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आलेख

Impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on Families of Migrant Workers in Southern Rajasthan: A Study of Sagwara block in Dungarpur District

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Abstract

Migration is one of the most important factors after fertility and mortality that affect the demographic changes in a country. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the flagship welfare scheme launched in February 2006 by UPA government in 200 most backward districts of country. It's one of the salient feature is to reduce the rural-urban migration by providing 100 days of employment to the people at their native place. This research has been conducted to understand the impact of MGNREGA on the families of migrant workers in Sagwara block of Dungarpur district in Rajasthan. Study finds that the scheme is not so effective to control the migration pattern of the sampled households. It is also revealed from study that facilities of drinking water and tent at worksite under MGNREGA has provided at good extent. Most of the sampled households believed that the scheme needs few improvements in implementation in Sagwara block.

Introduction:

Migration is the movement of people from one location to another and widely associated with change of permanent place of residence. There are three components of population

change. They are mortality, fertility and migration. Migration is one of the most important factors after fertility and mortality that affect the demographic changes in a country. There are two types of migration: internal migration and international migration. Internal migration is the movement of people from one place to other place in a given country. International migration is the movement of people from one country to another in order to take up employment of establish residence or to increase in living standard.

Migration refers to permanent or semi-permanent change in the place of residence of an individual or a group of individuals from one location to another. Thus, the term mobility includes both permanent (and semi-permanent) and temporary movements of people over the earth.

Southern Rajasthan: Livelihood depends on migration

The southern Rajasthan (Udaipur, Pratapgarh, Banswara, Dungarpur) is a tribe dominant region. There is a deep connection between southern Rajasthan and migration. It is a compact area of Arawali hills and due to lack of flat area, the area of arable land is very less. Due to the lack of cultivable land, uncertainty of rainfall in this region, huge hills, adverse conditions and bumpy roads the migration trend from village to cities can be seen and peoples are looking for livelihood options to other areas. In order to earn their livelihood, adult men from most of the families of this region, go to different big cities of Gujarat and Maharashtra and do different kinds of work.

The continuously increasing population and depletion of natural resources affecting adversely the standard of living and livelihood of the people of this region. Migration-based activities have remained a major source of income for families in southern Rajasthan from the last two decades. Migration has emerged as a major livelihood strategy in south Rajasthan over the past two decades. This is because agriculture-based livelihoods of migrant communities have been under perpetual threat from drought and famines.

About MGNREGA

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill, 2004 was enacted as an Act on 7th September 2005 and with great hope and hype the NREGA came into force on 2nd February 2006. It was initially implemented as NREGA in 200 backward districts of India. It was extended to an additional 130 district in its second phase in year 2007-2008 with effect from 1st April 2007. Later the remaining 295 districts were covered from 1st April 2008. On 2nd October 2009, The NREGA was renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Employment Act (MGNREGA) after the National Rural Employment Guarantee (Amendment) Act, 2009.

The primary objective of MGNREGA is to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household for enhancement of livelihood security of the household in rural areas of the country. This employment is providing to those adult members of households who volunteer to do unskilled manual work by which living conditions can be improved in rural India by providing employment security. The MGNREGA scheme was started in the first phase of its implementation in Dungarpur district. Presently it covers a number of 53 gram panchayats of Sagwara block in Dungarpur District.

Families of Migrant Workers and MGNREGA

If we look at various aspects of migration, one of the biggest aspects emerges and that is the other members of the family dependent on migrant worker which includes children and women of that particular family. The family of a migrant worker benefits from the income from migration on the one hand, while on the other hand, various circumstances arising out of his absence of family also bring pain directly and indirectly to the family. To solve this problem, the government launched the rural development scheme MGNREGA, under which a target of providing 100 days of employment per family in rural areas was set. For, the underlying objective of the MGNREGA scheme run by the government was that if the people were provided work in the village itself, then the local people will not migrate to the cities in search of work.

