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A Study on Socio - Economic Profile of MGNREGS Beneficiaries

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Mandya district of Karnataka state during 2012-13. Thirty beneficiaries formed the sample for the study. The data was collected by personal interview with the help of structured schedule which was developed keeping the objectives of the study. It was evident from the study that majority (60.00 %) of the beneficiaries were middle aged, belonged to other backward classes (53.33 %). It was found that there was a considerable proportion (40.00 %) of the female beneficiaries were working under the scheme. It was noticed that higher proportion (76.66%) of the beneficiaries had nuclear family. More than half (56.66 %) of respondents belonged to landless category and semi-medium income category (53.33 %). The study revealed that majority of the beneficiaries borrowed loans from non-formal institutions (90.00%). Television (70.00 %) formed the major asset among material possession in the present study.

KEYWORDS Material possession, Type of family, Loans

INTRODUCTION

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005) of India provides a legal guarantee for up to 100 days of annual employment at a predetermined wage rate to rural households willing to supply manual labour on local public works. The act was operationalised through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) which began in 2006. Initially restricted to 200 "poorest" districts of India (February 2006), it was extended to 130 more districts in May 2007 and to all districts across the country by 1st April 2008. MGNREGS is a social welfare programme primarily intended to enhance the livelihood securities of people by providing 100 days of employment in a year and it helps to regenerate the rural natural resource base for sustainable livelihood by carrying out soil and water conservation activities. This social welfare programme is primarily intended to enhance the livelihood securities of the people in rural areas by supplementing wage employment opportunities to the unskilled labour force. Hundred days of employment is provided to any household who is willing to do unskilled manual work under the scheme. Gram panchayats are the grass root institutions to plan, design and implement the MGNREGS. It is therefore, required to study the profile of beneficiaries who work under the scheme. Keeping this fact in view, the present study was planned to study the profile of beneficiaries.

Methodology

The study was conducted in two taluks of Mandya district (K. R. Pete and Nagamangala) for studying the socio economic characteristics of MGNREGS. Since, the two taluks were under rainfed conditions in the district, they were purposively selected. From each taluk, three villages were selected randomly. Twenty beneficiaries from each village were selected under the study to form a sample size of 120. Interview schedule was used to collect primary data from the beneficiaries.

The variables such as age, sex, caste, education, annual family income, size of family, type of family, landholding, type of house, household assets and loans were interpreted using statistical tools like frequency and percentages.

Results and Discussions:

It was evident from Table that majority (60.00%) of the beneficiaries were middle aged, followed by young age (26.67 %) and old age (13.33%). Usually persons of middle age have more work efficiency than young and old aged, further they are stable and have more responsibility towards family members. Incentives available in the form of cash and kind through MGNREG scheme might have encouraged middle age beneficiaries to involve in more number. The results are in line with the findings of Bharatamma (2005).

It could be observed from the result that more than half (53.33%) of the beneficiaries belonged to other backward classes. The finding justifies the selection of the beneficiaries as per the MGNREGS norms. Findings of Dey (2010) supported the present findings.

The data pertaining to education revealed that majority (40.00 %) of the beneficiaries were illiterates followed by middle school level (20.00 %) and high school (16.66 %) level of education. This situation might have arised due to low financial position of the beneficiaries and non-realization of importance of education. The findings are in line with the research results of Bheemappa (2006).

It was evident from table that majority (76.66 %) of the beneficiaries belonged to nuclear family category. Whereas, 23.34 per cent had joint family. Because of urbanization, people prefer to live in nuclear family for the sake of independence, satisfaction of basic needs and wish to lead happy life. The findings is in line with the findings of Bharathamma (2005).

The information about the size of the family showed that, 53.33 per cent of the respondents belonged to small family, followed by medium size (30.00 %) and big size (16.66 %) family respectively. This might be due to their awareness regarding the increased cost of living and problems/difficulties in maintenance of big family. Further, as the cost of living is increasing day by day, they might have found it beneficial to have small family to lead comfortable life.

