MGNREGA Transform Rural Lives of Dhalai District of Tripura: Impact Study

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in Dhalai District of Tripura State during 2010-2011 to know the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on the standard of living of beneficiaries. The overall mean value of standard of living of beneficiaries before MGNREGA programme was found to be 36.5 as compared to the overall mean value of 60.1 after the implementation of MGNREGA programme. There is an enhancement of mean value in the standard of living of beneficiaries by 65 percent indicating significant increase due to MGNREGA. Among the 15 personal and socio-phychological characteristics of the beneficiaries studied : aspiration, source of information, mass media participation, institutional linkage, achievement motivation and deferred gratification had significant to highly significant relationship with the impact on standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiaries and all these variables together contributed to the tune of 60 per cent of the variation in the standard of living.

INTRODUCTION

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme was notified on 7th September, 2005. The act came into force on February 2006 and was implemented in a phased manner. In phase one, it was introduced in 200 most backward districts of the country. It was implemented in an additional 130 districts in phase two during 2007-2008. To bring the whole nation under its safety net and keeping in view of the demand, the Act was extended to the remaining 285 districts of India from April 1st 2008 in phase three (Anonymous, 2009).

MGNREGA marked a paradigm shift from the previous wage employment programmes with its rights-based approach that makes the Government legally accountable for providing employment to those who demand it. The Act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing up to one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The primary objective of the Act is augmenting wage employment. Its auxiliary objective is strengthening natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought there by encouraging sustainable development. Against this background,

the present study was taken up with the following specific objectives:

1   To analyze the impact of MGNREGA on the standard of living of beneficiaries.

2.   to know the relationship between the selected personal and socio-psychological characteristics of MGNREGA beneficiaries and standard of living.

METHODOLOGY

MGNREGA programme was implemented in all the four districs (North Tripura, West Tripura, South Tripura and Dhalai) of Tripura State during the year 2006-2007. The present study was conducted in Dhalai district of Tripura state during 2010-2011. Among 34 Gram panchayets in Dhalai district, Kulai gram panchayet of Ambassa block was purposely selected for the study, since MGNREGA was first implemented in the district. All the three village viz.Netajinagar, Ramratan para and Thankurpally of Kulai gram panchayet were selected for the research study where MGNREGA programme was in operation since 2006-2007 . A sample of 50 MGNREGA beneficiaries (who were working in MGNREGA programme since (2006-2007) from each village were randomly selected for the study. Thus, the total sample for the study constituted 150 MGNREGA beneficiaries from three village of Kulai gram panchayet in Ambassa Block

of Dhalai district. Data were collected using a pre-tested interview schedule, Ex-post facto research design was adopted for this study.

Operationalisation and Measurement of Standard of living (Dependent variable)

Standard of living in the present study is operationally defined as the degree of MGNREGA beneficiaries in terms of their attainment of their annual income, employment generation, social status and reinvestment pattern on value addition in education, food, health status and investment on assets, savings and social functions. The standard of living was measured using the procedure followed by Vinaykumar (2008)

All the four components of standard of living (Annual income, employment generation, social status and reinvestment pattern) have been measured and expressed in different units like rupees, man days and score. Hence, all the values were converted into unit values or standard scores by using Thorndike standard score (Mccall,1922)

Based on the total score of the respondents on overall standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiary, the respondents were classified into three categories viz, low, medium and high using mean and half standard of deviation as measure of check.

Information of 15 personal and socio-psychological characteristics viz. age, education, family size, occupation, livestock possession, source of information, mass media participation, social participation, extension participation, cosmopoliteness, institutional linkage, achievement motivation, aspiration, deferred gratification and fatalism – scientism (independent variables) of the MGNREGA beneficiaries were measured using standardized schedule with suitable scales.

The collected data were scored, tabulated and analyzed using frequency, mean standard deviation, chi-square, zero order correlation and multiple regression tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1.   Mean values of different dimensions of standard of living during before and after MGNREGA.

