

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MGNREGS): Its Effect on Migration of Rural Labour

Dhanpat

Research Scholar

Department of Economics

Indira Gandhi University Mirpur (Rewari) Haryana

Abstract

The MGNREGS is a massive employment programme based on the economic and the social protection of the rural masses. The employment programmes which were started before this scheme were different in implementation and in guiding philosophy of the programmes. The major part of the population of India lives in the rural areas. The average daily earnings of this segment of rural population is below Rs. 30. The rural masses have to resort to migration to make both ends meet. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has decreased the distress migration of rural masses to a significant level. If the scheme is implemented with its full objective and strength it can also mitigate the problem of migration, social and economic inequalities.

Introduction

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) was launched by the Government of Haryana in all Gram Panchayats of districts Mahendergarh and Sirsa on 02nd Feb, 2006 and this scheme was also extended in two more districts of the state namely Ambala and Mewat w.e.f. 01st April, 2007. All the remaining districts of the State have been covered under this scheme from 01st April, 2008.

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. This Scheme is different from the earlier employment programmes launched by the Government of India. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a law

whereby any adult who applies for employment in rural areas has to be given work on local public works within 15 days. If employment is not given, an unemployment allowance has to be paid. 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. There are 22 districts, 126 blocks and 6136 Gram panchayats in Haryana. 7.7 lakhs job cards have been issued till now. The budget approved for Haryana was Rs. 165 crore 2014-15 and Rs. 83.74 crore in 2015-16. Since from the day of implementation of MGNREGA in Haryana, the state government as well as the central government were led by the same party. Hence the state was funded without any delay in disbursement of funds. There are 7% marginalized workers in Haryana, the total work requirement for working population is 69.04 %. 97.4 % of the work target was achieved in Haryana under the MGNREG scheme in 2011. About 65% of eligible households got 100 day's work in Haryana. 201318 households made demand for work during this period and a huge amount of funds have been sanctioned from very beginning of this programme in Haryana. Haryana Shares 1.69% of total allocation of funds, meant for MGNREG scheme in states, in the union budget. The MGNREGS has put a positive on stopping the rural labour migration to some extent and this problem still exists on a large scale. How the MGNREGS can overcome the problem of migration of rural labour.

Objective of the paper

The objective of the paper is to find out the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on migration of the rural labour for employment in lean agricultural season.

Methodology

The data collected for the study pertain to state of Haryana, District Rohtak. One village was selected from each five Development Blocks of district Rohtak viz. Rohtak, Sampla, Meham, Kalanaur and Lakhan-Majara. From each village a sample of 60 to 70 beneficiaries of the scheme was taken in accordance with the strength of beneficiaries in each village. The total number of beneficiaries is 330 which is sample size in the study. The percentage of participation in MGNREGS of a particular caste has been taken as a measurement of participation. All the villages have been selected on basis of the programme running there. The respondents were

asked whether they or their parents used to go out of the village in search of work before the implementation of MGNREGS in their village or not. The respondents were also asked whether they are still migrating in search work after implementation of MGNREGS. The results have been prepared on the basis of percentage analysis.

Migration Before MGNREGS:

Villages and Blocks of Dist. Rohtak Haryana		migration before		Total
		Yes	No	
Jasia (Rohtak)	Count	58	9	67
	% within Village of haryana	86.6%	13.4%	100.0%
	% within migration before scheme	18.4%	64.3%	20.3%
	% of Total	17.6%	2.7%	20.3%
Chandi (Lakhan Majara)	Count	61	2	63
	% within Village of haryana	96.8%	3.2%	100.0%
	% within migration before scheme	19.3%	14.3%	19.1%
	% of Total	18.5%	0.6%	19.1%
Kahnaur (Kalanaur)	Count	68	2	70
	% within Village of haryana	97.1%	2.9%	100.0%
	% within migration before scheme	21.5%	14.3%	21.2%
	% of Total	20.6%	0.6%	21.2%
Kishan	Count	68	0	68

Total	Garh (Meham)	% within Village of haryana	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
		% within migration before scheme	21.5%	0.0%	20.6%
		% of Total	20.6%	0.0%	20.6%
		Count	61	1	62
	Kharawar (Sampla)	% within Village of haryana	98.4%	1.6%	100.0%
		% within migration before scheme	19.3%	7.1%	18.8%
		% of Total	18.5%	0.3%	18.8%
		Count	316	14	330
		% within Village of haryana	95.8%	4.2%	100.0%
		% within migration before scheme	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
		% of Total	95.8%	4.2%	100.0%

Source:Primary Data Table 1

The Migration after MGNREGS.

