheme through effective targeting of the rural people.

6. Reference

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