

## Awareness Generation: Way for Reaching the Unreached and Making MGNREGS Work



### Sociology

**KEYWORDS** : Awareness, Rural, Employment, Scheme, Beneficiaries, MGNREGS.

**Mr. Argade Shivaji Dadabhau**

Ph. D. Scholar, II Year, Dairy Extension Division, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana (India) - 132001.

**Dr. B. Vijabhinandana**

Professor, Department of Extension Education, Agricultural College, ANGRAU, Hyderabad.

### ABSTRACT

*The study was carried out in the Thane district of Maharashtra with the objective of to study the awareness of beneficiaries on the activities of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). A total of 90 beneficiaries were selected from the 10 villages of five talukas of Thane district. The data was collected by personal interview and analysed by using suitable statistical techniques. Most of the beneficiaries had medium level of awareness followed by high and low levels of awareness on MGNREGS activities. The probable reason for low*

### INTRODUCTION

In India, Unemployment and Poverty are severe problems in rural areas, leaving it outside the growth path. In a country like India, the entire concept of planning considering equal status of men and women and must aim at increasing economic opportunities to the large rural people. India will become a super power only when its rural people achieve economic prosperity and self-reliance. Thus, Government of India, aiming at balanced growth, passed National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in the year 2005 in order to empower the rural labourers with right to get employment of 100 days per year per family during off-season. In accordance, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) has been launched in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, 2006, with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2006 in 200 drought prone and backward districts in India. This scheme was launched in Thane district of Maharashtra in the financial year 2007-08. Government of India on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2009 renamed its flagship rural job guarantee programme- National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

Central Government is making large public expenditure under MGNREGA. In the recent budget (2010-11), an allocation of Rs. 40,000 crores has been made for MGNREGA which is an increase of 150 per cent over the 2008-09 budget (16,000 crores). Under the above stated circumstances it became necessary to assess how far the programme is achieving its desired goals in terms of empowering the rural people. In this context the present study was under taken to study the awareness of beneficiaries on the activities of MGNREGS.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted by following descriptive research design in randomly selected ten villages of purposively selected five talukas of Thane district of Maharashtra. A sample of 90 beneficiaries selected randomly by following disproportionate random sampling procedure. Data was collected through well structured interview schedule. The collected data was coded, classified and tabulated. Finally, Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation, Frequency, Percentage and 'Z' test were used for drawing conclusions. A numbers of questions were asked to study the awareness of beneficiaries on MGNREGS activities. The scoring procedure of '1' and '0' was adopted i. e., 1 for each correct answer and 0 for each wrong answer. The total score for the correct answers was summed up for getting the awareness score of a particular beneficiary. The maximum and minimum score of each beneficiary was 27 and 0 respectively. Based on total score obtained by the beneficiaries on the awareness, they were grouped into three categories on the basis of mean and standard deviation i. e. low, medium and high.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Table 1 reported that two-third (67.78%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries fell under medium awareness category followed by high awareness (21.11%) and low awareness (11.11%) categories.

**Table 1: Distribution of selected beneficiaries according to their awareness on MGNREGS activities**

Sl. No.	Awareness	MGNREGS Beneficiaries	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (< 16.64)	10	11.11
2	Medium (16.64-22.60)	61	67.78
3	High (> 22.60)	19	21.11
Mean: 19.62 SD: 2.98			

This might be due to the efforts made by MGNREGS functionaries through Gram Sabha and also the existence of similar programme in the area for the welfare of rural areas of Maharashtra. The probable reason for low awareness about MGNREGS among the people is due to illiteracy and low social participation. The cent (100.00%) per cent of selected beneficiaries came to know about MGNREGS through their participation in Gram Sabha. Similar trend was reported by Ramkrishna (1986), Nagamani (2000), Sreerama Murthy *et al.* (2005) and Vinay Kumar (2009).

### CONTENT ANALYSIS OF AWARENESS OF BENEFICIARIES ON DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES OF MGNREGS

The study revealed that the cent (100.0%) per cent of selected MGNREGS beneficiaries were aware of facts that MGNREGS was started 3 years ago in their village; The registration of families under MGNREGS is free of cost; MGNREGS provides equal wages to men and women and The wage payment under MGNREGS is through bank or post accounts. This might be due to the planned efforts of MGNREGS functionaries to create awareness through Gram Sabha.

Most (98.89%) of the selected MGNREGS beneficiaries were aware that job cards issued to household and opening of Bank or Post Office Account is free of cost under MGNREGS. This might be due to the practical experience that they got through MGNREGS. A great majority (97.78%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that MGNREGS is meant for providing employment guarantee. This might be due to the publicity given to MGNREGS through electronic and print media.