Significance of the study

The present study mainly focuses on the impact of MGNREGA scheme on migration in Sagwara block of Dungarpur district in Rajasthan which is suffering by rural-urban migration problem. There have been many studies has conducted on the different aspects of scheme since the inception of the scheme but there is no research has been done on the issue of migration with relation to MGNREGA since its implementation in Sagwara block. So this study attempts to fill this research gap and tries to assess the performance and implementation of MGNREGA in Dungarpur district.

Objectives of the Study

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To analyse the progress and implementation of MGNREGA in Sagwara block.

2. To examine the impact MGNREGA on the families of migrant workers.
3. To provide suggestions and recommendations for better implementation of scheme.

Hypotheses

Hypotheses of the present research are as follows:

- H₁₀ There are insufficient facilities available at MGNREGA worksite.
- H₂₀ MGNREGA has no impact on families of migrant workers.
- H₃₀ There is no significant impact of MGNREGA scheme on the migration.
- H₄₀ MGNREGA is not implementing properly in Sagwara block.
- H₅₀ There is no improvements required under implementation of MGNREGA.

Study Area

The study has been conducted in Sagwara block of Dungarpur district in Rajasthan. Five villages Oad, Padra, Varda, Wanderwad, Barbodaniya have been selected from the Sagwara block and a sample of 20 households has taken from each village for the survey those who are registered under MGNREGA scheme. Hence, the total number of sampled households is 100 for present study.

Methodology and Data Base

Study is completely based on the primary data which has been collected through a questionnaire. The initial questionnaire has prepared in Hindi so that respondent will easily understand the questions.

Tools and Techniques

Statistical methods such as average, standard deviation etc. have been used and the data are presented by diagram. To know the impact of MGNREGA on various aspects related to migrant workers 'families, respondents' perceptions about different types of variables has collected on a scale of 1 to 5 and the average of each variable has determined. One sample 'T' test has used to study analyse the impact and effectiveness of the scheme on various aspects of the families of migrant workers. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software has been used for data analysis and calculation.

Results and analysis

The results and analysis of the present study is divided into the following parts:

1. Facilities at Worksites

A provision has been made to provide various types of facilities to the workers at the worksite under the MGNREGA scheme like drinking water, facilities of tents for shade, facility of child care for children and first aid facilities. Questions related to the facilities available at the worksite were asked from the selected families in the study area and it was marked in the level of 1 to 5.

