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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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MNREGA AND RURAL POVERTY: A CASE STUDY OF NILOKHERI BLOCK IN HARYANA PROVINCE

PARDEEP CHAUHAN ASST. PROFESSOR GURU NANAK KHALSHA COLLEGE KARNAL

ABSTRACT

This paper evaluates the effectiveness of the MNREGA to enhance livelihood security and incidence of rural poverty in Haryana. The measurement of poverty is the most important problem to be addressed first in understanding the problem of poverty. The present paper measure the poverty among the beneficiaries of MNREGA in Haryana. The MNREGA has now emerged as one of the important tools for rural development and poverty eradication. However, the MNREGA is not fully successful in achieving its objectives. To eradicate poverty, it is essential to create employment opportunities in the rural areas. The study confirms that a large proportion of the MNREGA beneficiaries have been living below the poverty line and the success of the MNREGA depends upon the effective implementation of this scheme.

KEYWORDS

MNREGA, rural poverty.

1. INTRODUCTION

eduction in poverty and unemployment and in improvement in the quality of life has been the basic goal of our five-year plans. After independence, many programmes for the weaker sections of the society have been started in India. To eradicate poverty it is essential to create employment opportunities in the rural areas. The MNREGA can prove to be a milestone in this direction. Poverty can be defined as a social phenomenon, in which a section of society is unable to fulfill even its necessities of life. The planning commission has defined the poverty line based on recommended nutritional requirements of 2400 calories person per day for rural areas and 2100 calories for the urban areas. Based on this the latest income criteria has been adopted in India to determine poverty line in India is based on 2009-10 data where it is stated that all Indian minimum income for rural and urban areas for a person per month should be Rs. 672.8 and Rs.859.6 respectively, on the basis of this criteria33.8 per cent in the rural areas and 20.9 per cent population in the urban areas are living below the poverty line. The all India HCR has declined 7.7 per cent from 37.2 per cent in 2004-05 to 29.8 per cent in2009-10. In Haryana, the income criteria to determine the poverty line for rural and urban areas for a person per month are Rs. 791.6 and Rs. 975.4 respectively. According to this criterion 18.6 per cent, population in rural areas and 23 per cent population in urban areas are still living below poverty line in Haryana.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Poverty is associated with the history of humanity. Right from the ancient times, attempts have been made to solve this problem. The social scientists, particularly economists have been trying to develop models for solving the problem of poverty.

Bardhan (1974) in his study pointed out that in 1968-69, 54 per cent of the rural population and 41 per cent of the urban population lived below the poverty line. Ahluwalia (1976) in his study analysis the time series estimates of rural poor for the period 1970-71 to 1973-74. According to him, percentage of rural poor has declined from 49.1 per cent in 1970 to 47.6 percent in 1973-74. According to Balakrishan and Ghosh(1980) who used NSS data of the 26th round (1971-72) and 28th round (1973-74), the rural poor increased from 178 million in 1871-72 to 217 millions in 1973-74, the corresponding rise in per cent being from 40.5 to 45.9. Puran Singh (2006) reveals that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, which concern legal right to employment on the rural citizens, is a landmark in the history of independent India. This article is a modest attempt to critically examine the various provisions of this scheme with special reference to the delivery mechanism and role of Panchayati Raj institutions in implementation of the scheme and suggestions to make it more effective. Rajesh Shukla (2009) has pointed out that the MNREGA offers an opportunity of introducing the target households to saving and investment culture that has major implications for future economic growth of the country as well as for the financial security of these households. The challenge for the MNREGA would be transforming itself into a self- sustaining programme the benefits the poorest of the poor. Ashok lahiri (2007) narrates that the MNREGA is like a life insurance. The life insurance benefits a family only if the insured dies. However, that may not be the outcome that the family wants. Therefore, in the ultimate analysis, we should not drive satisfaction when more people take up jobs under the MNREGA be mixed with creation of durable assets.

Thus, the MNREGA is gradually emerging as one of the most effective strategies to alleviate rural poverty. It can effectively generate employment and sustain the income of households by giving the opportunities of work.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

i) To evaluate the incidence of poverty among MNREGA beneficiaries.

- ii) To assess the effectiveness of MNREGA to enhance livelihood security in rural area.
- iii) To analysis the current status of this scheme.
- iv) To suggest some policy implication for the effective implementation of this scheme.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study had been carried out in one block Nilokheri, District Karnal of Haryana. From the block Nilokheri, four villages were selected for the purpose of survey. These four villages were Raipur Roran, Seed Pur, Dabarthala and Jamba, from each village 25 beneficiaries were selected randomly. The total sample was 100. The study was carried amongst adults of age group 20-55 years. Male and female respondents were included in this survey. It was conducted with the help of a questionnaire. All the interviews were conducted in Hindi/local dialect. The survey was conducted in April 2012. The secondary data used in the study were collected from the various authenticated sources. Most of the data used in the study are collected form annual reports of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi, and Reports of Planning Commission of India, New Delhi.