It was observed that, 56.66 per cent of respondents belonged to landless category, 26.66 per cent of them were marginal farmers. It shows that landless farmers formed the major component of MGNREGS beneficiaries as it involved unskilled labour work. The findings are in line with the findings of Bharathamma (2005).

It could be observed from the Table that, majority (53.33%) of the beneficiaries belonged to semi-medium income category, followed by 30.00 per cent and 16.66 per cent who belonged to medium and low income category, respectively. The present trend is because MGNREG scheme is meant for resource poor people. Similar findings were also reported by Dwarkanath (2001).

The perusal of data indicated that majority (46.64 %) of the respondents were having pakka house followed by kachha house (45.00 %). Similar findings were also reported by Disha (2007).

It was found that majority (53.33 %) of the respondents possessed bicycle, followed by television (70.00 %), radio (23.33 %) and motor cycle (16.66 %). The raise in family income by wages earned by the scheme increases the possession of assets since man has no end to his needs and wants. If one need is fulfilled at the same time another need arises. In the present study the basic requirement are available with beneficiaries but after working under the scheme their requirements increased based on the family income. The results of the study of Vishvanath Hiremath (2007) were in conformity with the findings of the present study.

The study revealed that majority of the beneficiaries borrowed loans from non-formal institutions (90.00 %) than formal institutions (10.00%). The complexity involved in documentation and delay in loans from formal institutions was the main factor to borrow from non-formal sources. Ease of access to non-formal credit may also be the reason to borrow from non-formal sources.

Conclusion:

The scheme has been conceived primarily to provide households a guaranteed income through employment on public projects, it is sensitive to issues of gender discrimination in the labour marker. It also gives priority to female employment and targets at least one third of the beneficiaries to be women. Benefits under the scheme should be enhanced both in cash and kind form which will reflect in improvement in annual family income which enhances the standard of living of beneficiaries.

It is strongly recommended that in order to ensure the early completion of the scheme, the mode of payment is universalized to wage payment through the bank and post office accounts, which, in any case, is being practised but not consistently. The facility of credit should also be made available to the beneficiaries as the payment under the scheme is made through banks/post offices. Which makes the beneficiaries to bring into the formal system of credit. The concept of social justice can also be observed as beneficiaries belonged to all the categories of the society.

Table

(N=120)

Sl. No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Age		
	Young (18-30 Years)	32	26.67
	Middle (31-50 Years)	72	60.00
	Old (>50 Years)	16	13.33
2	Sex		
	Male	72	60.00
	Female	48	40.00
3	Caste		
	General	16	13.33
	Backward Classes (OBC)	64	53.33
	SC/ST	40	33.34
4	Education		
	Illiterate	48	40.00
	Primary School (1-4)	16	13.33
	Middle School (5-7)	24	20.00
	High School (8-10)	20	16.66
	PUC	12	10.00
	Graduate	0	0.00
5	Type of family		
	Nuclear family	92	76.66
	Joint family	28	23.34
6	Family size		
	Small (upto 4 members)	64	53.33
	Medium (5-7 members)	36	30.00
	Big (>7 members)	20	16.66
7	Land holding		
	Landless	72	56.66
	Marginal farmers (upto 2.50 acres)	32	26.66
	Small farmers (2.51 to 5.00 acres)	20	16.66
	Semi-medium farmers (5.01 to 10.00 acres)	0	0.00
8	Annual family income		
	Low (up to Rs.17,000/-)	20	16.66
	Semi-medium (Rs.17,001 to 34.000/-)	64	53.33
	Medium (Rs. 34,001 to 51,000/-)	36	30.00
9	Type of house		
	Hut	16	13.33
	Kachha house	48	40.00
	Pakka house	56	46.64
10	Household assets		
	Bicycle	64	53.33
	Radio	28	23.33
	Motor cycle	20	16.66
	Television	84	70.00
	Gobar gas plant	0	0.00
	Car	0	0.00
11	Loans		
	Formal	12	10.00
	Non-formal	108	90.00

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