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Awareness and Work Mechanisms of MGNREGA at Thondamuthur Block in Coimbatore District

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Abstract

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA seeks to enhance the livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Act seeks to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. The choice of works suggested in the Act address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is on a sustainable basis. On this background, an attempt is made to analyze the awareness and mechanism of getting work of MGNREGA programme. The main objectives of the study are to study the socio-economic profile of the beneficiaries, to estimate the awareness of the programme and to analyze the mechanism of getting work to be done under this Act. The study was conducted in the Thondamuthur block in Coimbatore District and the data is collected with a structured questionnaire. The target group is the person registered under this MGNREGA programme, and the list is received from the President of the Block. The findings of the study revealed that above ninety percent of the beneficiary were women. Most of the people were aware of the programme and they bring their own equipment for the work, and every beneficiary of the MGNREGA act had easy access and received their job card.

Key Words

MGNREGA, Mechanism, Coimbatore, Thondamuthur, Awareness

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a flagship programme of Government of India. The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal Ministry for the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. It is responsible for ensuring timely and adequate resource support to the States and to the Central Council. It has to undertake regular review, monitoring and evaluation of processes and outcomes. It is responsible for maintaining and operating the MIS to capture and track data on critical aspects of implementation, and assess the utilization of resources through a set of performance indicators. Mahatma Gandhi NREGA was launched in 200 select districts on 2nd Feb 2006 and was extended to 130 additional districts during 2007-08. All the remaining rural areas in the country have been covered under the Act with effect from 1st April 2008. Presently, Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is being implemented in all the notified rural areas of the country. This is the largest employment programme ever started in the country with a huge public investment. Panchayat are involved in the planning and implementation of the scheme and creation of durable assets for sustainable development of the rural areas. There is a complete ban on the involvement of contractors and use of machinery is prohibited. The guidelines on NREGA clearly reflect the importance of social audit and greater emphasis has been placed on transparency and accountability. Use of information technology through online information is encouraged for the stakeholders for proper monitoring and evaluation of the programme. The focus of the scheme is to provide 100 days wage employment to rural households who wish to work and ask for work.

The NREGS document envisaged that focus of the scheme shall be on the following works in their order of priority:

(i) water conservation and water harvesting; (ii) drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation); (iii) irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works; (iv) provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana; (v) renovation of traditional water bodies, including desilting of tanks; (vi) land development; (vii) flood control and protection works, including drainage in water logged areas; (viii) rural connectivity to provide all-weather access; and (ix) any other work, which may be notified by the central government in consultation with the state government.

Objectives

The major objectives of the study are:

- To study the socio-economic profile of the beneficiaries of the MGNREGA programme
- To analyse the awareness of the MGNREGA among the rural people.
- To estimate the mechanisms of getting work that are to be done under the Act.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. The Coimbatore district consists of nine Taluks, 9 blocks, four municipalities and two corporations in area of 7,470.79 sq km. It is one of the most industrially advanced and commercially vibrant districts of Tamilnadu the data for the study is purely primary in nature. The study was conducted in Thondamuthur block in Coimbatore district. The survey was planned in consultation with the Project Officer, DRDA, BDOs and Head/Professor of Home Science

Extension Education, Avinashilingam University. The investigators had a structured questionnaire to know about the socio economic programme, awareness and work mechanisms under the scheme. The target group of the study was the beneficiaries of MGNREGA programmer. The beneficiaries of various Panchayat from Thondamuthur block is shown in Table: 1

Table: 1 Selection of Sample in Thondamuthur Block

Name of the block	Name of the Panchayat	Number of Sample
Thondamuthur	Mathampatti	38
	Mullankadu	42
	Perur chettipalayam	49
	Thithipalayam	34
	Thennamanalaur	58

Results

The study on the Awareness and Mechanism of MGNREGA in Coimbatore district are discussed under the following heads,

- Socio-economic background of the beneficiaries
- Awareness about the scheme
- Mechanism of getting work