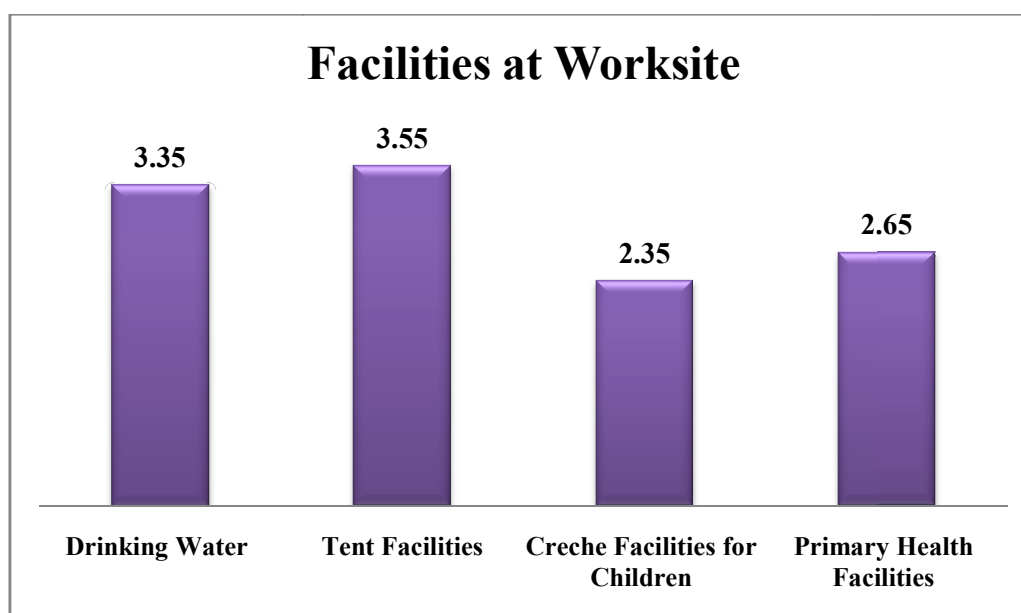


Chart 1: Facilities at Worksites

Chart above revealed that the average score of drinking water (3.35) and tents facility (3.55) are more than the neutral value 3 which is positive perception but the facility of child care (2.35) And first aid facilities (2.65) are less than neutral value 3 which indicating negative perception. The overall mean score of 2.98 is less than the neutral value of 3, indicating a negative overall view of the families of selected migrant workers about the facilities available at the MGNREGA workplace.

The null hypothesis of the research was that there are insufficient facilities available at MGNREGA worksite. Our analysis revealed that the worksite facilities provided under MGNREGA are not significantly sufficient ($p > 0.05$). **The null hypothesis H_0 1 has been partially accepted.**

2. Impact on the Migrant Families

In order to know the impact of MGNREGA on different aspects of families of migrant workers, the perception of respondents reported in a five point scale of effectiveness that depicted in table 1 below.

Table 1: Perceptions about the impact of MGNREGA on Various Aspects

Particulars	Perceptions about the impact of MGNREGA Mean Scores	SD	SE	T-Value
Food supplies for your family	3.65	0.86	0.086	7.5825***
Support and improvement of education	3.22	1.00	0.100	2.1982**
Prevent migration to urban area	2.55	0.93	0.093	4.8636***
Help in repaying debts	2.25	0.89	0.089	8.4092***
Contribute to meeting medical expenses	3.29	0.62	0.062	4.6449***
Support in purchasing livestock	3.20	0.93	0.093	2.1458**
House repair	3.28	0.87	0.087	3.2351***
Improvement in drinking water supply	3.32	0.80	0.080	3.9874***
Access and communication through road construction	3.85	0.91	0.091	9.2972***
Support in savings and investment	2.73	0.86	0.086	3.1291***
Increase in agricultural productivity	3.60	0.80	0.080	7.4624***
Overall	3.18	0.86	0.086	2.0930**

Source: Compiled from primary data

*** Significant at 0.01 level

** Significant at 0.05 level

The analysis was done by comparing the score of each and every dimension with the neutral score of 3. 'T' test was applied to confirm that the difference in the mean score of each aspect from neutral score is statistically significant or not. The score is less than 3 and if it statistically significant, this would indicate the negative perception towards the different aspects. Similarly if the score is greater than 3 and if it statistically significant, this would indicate the positive perception towards that aspect.

It is noticeable from the table above that the mean score is below 3 for the three aspects (migration control, debt repayment, savings and investment) it means the negative perceptions of the respondents about the impact of scheme on these areas. Remaining areas has positively affected by the MGNREGA programme. The overall mean score of 3.15 indicates a positive perception of the respondents about the impact of MGNREGA on various aspects related to families of migrant workers. The null hypothesis of the research was that MGNREGA has no impact on the families of migrant workers. Our analysis revealed that there is significant impact of MGNREGA on the various aspects of the families of migrant workers ($p < 0.05$). **The null hypothesis H_0 2 has been proved wrong and it has rejected.**

Table 2: Perceptions about the implementation of MGNREGA

Particulars	Perceptions about the implementation Mean Scores	SD	SE	T-Value
Satisfaction about work done in MGNREGA	4.15	0.63	0.063	18.3818***
Progress of MGNREGA	3.65	0.67	0.067	9.6680***
Improvements after MGNREGA	3.22	0.93	0.093	2.3720**
Improvement in financial situation	3.26	0.97	0.097	2.6791***
Secure livelihood	3.37	1.01	0.101	3.6576***
Effective in curb migration	2.14	0.74	0.074	11.6401***
Overall	3.30	0.82	0.083	3.6408***