Villages and Blocks of Dist. Rohtak Haryana		Need for migration after scheme		Total
		Yes	No	
	Count	38	29	67
Jasia	% within Village of haryana	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%
	% within Need for migration after scheme	19.5%	21.5%	20.3%

	% of Total	11.5%	8.8%	20.3%
	Count	39	24	63
Chandi	% within Village of haryana	61.9%	38.1%	100.0%
	% within Need for migration after scheme	20.0%	17.8%	19.1%
	% of Total	11.8%	7.3%	19.1%
	Count	49	21	70
Kahnaur	% within Village of haryana	70.0%	30.0%	100.0%
	% within Need for migration after scheme	25.1%	15.6%	21.2%
	% of Total	14.8%	6.4%	21.2%
	Count	52	16	68
Kishan Garh	% within Village of haryana	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%
	% within Need for migration after scheme	26.7%	11.9%	20.6%
	% of Total	15.8%	4.8%	20.6%
	Count	17	45	62
Kharawar	% within Village of haryana	27.4%	72.6%	100.0%
	% within Need for migration after scheme	8.7%	33.3%	18.8%
	% of Total	5.2%	13.6%	18.8%
	Count	195	135	330
Total	% within Village of haryana	59.1%	40.9%	100.0%

% within Need for migration after scheme	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
% of Total	59.1%	40.9%	100.0%

Source: Primary Data

Table 2

Table 1 shows the migration of labour before implementation Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme. In five sample villages one each from a Development Block of district Rohtak of Haryana state. Out of 67 respondents of Jasia village 58 respondents said either they or their parents used to migrate in search of work for making a survival livelihood. Only 9 respondents answered in negative. It means that 86.6% of the labour which is now engaged in MGNREGS scheme used to go out of the village in search of work and the rest stayed in the village. In village Chandi from Lakhan Majra development block of district Rohtak 61 respondents said the same story which comes out to be 96.8 %. and the rest of the respondents responded in negative. In Kahnaur village of Kalanaur Development Block of district Rohtak 97.1 % of the MGNREGS labour responded that either they or their parents used to go out of the village. In Kishan Garh village of Meham Block of district Rohtak 100 % of the respondents answered in affirmative. This is due to the nearness of the village to the Meham town. In Kharawad village of Sampla development block of district Rohtak 98.4 % used to leave village in search of work in nearby city Rohtak. Out of total 330 respondents 316 respondents answered in positive and only 14 respondents answered in negative in other way we can say that 95.5 % of the total respondents said that either they or their parents used to migrate to nearby township or to some other urban centre in search of work. The table 2 narrates the story of present situation. After the implementation of MGNREG scheme there have occurred some changes in the situation of migration behavior of the rural labour which is now engaged in MGNREGS. After the implementation of the scheme there is a down turn in migration. In village Jasia village, out of 67 respondents, 38 respondents said that they still go out of the village in search of work and 29 respondents said that they need no migration. It means that there is fall of 28.9% in migration in of the labour from the village. The same fact was found true in other four villages included in the sample. The fall in migration of rural labour was 34.9 % in village Chandi, in village Kahnaur the fall in migration is 27.1 %, in village kishan garh of Meham block the fall in migration is 23.5% and the fall in migration in village kharawad is 71.0 % .

Findings of the Study

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has remained successful in generation of gap filling employment in rural areas.
- The MGNREG scheme has stopped rural seasonal migration not completely but partially.
- Even after the implementation of the MGNREG scheme, a significant number of labor migrate to some other places in search of work.
- More seasonal migration of labour can be stopped by increasing the number of days of employment in MGNREGS.

Suggestions

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme has increased the days of employment for rural labour but the numbers of days are too short to meet the requirement so there is need to increase the number of days in this programme.
- The MGNREGS programme has stopped migration of rural labour. Rural labour still migrates in other places in search of work. Therefore, there should be more projects to be under taken to make available the sufficient employment in a village so that the migration may be minimized.

Conclusion

- The MGNREG schemes is a paradigm shifting programme for the rural masses. It has made the right to work a reality. But the number of the days and the projects under taken in this scheme are not sufficient to create a sufficient amount of work and employment days. It can stop the distress migration of the rural if it provides a decent number of employment days to the rural poor. It will also give an impetus to economic liberty and to the social justice which is a dire demand of time. It will also help in reducing the economic inequalities prevalent in the society.

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