i) Socio Economic Background Of The Beneficiaries

The Table-1 shows the socio economic background of the beneficiaries

Table 1: Socio-Economic Background of the Beneficiaries

Particulars	Categories	Thondamuthur	Percentage
Gender	Male	31	15
	Female	183	85
Educational Status	Illiterate	132	61
	Primary School	45	21
	Middle School	24	11
	High School	12	6
	Higher secondary Graduate	1	1
Age	21-30	21	10
	31-40	32	15
	41-50	42	20
	51-60	70	33
	61-70	35	16
	71 and above	14	6
Caste	SC/ST	114	53
	BC	46	21
	MBC	46	21
	others	8	5
Income (monthly)	Below 1000	114	53
	1001-2000	83	39
	2001-3000	17	8
	3001-4000	-	-
	4000 and above	-	-
Bank account status	Yes	131	61
	No	83	39
Name of the bank	IOB	98	46
	Canara	29	13
	Union Bank	-	-
	Indian Bank	4	1
Post office account	Yes	83	39
	No	-	-
Occupation	Coolie	147	69
	Daily wage	67	31
Type of ration Card	Green	142	66
	Blue	72	34
Possession of Land	Yes	-	-
	No	214	100
Provision of Electricity	Yes	205	96
	No	9	4
Toilet facility	Yes	77	36
	No	137	64
Water facility	Yes	194	91
	No	20	9

Source: Field Survey

The table reveals that majorities (85 per cent) of the beneficiaries were females and remaining 15 percent were male. Sixty one percent were illiterates and only six percent have completed their high school education, whereas 33 percent were in the age group of 51-60 yrs, 16 per cent were between 61-70 yrs this says that it is a social security measure for elderly people. Among 214 beneficiaries, surveyed 53 per cent of the beneficiaries belonged to SC/ST. They were people who benefited from the scheme. Only 39 per cent of the beneficiaries had a monthly income between Rs 1000-Rs 2000 and 8 per cent were getting Rs. 20013000 respectively. 69 percent of the beneficiaries stated that they were engaged as coolie as their occupation and 30 per cent as daily wage workers. Sixty-six percent of them possessed green color ration card and remaining thirty four per cent possessed blue color ration card. The data strongly shows that no beneficiaries had no land from this we conclude that they are all landless labourers. 95 per cent of them had electricity connection at their house and only five per cent do not have electricity connection. Only 36 percentage had the toilet facilities and ninety one percent of the people had the water facility.

ii) AWARENESS ON MGNREGA

The table reveals the awareness of MGNREGA programme among the people

Table :3 Awareness on MGNREGA

Particulars	Categories	Thondamuthur	
		N=214	Percent
Sources of information	President	81	38
	Neighbours	35	16
	Ward members	56	26
	Relatives	32	15
	Radio / TV Facilities	10	5
Knowledge about the scheme	Yes	48	23
	No	166	77
Distance from house/ work site	Yes	129	60
	No	85	40
Employment day	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Beneficiaries should bring working equipment	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Knowledge about salary (eligible wage)	Yes	122	57
	No	92	43
Number of days employment provided	Yes	153	71
	No	61	29
Machinery utilized	Yes	-	-
	No	214	100
Accident provision	Yes	129	58
	No	89	42
Worksite facilities	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Vigilance committee formed	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-

Source: Field Survey

The table reveals that 38 per cent got information about the scheme through presidents and 26 percent know from the ward members. 77 percent of the people did not have knowledge about the scheme. 100 per cent stated that they are bringing their own equipment and had accepted for the facilities at the worksite.

ii) MECHANISMS OF GETTING WORK

The mechanisms of getting work done is shown in table-4

Table :4 - Mechanisms of Getting Work

Particulars	Categories	Thondamuthur N=214	Percentage
Mode of putting application	Oral	194	91
	Written	20	9
Way of register is easy	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Time period taken to get job card	Within a day	139	65
	Less than one week	55	26
	Less than 15 days	20	9
Type of proof given	Ration card	153	71
	ID card	61	29
Issued proof for registration	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Money spent for getting job card	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Time period taken to get job	Immediately	112	52
	Within a day	65	30
	Within two days	23	11
	Within a week	14	7
Photos of beneficiary on job card	Yes	214	100
	No	-	-
Money spent for taking photos	Yes	-	-
	No	214	100
Custody of job card	Self	214	100
	President	-	-
	Clerk	-	-
	Family head	-	-

Source : Field Survey

Under the MGNREGA programme, 91 percent of the beneficiaries had submitted their application orally to the president as well as panel out clerk. All beneficiaries accept that the way of registration was easy (100 percent). Nearly 65 percent of them accepted that their job card was received within a day. The Ration card was given as the proof of identity by more than 71 percent of beneficiaries. Cent percent of the people had their photo in their job card and also accepted that they did not spend money for their job card. The job card is under the self custody of the beneficiary.

Conclusion

The Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal Ministry for the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. It is responsible for ensuring timely and adequate resource support to the States and to the Central Council. The focus of the scheme is to provide 100 days wage employment to rural households who wish to work and ask for work. Majority of the beneficiaries were women. All the beneficiaries had the awareness on the wages, knowledge about the scheme and were using their own equipments for the work.

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