It is evident from the finding in Table 1 that employment generation of the beneficiary respondents increased to an extent of 168 per cent after the implementation of MGNREGA programme as compared to before MGNREGA . Similar increase between before and after the implementation of MGNREGA programme with respect to annual income (149%), food consumption (116%), investment on social functions (96%), investment on savings (91%) investment on assets (81%), social status (28%), value addition in education (20% and health status (20%) was observed among the beneficiary respondents.

The results also indicate that the overall mean value of standard of living before MGNREGAprogramme was found to be 36.5 as compared to overall mean value of 60.1 after the implementation of MGNREGA programme. Hence, the enhancement of mean value of standard of living among beneficiary respondents was found to be 65 per cent indicating the effectiveness of benefits derived as a result of participation in MGNREGA programme.

The data subjected for statistical test reveals the enhancement in the mean values of standard of living between before and after the implementation of MGNREGA programme for all dimension under study was found to be highly significant.

It can be concluded from the study findings that there is significant increase/improvement in the beneficiaries annual income, employment generation, social status and reinvestment pattern on value addition in education, food consumption pattern, health status investment on assets, savings and social functions on assets, savings and social functions due to the implementation of MGNREGA. As a result there is significant improvement in the standard of living of beneficiaries after the implementation of MGNREGA.

Standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiary

Category	Criteria	Before MGNREGA (score)	After MGNREGA (score)
Low		<36.97	<57.03
Medium	Mean + ½ SD TO	36.97 TO 40.77	57.03 TO 61.29
High	>Mean + ½ SD	>40.77	>61.29

Table 1
Mean values of different dimensions of standard of living before and after MGNREGA

SlNo	Dimensions of standard of living	Mean Values			't' value
		Before MGNREGA	After MGNREGA	Percentage of increase after MGNREGA	
1.	Annual income (Rs)	6171.0	15366.0	149	38.61**
2.	Employment generation (Mandays)	45.0	120.6	168	27.05**
3	Social status (Scorer)	3.0	3.8	28	30.38**
4.	Value addition in education (Score)	5.0	6.0	20	18.10**
5	Food consumption pattern (Rs)	5388.0	11638.0	116	22.44**
6	Health status (Score)	3.0	3.6	20	16.32**
7.	Investment on assets (Rs)	0.0	810.00	81	10.15**
8.	Investment on Savings (Rs)	0.0.	910.0	9	11.18**
9.	Investment on social function (Rs)	410.0	803.6	96	98.57**

** Significant at 1 per cent level

Table 2
Distribution of MGNREGA beneficiaries based on their level of standard of living before and after MGNREGA

Sr.No.	Level of Standard of Living	Before MGNREGA (n=15)		After MGNREGA (n=150)	
1.	Low	47	31.3	24	16.0
2.	Medium	61	40.6	67	44.6
3.	High	42	28.0	59	39.3
4.	Total	150	100.0	150	100.0
5.	Mean	38.87	-	59.16	-
6.	Standard Deviation	3.810	-	4.265	-
7.	Chi-square	10.59**			

** Significant at 1 per cent level

2.   Distribution of MGNREGA beneficiaries based on the level of standard of living b e f o r e and after MGNREGA.

It is observed from Table 2 that 31.3 per cent of the beneficiary respondents were belonging to low level of standard of living before the implementations of MGNREGA programme. It is interesting to note that only 16.0 per cent of the respondents were falling under low level of standard of living after the implementation of MGNREGA programme.

Table 2 also reveals that 40.6 per cent of the beneficiary respondents were falling under medium level of standard of living before the implementations of MGNREGA programme, while 44.6 per cent of the respondents belong to medium level of standard of living after the implementation of MGNREGA programme.

