Profile of the MGNREGS Beneficiaries- A Study in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT
A study was conducted in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh on beneficiaries of MGNREGS by purposively selecting a total of twelve villages from three mandals based on the criteria of maximum employment generation in Srikakulam district. From each of the above listed 12 villages 10 beneficiaries of MGNREGS were randomly selected from each village thus making a total of 120. Majority of the beneficiaries were middle aged, illiterate with medium family size, most of them were female with high annual income, high asset possession, high socio- politico participation followed by medium sources of information, high risk orientation, medium level of aspiration, medium economic motivation and medium achievement motivation.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) though notified on 7th September, 2005 was implemented in all the backward districts of India in April, 2008. It is the biggest employment providing programme ever started in the country for the development of rural areas. It aims at providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to undertake unskilled manual work. This scheme is different from the earlier employment programmes launched by Government of India. This scheme is on one hand demand driven and on the other, treats employment as a right of the rural households. Thus, the scheme provides income directly to the unskilled workers in the rural areas.

The MGNREGS has shown a significant improvement in different aspects. The number of households associated with MGNREGS works has been increasing consistently, the number of days for which employment has been provided have also increased. Another important aspect of MGNREGS is the increasing participation of women in it.

Though MGNREGS was initiated during the year 2006, there have been several studies looking into its implementation aspects, such as wage formation process, its democratic administration and implementation. Some studies have focused on its socio economic impact such as rural poverty alleviation, gender issues, self esteem, livelihood, food security and migration but so far there were no concrete studies taken up in Andhra Pradesh. The present study was undertaken purposively in Srikakulam district to study the profile characteristics of MGNREGS beneficiaries in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted by following Ex-post facto research design in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. The study was conducted by purposively selecting a total of twelve villages based on the criteria of maximum employment generation *viz.,* Pedarama, Kuddapalle, Sambham and Kodisa from Seethampeta mandal; Ranasthalam, Patharlapalle, Pydhibhimavaram and Pishini from Ranasthalam mandal; Polaki, Priyagraharam, Kottarevu and Ghatalavalasa from Polaki mandal in Srikakulam district. From each of the above listed 12 villages 10 beneficiaries of MGNREGS randomly were selected from each village thus making a total of 120. The data was collected from the sample of MGNREGS beneficiaries by personal interview method using structured pre-tested schedule. Finally frequency and percentages, mean, standard deviation calculated to know the distribution of beneficiaries over their profile characteristics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is apparent from the Table 1 that majority of MGNREGS beneficiaries belonged to middle age (70.84%) category followed by young age (17.50%) and old age (11.66%) categories. The above trend might be due to the middle and young aged beneficiaries were enthusiastic, possess more physical vigor and have more work efficiency than older beneficiaries. These findings were in agreement with the findings of Sitarambabu *et al.* (2013).

Nearly 25.00 per cent of MGNREGS beneficiaries were illiterate followed by primary school education (23.30%), high school education (21.70%), functionally literate (15.80%) and college education (14.20%) categories. However, it shows that majority of beneficiaries were illiterate as they have no other job opportunities other than labour work. Therefore MGNREGS was mostly helpful to illiterate people. Similar trend was reported by Pattanaik (2009).

Majority (73.30%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries had medium size of the family followed by small (16.70%) and large (10.00%) size. The poor families would have understood the difficulties involved in bringing up too many children with their limited means and thus might have limited their size of the family. The result was in accordance with Sankari and Murugan (2009).

Most (51.70%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries were female followed by male (48.30%). Women participation was higher over men participation which was due to the fact that the MGNREGS programme emphasizes 33.00 per cent reservation to women in allotted works and they show much interest in participation of works in the local areas for their livelihood security. Similar trend was observed by Adeppa (2014).

About 83.33 per cent of MGNREGS beneficiaries were having 4-6 years of experience followed by 1-3 years (16.67%). This trend might be due to MGNREGS was implemented in 2007 (Phase-II) in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. Hence beneficiaries were experienced maximum six years of benefits through MGNREGS. This finding was in conformity with finding of Mohanty and Mishra (2012).

Majority (88.33%) of the MGNREGS beneficiaries had high annual income of Rs. >60, 183.00 followed by medium (8.34%) and low (3.33%) income categories of Rs. 25, 160.00-60,183.00 and Rs. <25, 160.00 respectively. The main objective of MGNREGS is to provide employment opportunities to rural poor in order to improve their economic conditions. MGNREGS helped them to cross Below Poverty Line by increasing their income level. This result was in agreement with Chandra *et al.* (2012).

Nearly 89.17 per cent of the beneficiaries had high asset possession followed by medium (10.83%) asset possession. The possible reasons for the above trend could be that the income generated through MGNREGS helps the beneficiaries to purchase assets like TV, Two wheeler, mobile and ample scope of using resources judiciously in their own circumstances results in increasing their social status. This finding was in conformity with finding of Sarkar *et al.* (2011).

Majority (80.80%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries had high socio-politico participation followed by medium (19.20%) socio-politico participation. This might be due to many MGNREGS beneficiaries were the members of co-operative societies, Gram Panchayats and Self Help Groups. This result was in agreement with the findings of binding force with several principles of integration. the   Pankaj and Tankha (2010).