Source: Compiled from primary data

*** Significant at 0.01 level

** Significant at 0.05 level

The overall mean score of 2.55 indicates a negative perception of the respondents about the impact of MGNREGA on migration. Table 2 indicating that the overall mean score of 2.14 which is below neutral value 3 indicates a negative perception of the respondents that the scheme is ineffective in curbing migration and it is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) **Thus our null hypothesis (H_03) "There is no significant impact of MGNREGA scheme on the migration" has proved correct and it has been accepted.**

3. Implementation of the Scheme

Table 2 revealed that the overall mean score of 3.30 indicates a positive perception of the respondents about the implementation of MGNREGA scheme and it is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). Hence, **the null hypothesis H_04 "MGNREGA is not implementing properly in Sagwara block" has been proved wrong and it has rejected.**

Table 3: Perceptions about the required improvements under MGNREGA

Particulars	Perceptions about the required improvements Mean Scores	SD	SE	T-Value
Increase number of workdays	3.76	0.83	0.083	9.1540***
Increase minimum wage rates	3.65	0.86	0.086	7.5825***
Increase in number of laborers per family	3.73	0.83	0.083	8.8270***
Payment of wages on daily basis	3.70	0.87	0.087	8.0423***
Proper monitoring by social audit	3.66	0.86	0.086	7.7156***
Increase accountability of panchayats and officials	3.65	0.86	0.086	7.5825***
Improvement in facilities available at	3.5	1.12	0.112	4.4497***

the workplace				
Improvement in MGNREGA is expected	3.45	0.98	0.098	4.5898***
Overall	3.64	0.90	0.090	7.1111***

Source: Compiled from primary data

*** Significant at 0.01 level

** Significant at 0.05 level

Perceptions about the required improvements under MGNREGA are presented in table number 3. Table revealed that the overall mean score of 3.64 indicates a positive perception of the respondents about the improvements required in implementation of MGNREGA scheme and it is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). Hence, **the null hypothesis H05 "There is no improvements required under implementation of MGNREGA" has been proved wrong and it has rejected.**

Findings of the Study

The following things have come out from the study:

1. Drinking water and tents facilities are available in sufficient levels under MGNREGA activities, but child care and first aid facilities are inadequate compared to these.
2. Three aspects related to migrant worker's' families i.e. migration control, debt repayment, savings and investment has not highly affected by the MGNREGA scheme compare to all other remaining areas.
3. The study revealed that most of the family has satisfied with the work done under MGNREGA. According to them the MGNREGA scheme played a significant role in general and financial reforms and livelihood of families has affected positively.
4. The study has also examined that mean score of perceptions of the respondents about the impact of MGNREGA on prevent migration to urban area is 2.55 which indicating that the MGNREGA has not been so effective in curbing migration in Sagwara block.

Suggestions

The present study has assessed its impact on various aspects of migrant workers' families, the opinion of families related to the implementation of the scheme. Most of the respondents said that though MGNREGA implementation has brought various types of reforms in rural areas like livelihoods of people, increase food supply, support for agricultural expenditure, and access to roads etc. But scheme required some improvements such as increase the number of workers per household, increment in wage rates; increase in workday, payment of wages on daily basis, augmenting the facilities at the workplace etc. Better results can be achieved through the scheme by properly monitoring the plan, strengthening social audit, increasing accountability of panchayat employers and officials etc.

Conclusions

This research work has been done by considering the intensity of migration in Sagwara block of Dungarpur district in southern Rajasthan in which the effect of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on the families of migrant workers has been studied. The study has assessed the impact of scheme on their families, impact on different aspects, migration status, different facilities available at the workplace and opinions of families on various aspects related to implementation. The study has revealed that there are some lacunae in the implementation of MGNREGA, due to which the local workers have to migrate to other areas in the event of lack of sufficient income for livelihood. If the MGNREGA is implemented in a sure and planned manner and some improvements are made in it, then it can definitely prove to be effective in preventing and reducing rural-urban migration, so some improvement in MGNREGA is required.

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Limitations of the study

The study has conducted in Sagwara block of Dungarpur district in Rajasthan to analyse the impact of MGNREGA scheme on families of migrant workers. The findings of the study may not be transferable to other situations and entire state because the sample was restricted to specific area.

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