It is also seen from Table 2 that 28.0 per cent of the beneficiary respondents were in the category of high level of standard of living before the implementation of MGNREGA programme. It is heartening to observe that 39.3 per cent of the respondent belonged to high level of standard of living after the implementation of MGNREGA programme.

The results of chi-squares test in reveals that there exists a positive and significant difference in the standard of living of beneficiaries before and after the implementation of MGNREGA programme.

It can be inferred from the findings that there is a significant improvement in the standard of living of beneficiaries due to participation in the MGNREGA.

3.   Relationahipm between personal and socio-psychological characteristics of MGNREGA beneficiaries with the impact on standard of living.

The correlation coefficients of 15 personal and socio-psychological characteristics of MGNREGA beneficiaries with the standard of living are presented in Table 3. It could be observed from the table that nine independent variables were found to be having non-significant relationship with the impact on standard of living, while one and five independent variables were found to have significant relationship at five per cent and one per cent level, respectively with the impact on standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiaries.

Age, education, family size, occupation, livestock possession, social participation extension participation, cosmopoliteness and fatalism-scientism had non-significant relationship with the impact on standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiaries.

Aspiration had significant relationship at five per cent level with the impact on standard of living. Where as, source of information, mass media participation, institutional linkage, achievement motivation and deferred gratification had highly significant relationship with the impact on standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiaries.

It is also observed from Table 3 that, out of 15 personal and socio-psychological characteristics of MGNREGA beneficiaries studied, only five independent variable viz. source of information, mass media participation, institutional linkage, aspiration and deferred gratification were found significant in multiple regression analysis in explaining the variation in the impact of standard of living . All the 15 independent variables contributed to the tune of early 60 per cent of the variation in the standard of living The R^2 value of 0.5911 with significant 'F' value (13.59) revealed the significance at one per cent level of regression equation in the prediction of results.

The study revealed that there is significant increase in the standard of living of the beneficiaries after the implementation of MGNREGA The source of information, mass media participation and institutional linkages had significant relationship

with the impact on the standard of living of MGNREGA beneficiaries Communication is one of the critical areas for effective and efficient implementation of MGNREGA. The District Rural Development Authority and panchayeti raj institutions should create awareness   about the

provisions and facilities of MGNREGA to the local people through pamphlets, brochures, newspapers, television and radio programme for better participation of local people in MGNREGA and thereby improving the standard of living.

Table 3
Relationship between personal and socio-psychological characteristics of MGNREGA beneficiaries and their standard of living (n-150)

Sl.No	Personal and socio-psychological characteristics	Correlation Value ®	Regression Co-efficient (b)	Standard Error of Regressin co-efficient (SEb)	't' value
1	Age	0.0658 NS	0.0097	0.0395	0.2445NS
2	Education	0.1045NS	0.1604	0.1658	0.9675NS
3	Family size	0.0900NS	0.05537	0.1222	0.4392NS
4	Occupation	0.0022NS	0.0847	0.1317	0.6429NS
5	Livestock possession	0.1625NS	0.3074	0.2230	1.3782NS
6	Source of information	0.4168**	0.3629	0.1029	3.2934*
7	Mas media participation	0.3646**	0.4049	0.1687	2.3996*
8	Social participation	0.1606NS	0.2946	0.1819	1.6194NS
9	Extension participation	0.1704NS	0.1799	0.1038	1.7327NS
10	Cosmopoliteness	0.0432NS	0.0533	0.1516	0.3516NS
11	Institutional linkage	0.2932**	0.4434	0.1348	3.2884*
12	Achievement motiovation	0.4688**	0.0237	0.1041	0.2279NS
13	Aspiration level	0.2484*	0.3815	0.1055	3.6157**
14	Deferred gratification	0.1117NS	0.0594	0.0763	0.7787NS
15	Fatalism-scientism	0.1117NS	0.0594	0.0763	0.7787NS

** Significant at 1 per cent level: *Significant at 5 per cent level: R^2= 0.5911;
F=13.59**; NS = Non-significant

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