About 65.83 per cent of MGNREGS beneficiaries had medium sources of information like mass media, neighbours and field assistants followed by high (25.84%) and low (8.33%) sources of information. The reason for medium sources of information due to low educational levels, lack of awareness of beneficiaries regarding the broadcast timings, lack of knowledge about farm magazines, lack of interest to know new things, financial problems, pre occupation of beneficiaries in other important activities and non-addressable of situation specific problems. The finding was in concurrent with the findings of Venkatesan *et al.* (2014).

Half (50.84%) of the MGNREGS beneficiaries had high risk orientation followed by medium (28.33%) and low (20.83%) risk orientation. This may be due to their sources of income were poor, low net returns, poor education and also agriculture being their enterprise which is at subsistence level. Hence, every effort must be made to improve their educational and income levels

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their profile characteristics.

Profile of the MGNREGS beneficiaries	Category	Frequency (No.)	Percentage (%)
1 .Age	Young Age (18-35 years)	21	17.50
	Middle Age (36-58 years)	85	70.84
	Old Age (> 58 years)	14	11.66
2. Education	Illiterate	30	25.00
	Functionally literate	19	15.80
	Primary school	28	23.30
	Middle school	26	21.70
	College education	17	14.20
3. Size of the family	Small family (1-3 members)	20	16.70
	Medium family (4-7 members)	88	73.30
	Large family (>7 members)	12	10.00
4. Gender	Male	58	48.30
	Female	62	51.70
5.Experience and number of years benefitted	1-3 years	20	16.67
	4-6 years	100	83.33
6. Annual income $X=4.36$ SD= 1.38	Low annual income (<2.98) (Rs. <25, 160.00)	4	3.33
	Medium annual income (2.98-5.73) (Rs. 25, 160.00- 60,183.00)	10	8.34
	High annual income (>5.73) (Rs. >60, 183.00)	106	88.33
7.Possession of assets $X=2.50$ SD= 0.68	Low asset possession (<1.81)	-	-
	Medium asset possession (1.81-3.18)	13	10.83
	High asset possession (>3.18)	107	89.17
8.Socio- politico participation $X=1.93$ SD= 1.43	Low socio- politico participation (<0.49)	-	-
	Medium socio- politico participation (0.49-3.35)	23	19.20
	High socio politico participation (>3.35)	97	80.80
9.Sources of information $X=79.45$ SD= 9.25	Low sources of information (<70.20)	10	8.33
	Medium sources of information (70.20-88.70)	79	65.83
	High sources of information (>88.70)	31	25.84
10.Risk orientation $X=16.03$ SD= 1.69	Low risk orientation (<14.33)	25	20.83
	Medium risk orientation (14.33-17.33)	34	28.33
	High risk orientation (>17.33)	61	50.84
11.Level of aspiration $X=11.76$ SD= 3.03	Low level of aspiration (<8.73)	25	20.84
	Medium level of aspiration (8.73-14.80)	52	43.33
	High level of aspiration (>14.80)	43	35.83
12.Economic motivation $X=14.59$ SD= 3.03	Low economic motivation (<11.56)	27	22.50
	Medium economic motivation (11.56-17.62)	48	40.00
	High economic motivation (>17.62)	45	37.50
13.Achievement motivation $X=18.59$ SD= 1.30	Low achievement motivation (<16.65)	14	11.67
	Medium achievement motivation (16.65-20.52)	64	53.33
	High achievement motivation (>20.52)	42	35.00

through their involvement in MGNREGS results in promoting high risk orientation. This result was in agreement with the results of Manoj (2008).

Less than half (43.33%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries had medium level of aspiration followed by high (35.83%) and low (20.84%) levels of aspiration. The level of aspiration of selected MGNREGS beneficiaries showed that they had many aspirations. After introduction of MGNREGS, most of them had expressed their willingness to improve their house condition, higher education to their children, their agricultural productivity and their income level in the future *etc*. Most of the beneficiaries had mentioned that the improvement will take place as long as the MGNREGS continue. Similar findings were reported by Prabhu (2011).

About 40.00 per cent of the MGNREGS beneficiaries belonged to medium economic motivation category followed by high (37.50%) and low (22.50%) economic motivation categories. This might be due to the urge of the MGNREGS beneficiaries to earn more lucrative income from MGNREGS other than agriculture to increase income, educational levels and for their better livelihood security. This finding derives support from the findings of Palanisamy (2011).

Nearly half (53.33%) of MGNREGS beneficiaries had medium achievement motivation followed by high (35.00%) and low (11.67%) achievement motivation. This might be due to enthusiasm and zeal of MGNREGS beneficiaries to become economically sound that might have created a drive to achieve still better and raise their standard of living. These findings were in agreement with the findings of Pandey and Grover (2009), Roy *et al.* (2013) and Chinnamnaidu *et al.* (2014).

It could be concluded that majority of the MGNREGS beneficiaries were middle aged (70.84%), illiterate (25.00%) with medium family size (73.30%), most of them were female (51.70%) with high annual income (83.33%) high asset possession (89.17%), high socio-politico participation (80.80%) followed by medium sources of information (65.83%), high risk orientation (50.84%), medium level of aspiration (43.33%), medium economic motivation (40.00%) and medium achievement motivation (53.33%).

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