

A Study On Impact Of Covid-19 In Mgnregs (Mahatma Gandhiji National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme) Beneficiaries With Special Reference To Thanjavur

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Abstract: *Indian rural poor largely depend on the earning of wages through exercising unskilled labour. Poor rural people are frequently vulnerable to perils of poverty, at the time of poor demand for labour or on the ground of natural calamities or ill health, which have great influence on their work and job demand. Nearly half on Indian villages are suffering from a very poor economic condition. India introduced many programmes since independence. Rural development is an integrated development and poverty. Amelioration of poverty was given predominant role in all the five year plans. Unpresented COVID-19 situation created challenge to MGNREGS beneficiaries also which have no option to perform the beneficiaries to work from home; since it requires to perform work at selected site.*

Keywords: *livelihood security, food, migration, covid.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In rural India, the village work force need to face the primary challenges like concentration of entire work force in agriculture, unemployment, poor productivity in agriculture, poor wages, living in poverty, distinction on the grounds of gender, their wages and employment, polluted environment, unsecured agricultural labourers and poor and meagre level participation in the programmes of rural development. These rural basic challenges needed to be addressed by the Government, which has taken a legislative measure and enacted an Act in the Parliament. Everyone has entitlement for employment, which is the constitutional right. An act was enacted to give guarantee for hundred days wage employment in a financial year. No discrimination in the wages on the grounds of gender, a week is a limiting period for making payment of wages, while implementing the work, no machinery involved and contractors are not allowed. The work should be capable of being created assets which must be productive and long lasting. The Grama panchayat must shoulder the task of discovering the local works, no discrimination and transparency at every phase of the work are basic important characteristics of the Act.

Objectives:

- To analyze the profile of MGNREGS beneficiaries at Thanjavur.
- To analyze the impact of COVID-19 on MGNREGS beneficiaries at Thanjavur.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through survey. Secondary data were collected from various books, magazines, as well as from web sources. Disproportionate random sampling was used to collect data from 50 respondents.

Review of literature

Rajiv Ranjan¹(2016) The Act proving a boon for states of Bihar and Jharkhand, two of the most backward states of the country while having negative impacts on agricultural economy of states like Punjab, which depend a lot on migrant laborers for their peak agricultural seasons. At the national level, on one hand it can be seen as a full employment strategy and on the other a huge burden on the fiscal expenditure.

Dr. Indraneel Bhowmik²(2013) The economic features of the land – higher poverty levels, limited employment opportunities, restrained industrialisation and minimal infrastructure, makes the scheme more pertinent for the state of Tripura. The secondary data also suggest that the scheme has had better deal in the state as compared to many other states. Thus, the present study was taken up to examine what and how is the scheme doing in Tripura, with specific focus on issues relating to equity and efficiency of the delivery mechanism.

Usha Rani Ahuja, Dushyant Tyagi³(2011) The logit model used to identify determinants of participation in MGNREGA works has revealed that the estimates of all the variables (except loan) selected for the analysis were significant having a negative sign, inferring there by that participation in MGNREGA is negatively affected by these variables.

Prabeena Kumar Bebarta⁴ (2013) It was understood that the tribal households in the Gajapati district have been benefited from MGNREGA in many ways as it has increased their income resulting multiple impacts in their social and economic life; however, there is still a long way to fulfil the purpose and objectives of MGNREGA and ensure the livelihood security of the rural and tribal households.

Denise O'Brien⁵ (2020) There is an upside to the exposure of the vulnerability of the industrial system. Many people are turning to local farmers that produce fruits and vegetables and animals on a small or medium size scale. CSAs are full to overflowing with people buying shares. This presents an opportunity to us as small farmers. We can continue to educate on the importance of local/regional food production and raise awareness of the devastation of an industrial agribusiness has on our environment and our communities. We must undo federal policy that has given us cheap food and capture the true value of agriculture to the environment and to the people.

Nurkhodzha Akbulaev, Ilkin Mammadov, Vasif Aliyev⁶ (2020) The pandemic COVID-19 affects people and societies around the world and will have a lasting impact on the global economy and trade. The severity of the economic impact will depend on "how long the constraints in the major economies will persist, and on the scale and effectiveness of fiscal measures." Many people lose their jobs because of coronavirus: companies cut and fire employees because they have nothing to pay. The pandemic has put heavy pressure on the economies of many countries, and import and export rates have declined, but scientists continue to explore COVID-19. Government support for producers during the quarantine regime becomes crucial.

Rakesh Tiwari, H I Somashekhar, V R Ramakrishna Parama⁷ The NREGA activities were found to reduce the vulnerability of agricultural production, water resources and livelihoods to uncertain and low rainfall, water scarcity and poor soil fertility. The implications measured in this study are only for about one to three years of NREGA activities. A longer period of five to

10 years is needed to understand the full extent of environmental services and the potential for vulnerability reduction, given the gestation period in ecological, hydrological and soil processes (for example, groundwater recharge, soil fertility improvement and tree.