For the measurement of the poverty, the poverty line taken based on minimum consumption criteria, which is Rs. 791.6, because according to 61 rounds N.S.S.O. results the latest minimum income criteria for a person per month in rural areas is Rs. 791.6 in Haryana.

5. CALCULATION OF POVERTY INDICES

A poverty measure is a function of individual incomes and the poverty line. The literature on poverty measure is huge and technical in nature. It deals with the choice of functional form of a suitable poverty index. This study has been taken the four different indices to measure the poverty and the outcomes of MNERGA on income of beneficiaries. These are;

 $H = \frac{q}{y}$

(I) HEAD COUNT RATIO;

where q is the no. of beneficiaries living below poverty line. n is the total no. of beneficiaries in the sample. (II) INCOME- GAP RATIO;

(*i*)

 $I = \frac{q}{\pi . q}$ *(ii)* i=1g_i he aggregate poverty gap) where g = g_i =p₁-y₁, P is the poverty line (Rs. 791.6) Y_I= Income of the ith beneficiary. (II) GINI-COEFFICIENT; $[1 - \sum_{t=0}^{n} (\sigma Y_{t-1} - \sigma Y_t)](\sigma X_{t-1} - \sigma X_t)]$ $[1 - (\sigma Y_{t-1} - \sigma Y_t)(\sigma X_{t-1} - \sigma X_t)]$ (iii) X is the number of observations Y is the beneficiary's income level (IV) SEN'S INDEX P = H[I + (1 - I)G](iv)

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Haryana, the rural poverty has significantly declined over the years. The decline in the incidence of poverty in rural areas is depicted in the Table-1, which shows the percentage of population in rural areas below the poverty line between 1973-74 and 2004-05,

11	AGE OF PO	PULATIO	IN DELOW	POVERI	T LI			
	Year	Rural	Urban	Total				
	1973-74	34.23	40.18	35.36				
	1977-78	27.73	36.57	29.55				
	1983-84	20.56	24.15	21.37				
	1987-88	16.22	17.99	16.64				
	1993-94	28.02	16.38	25.05				
	2004-05	13.60	15.10	14.00				
an Dianning commission. Covernment of In-								

Source: Planning commission, Government of India.

Indian government has started various poverty alleviation schemes to eliminate poverty from the country. Particularly from rural areas, as rural poverty of India is a massive and conspicuous due to unemployment, under employment etc. In view of this at present in rural India the MNREGA employment schemes is in operation sponsored by the government of India.

8. THE NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GURANTEE ACT

This is a wage employment scheme implemented in the country under National Rural Employment Guarantee, Act 2005. This act starts functioning in 2006-07 and at first, it was implemented in 200 districts. In 2007-08, this act was extended to 330 districts and further extended to all 596 districts of India in 2008-09. In Haryana, this scheme was implemented in district Mahendergarh and Sirsa on 2nd February 2006. The MNREGA was implemented since April 2008 in all districts of Haryana.

The basic objective of the scheme is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The scheme is applicable only to rural areas. 1/3rd of the jobs are reserved for women. Minimum wages applicable in the state would be payable to the persons employed. Unemployed persons are to apply for registration with concerned Gram Panchayats. After registration, job Cards are issued to the households by the Gram Panchayats. The payment of wages is being made on weekly or fortnight basis. The contractors are banned under this programme.

Scheduled Tribes;

The following works are permissible under the MNREGA:-

i) Water conservation and water harvesting;

ii) Drought proofing (including a forestation and tree plantation);

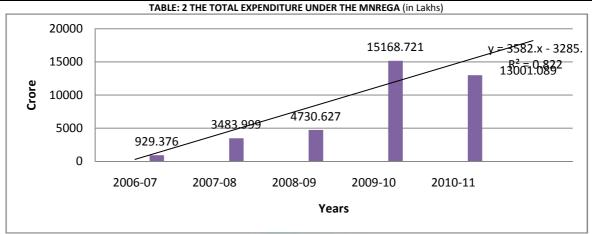
iii) Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works

iv) Irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and
 v) Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas;

vi) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access; and

vii) Any other work, which may be, notified the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

The programme is being implemented through the Gram Panchayats.



Source: Annual Reports of the Various Years, Ministry of Rural Development.