Majority (96.67%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that the use of Machineries and involvement of Contractors is not permissible for MGNREGS works and one can complain against mal practices occurred during implementation of MGNREGS. This might be due to the wide publicity given to MGNREGS through electronic and print media.

Majority (95.56%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that the nature of works taken up under MGNREGS includes Water Conservation, Land Development, Rural Connectivity, etc. This might be due to the implementation of said works in their areas. Majority (91.11%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that MGNREGS is scheme open for all local adult people. This might

be due to the wide publicity given through local Gram Panchayat notice board.

Majority (86.67%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware of facts that the daily working hours recommended under MGNREGS for each beneficiary are 7 hours and one can apply for duplicate job card in case one lost it. This might be due to the publicity given as per the policy decisions of MGNREGS in electronic and print media as well as Gram Sabha.

Almost same number (84.44%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that the work is being provided under MGNREGS during agricultural slack season. This might be due to the wide publicity given to MGNREGS through Gram Panchayat notice board and their own experiences while participation in similar earlier programmes. Likewise, 83.33 per cent of MGNREGS beneficiaries were aware that it is necessary to apply for employment after getting job card. It necessarily might be due to the campaigns of this fact by officials during Gram Sabha as well as display of such information on notice board.

Similarly, 81.11 per cent of MGNREGS beneficiaries were aware that the reservation for women beneficiaries under MGNREGS is 33 per cent. This might be due to the continuous campaigns by MGNREGS officials as well as preference attached to the women participation in earlier programmes like IRDP, DWCRA, SGSY, etc.

Three-fourth (76.67%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries were aware that the Unemployment Allowance is to be provided in case employment is not given within 15 days of application for work. It could be due to wide publicity through electronic, print media as well as official campaigns.

The registration of families under MGNREGS is open throughout the year is known to more than half (58.89%) of the selected MGNREGS beneficiaries. This might be due to the information provided through Gram Panchayat notice board and Gram Sab-

ha. Similarly, more than half (53.33%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries was aware that the registration of families under MGNREGS is through either written application or oral application. This might be due to the efforts made by Gram Panchayat to furnish the information through Gram Sabha and notice board.

Quiet opposite to this, the majority (78.89%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries had no awareness with regard to the fund reserved for providing employment to disabled persons is 3 per cent followed by extra wages of 10% are paid under MGNREGS in case work is provided beyond 5 km (75.56%), SCs/STs, Land Reforms Beneficiary, IAY Beneficiary and BPL Family are eligible under MGNREGS to take land development works on their own land (72.22%), MGNREGS provides 100 days employment guarantee and the job card is valid for 5 years (62.22% each), the Creche facility is provided under MGNREGS at worksites (61.11%), all documents and records related to MGNREGS are available for public scrutiny (60.00%) and the works are ordinarily being provided within 5 Km. radius of the village (54.44%), respectively. This might be due to low key emphasis while giving publicity to MGNREGS through electronic, print media and official campaigns.

### CONCLUSION

From the above findings it could be concluded that as most of the beneficiaries had medium awareness, this calls for intensive efforts on the part of government officials to create greater awareness on various aspects of MGNREGS. The electronic and print media could have been effectively used for bringing awareness among the people. It is very interesting time in the history of independent India, when the government is taking steps to provide its citizens with rights that it has never given before through Acts like Right to Education, Right to Information, Right to Employment (MGNREGA) and Right to Food. But, proactive participation of people is of prime importance to make sure these laws are implemented properly through the programmes such as MGNREGS.

### REFERENCE

- Ahiladevi, S., Manoharan, M. and Sujata, J. 2001. Awareness and Perceived Impact of IRDP on Women. *Journal of Extension Education*. 11(4): 2942-2948. | Nagamani, S. 2000. Appraisal of Janmabhoomi Programme by Rural Women in Kurnool District of Andhra Pradesh. M.Sc.(Ag.) Thesis, Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. | Ramakrishna, K. 1986. Impact of National Rural Employment Programme in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh. M.Sc.(Ag.) Thesis, Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. | Sreeramamurthy, V., Reddy, D. R. and Subramananyeswari, B. 2005. Awareness of People about Janmabhoomi Programme and Its Relationship with Their Personal and Socio-Economic Characteristics in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh. *Mysore Journal of Agricultural Sciences*. 39(2): 259-261. | Vinay Kumar, G. 2009. A Critical Study on Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas of Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. M.Sc.(Ag.) Thesis, Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University, Rajendranagar, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. | [www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in) |