Prof. Shlomo Maital Ella Barzani⁸ (2020) Expert epidemiologists assert that COVID-19 will not disappear – it is with us to stay. While the initial vaccines may go into clinical trials within 6 weeks, it will still take up to a year before they are commercially available. Until then, conventional measures will be needed that date back to the middle ages – quarantine, limited social contact, school closings, etc. At all levels – individual, family, neighbourhood, community, region, nation – the resilience of our economic, social and medical systems will be tested severely in the coming year.

P. Shenbagaraj , S.Arockiasamy⁹ The general economic condition in the Thoothukudi district like high incidence of agricultural labourers, low rainfall, industrial backwardness, low level of net irrigated area indicate that the programmes like MGNREGA would create a positive impact on increasing the quantum and level of employment. But the available data show that MGNREGA has created employment only for a limited number of days and the earnings of the households was also very less.

J.B. KOMARAI AH¹⁰ The MGNREGS is a demand driven programme for the rural people for getting 100 days of guaranteed employment in rural areas. It is massive development programme which requires continuous monitoring and evaluation for timely and appropriate interventions. The programme has the greater impact on employment, income generation, and reduction of migration, creation durable assets and ultimately developing livelihoods for rural people

3. DATA COLLECTION:

The current data is derived from primary data. A fresh data is also known as primary data. The primary data information is gathered from the beneficiaries working MGNREGS at Thanjavur district.

Table – 3.1. ANNUAL INCOME OF FAMILY

ANNUAL INCOME OF FAMILY					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Rs 10,000 to 20,000	2	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Rs 20,000 to 30,000	12	24.0	24.0	28.0
	Rs 30,000 to 40,000	36	72.0	72.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

The above table reveals that more than half (36 per cent) of the respondents income categorised under Rs. 30,000 to 40,000 annually, which means they are living under Below the Poverty Line (BPL).

Table – 3.2. NO. OF TIMES REGISTERED FOR JOB CARD

No. of times registered for job card					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	cumulative
Valid	1 to 5 times	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
	5 to 10 times	32	64.0	64.0	84.0
	10 to 15 times	8	16.0	16.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

The above table reveals that 64% of the respondents registered for job card from 5 to 10 times. They can register or renew job cards n’ number of times.

Table – 3.3 RECEIPT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ALLOWANCES

Receipt of unemployment allowances				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Not received	50	100.0	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The table reveals that 100 percent of the beneficiaries they haven’t availed any unemployment allowances. They should be either provided employment or provision are there to receive unemployment allowances if employment is not provided within 14 days after registration.

Table – 3.4 PROVISION OF EMPLOYMENT UNDER THE SCHEME DURING PANDEMIC

Provision of employment under the scheme during pandemic					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
valid	provided	20	40.0	40.0	40.0

	Partially Provided	30	60.0	60.0	100.0
	total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data

From the table it could be inferred that majority of 60 % of the respondents opined that they have partially provided employment during COVID situation. It enable the beneficiaries to earn at least to protect their livelihood securities even if the major source of income was tapped.

Table – 3.5 NATURE OF WORK PROVIDED DURING PANDEMIC

Nature of work provided during pandemic					
Valid		Frequency	Percent	valid percent	Cumulative percent
	Regular work	23	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Special covid related work	27	54.0	54.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

From the table it could be interpreted that more than half (54 percent) of the respondents opined that they were provided special COVID related works during pandemic situation like cleaning and maintaining public places, Making awareness about COVID, Assisting in COVID Test wards at primary health centre or hospitals and so on.

Table – 3.6 INCOME

Income					
Valid		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	sufficient	10	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Partly sufficient	37	64.0	64.0	84.0
	Not sufficient	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

From the table it could be inferred that 64 percent of beneficiaries opined that the income from MGNREGS scheme is partially sufficient to run the family. That can be inferred that meeting the very basic need of food security alone can met.

Findings:

- 68% of the respondents opines no. of family members ranges from 1-3.
- 72 % of them having annual income from Rs.30,000 to Rs.40,000
- 64% of them registered for job cards from 5 to 10 times.
- 92% of them feels satisfied by performing their jobs.
- 100 % of them opines that they have renewed their job card.
- 50 % of them renewed their job card around 4 times.
- 54% of them opines that they have provided special COVID related works during pandemic.

- 100 % of them opines that they haven't received any unemployment allowance.
- Only 26% of them having other main occupation.
- 50% of them opines that they have provided only two of the facilities at work site rather all.

Suggestions:

- Unemployment allowance could be provided if the job not provided within 15 days of registration.
- It is suggested to have any other main occupation on non- working days of MGNREGS.
- All the work site facilities must be provided at worksite like shadow, drinking water, first aid etc., without any exemption.

4. CONCLUSION:

Following all the norms of job provision could be strictly followed by the authorities at all level. Beneficiaries must aware about all matters pertaining to job card, unemployment allowance, renewal of job card, awareness about worksite facilities by continuing participation in grama sabha meeting and interaction with peer team. Above all, it could be concluded that during pandemic, job was offered to the beneficiaries mostly on special COVID related works at this district, which mutually benefited to MGNREGS beneficiaries as well as to the authorities.