The Table -2 reveals that the total expenditure is increasing under this scheme. It was Rs. 929.376 lacks in 2006-07 to Rs. 3483.999 lacks in 2007-08, Rs. 4730.627 lacks in 2008-09, Rs. 15168.721 lacks in 2009-10, and Rs. 13001.089 lacks in 2010-11. The Table 3 shows that, in Haryana as on April 2010, 1233038 households were registered under this scheme. Out of 431620 households that demanded employment, the number of households working under the MNREGA is 429957, but the numbers of households that have completed 100 days of employment is only 28597.

TABLE: 3 THE EMPLOYMENT GENERATIONS UNDER THE MNREGA (in Numbers)

TABLE: 5 THE EMPLOYMENT GENERATIONS ONDER THE MIRREGA (IN NUMBERS)									
Year	ear No. of Households			No. of households	No. of works completed	No. of Works			
	Job card	Demanded	Provided	completed 100 Days of	Completed				
	issued	Employment	Employment	employment					
2006-07	74401	7004	5586	0	0	77			
2007-08	106772	50765	50765	5626	985	667			
2008-09	1614.45	67883	67883	7402	1609	1189			
2009-10	378286	153513	153273	6698	3513	2798			
2010-11	512134	152455	152450	8871	4070	3645			
Total	1233038	431620	429957	28597	10182	8376			

Source: Annual Reports of the Various Years, Ministry of Rural Development.

It shows that the MNREGA is not able to achieve the set targets, but it is true that the MNREGA is able to provide jobs and employment to many households in the rural areas. It is a big achievement.

9. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE BENEFICIARIES

In the study, 100 beneficiaries were selected randomly for the survey from the four villages of block Nilokheri in which 78 were male and 22 were female. 38 beneficiaries were literate and 62 were literate. Out of 62 literate beneficiaries, 39 had only primary education, 12 had metric, 9 had secondary education and 2 had graduate degree. 7 beneficiaries were small farmers, 36 were agricultural laborers, 57 were non agricultural casual laborers 34 beneficiaries had a family size of 1-5 members, 52 had family size of 6-10 members and only 14 had a family size of 11 or more. 60 beneficiaries were scheduled caste, 32 were OBC's and 8 belonged to general category.

10. CALCULATION OF POVERTY INDICES

Head Count Ratio; (i) 74 $H = \frac{100}{100}$ = 0.74(ii) Income- Gap Ratio; I = 0.176(iii) Gini Coefficient; G = 0.0314Poverty line =791.6 per capita per month (iv) The Sen Index; P = 0.74[0.176 + (1 - 0.176)(0.03146)]= 0.74[0.176 + (.824)(0.03146)]= 0.74[0.176 + (0.026071)]= 0.74[0.004589]P = 0.00339

The calculation of Head-Count Ratio (H) for these beneficiaries of the MNREGA shows that 74 per cent beneficiaries were below poverty line. The estimate value of income gap ratio (I) comes out to be 0.176 which signifies that a large proportion of beneficiaries were in the upper income slab below poverty line. A low estimate of Gini Coefficient (G) of 0.031 reveals a very low degree of income disparity among the beneficiaries below poverty line. The sen-index being calculated based on above information gives a value of 0.003396, which also reveals that a considerable number of beneficiaries come from the upper income slab below poverty line.

11. CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATION

The MNREGA is very useful for the poverty alleviation in rural areas. The final objective and goal of the MNREGA is to bring about an increase in the standard of living of the people and to bring them above the poverty line. The implementation of the MNREGA has provided employment during the lean season and reduced migration to some extent. The MNREGA has created necessary infrastructure in rural areas. The infrastructure in the process has laid the foundation for further development work. The MNREGA has not been fully successful in achieving its targets- to reduce poverty, to eliminate economic and social disparities. The main reasons for its failure are- funds were not realized timely, lack of coordination between Gram Panchayats and Government's officials, lack of awareness among the people, lack of proper trained staff, lack of proper supervision, no funds to purchase working tool. The success of the MNREGA depends upon the active participation of the people and coordination between the Gram Panchayats and Government's officials. On the basis of above discussion the following suggestions are made to improve the performance of the MNREGA in Haryana.

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i) The release of the funds should be timely, the budgetary allocation for this scheme should be sufficient to provide genuine wage rates to the beneficiaries.
 ii) Proper maintenance of job cards, muster rolls and other records relating to the scheme at the block and panchayat level should be ensured.
 iii) The community participation is necessary for the effective implementation of the MNREGA. Gram Sabha must play an important role in the implementation of the scheme.

iv) For a BPL family 100 day's employment is not sufficient. There should have been weight-age for BPL, landless families in providing job opportunities.

v) The people should be aware about this scheme. Awareness camps should be organized at village level.

vi) For the effective implementation of the MNREGA, it is necessary that the panchayat should be educated about various activities that can be covered under the MNREGA.

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