



Constraints experienced by women work force in MNREGA in Punjab and Rajasthan, India

Sitaram Bishnoi*, V.K. Rampal and H.R. Meena

Division Dairy Extension,
NDRI, Karnal-132 001, India.

Received: 14-03-2014

Accepted: 21-12-2014

DOI: 10.5958/0976-058X.2015.00047.5

ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), is the flagship programme of the Government that directly touches lives of the poor and promote inclusive growth. A Comparative study of constraints perceived by the respondents in taking advantage of MNREGA was conducted in Punjab and Rajasthan. The constraints were categorized into six categories namely mate and registration, work, wages, job card, facilities, social constraints. A total of 120 rural women were interviewed by using stratified sampling with equal sample allocation of the beneficiary. Constraints like illiteracy, feel difficulty in filling form and complex procedure of registration, MNREGA work is more laborious and hard for women, wage rate are very low, unnecessary delay in wage payment, more job card and less employment, elite group within workers capture most of job card, and lack of child care facility were the major constraints which were perceived by the respondents in both the states.

Key words: Beneficiary, Constraint, Mate, MNREGA, Women.

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was notified in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from 2nd February, 2006 and then extended to additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008. The remaining districts have been notified under the MNREGA with effect from April 1, 2008. MGNREGA is the world's biggest employment guarantee programme and aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household. Its primary objective is to augment wage employment and strengthen natural resources management (Poonia, 2012).

This act stipulates that wages will be equal for men and women and also committed to ensuring that at least 33 percent of the workers shall be women (Adhikari and Bhatia 2010). The economic dependence of women on men in rural India plays a major role in the subjugation of women, and in this respect the MNREGA is an important tool of social change (Drèze, Oldiges 2007). MNREGA can play a substantial role in economically empowering the women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-esteem. Government figures indicate an impressive participation of women in the MNREGA. It is above 33 per cent in 15 states. Tamil Nadu, with 82 per cent, shows the highest participation

where as Kerala and Rajasthan are also showing impressive figures of 71 and 69 per cent respectively (Mishra, 2010). In Punjab the first phase of this scheme was implemented only in Hoshiarpur district and in second phase it has covered three more districts *viz.* Jalandhar, Amritsar and Nawanshahr. In Rajasthan state in the first phase it had covered eight districts of southern part of states and in second phases it has been implemented in nine more districts of the state and in third phase it has covered all districts of the state. Keeping above fact in mind a study an constraints experienced by women work force in MNREGA scheme in Punjab and Rajasthan.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Bikaner and Ludhiana district of Rajasthan and Punjab state respectively. Both the districts were selected purposively based on higher number of women participation and completed hundred days employment under MNREGA in last five years (2008 to 2013). From each district one block namely Nokha from Bikaner and Raikot block from Ludhiana district was selected, further two villages were selected from each block by using simple random sampling method. Thus a total of four villages were selected randomly. From each selected village, 15 MNREGA beneficiary women were randomly selected. Thus a total of 120 MNREGA beneficiary women were included in the study. Required data were collected through personal

*Corresponding author's e-mail: srex2011@gmail.com.

interview methods. Constraints in MNREGA scheme were measured in three point continuum. As per response of beneficiary women, frequency and percentage were calculated and rank was awarded for draw meaningful conclusion of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints related to mate and registration: It is apparent from the Table-1 that in case of beneficiary in Ludhiana due to illiteracy, feel difficulty in filling form and complex procedure of registration were reported by (60%) and (33.33%) respectively, thus they were ranked I and II, followed by Mate is not present at work place (23.33%) and undesirable behaviour of mate was observed by (6.67%) respectively. While in Bikaner due to illiteracy, feel difficulty in filling form and Mate is not present at work place were reported by (80.00%) and(76.67%) respectively, thus they were ranked I and II, followed by Complex procedure of registration (26.67%)and Bad behaviour of mate were observed by(20%) respectively. During the data collection it was observed that women are illiterate, they feel difficulty to fill form had been the most important constraint among

the beneficiaries in both the districts. Where undesirable behaviour of mate was the least important constraint faced by the beneficiaries. Some of the obstacles that we found during survey were also found by Tankha (2010). He found that the awareness of MNREGA and workers entitlements is very low. In many villages, there has been a deliberate attempt not to disseminate complete information regarding the MNREGA. Most people are not even aware of the fact that they should apply for work and also of getting unemployment allowance in case of not getting work.

Constraints faced by the beneficiary respondent related to work: It was revealed from Table-1 that, in Ludhiana district beneficiary perceived MNREGA work was more laborious and hard for women (96.66%) and Low technical standard of work (86.66%) as the most serious work constraints so they rated at I and II ranks respectively. And in Bikaner untimely measurement of work (100%) and MNREGA work is more laborious and hard for women (80%) were the most serious work constraints so they rated at I and II ranks respectively. While comparing in Ludhiana and Bikaner district it was found that MNREGA work is more

TABLE 1: Constraints faced by respondent related to mate and registration and work

Constraints	Constraints related to mate and registration					
	Ludhiana(n ₁)=60		Bikaner(n ₂)=60		Pooled (n=120)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Mate is absent at work place	23.33	III	76.67	II	50.00	II
Undesirable behaviour of mate	6.67	IV	20.00	IV	13.33	IV
Feel difficulty to filling form due to illiteracy	60.00	I	80.00	I	70.00	I
Complex procedure of registration	33.33	II	26.67	III	30.00	III
	Constraints related to work					
Delay in the measurement of work	16.67	V	100	I	58.33	III
Harassment during work	26.67	IV	13.33	V	20.00	V
Low technical standards of work	86.67	II	63.33	III	75.00	II
Exploitation of worker by mate	30.00	III	20.00	IV	25.00	IV
Far away work place	3.33	VI	6.67	VI	5.00	VI
Work is more laborious and hard for women	96.67	I	80.00	II	83.33	I

TABLE 2: Constraints faced by respondents related to wages and job card

Constraints	Constraints related to wages					
	Ludhiana(n ₁)=60		Bikaner(n ₂)=60		Pooled (n=120)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Bank is far away from home	56.67	II	86.67	II	71.67	II
Unnecessary delay in wage payment	46.67	III	100.00	I	73.33	I
Complex procedure of receiving money	16.67	V	20.00	V	18.33	V
Payment is not delivered in villages	33.33	IV	36.67	IV	35.00	IV
Very low Wage rates	60.00	I	80.00	III	70.00	III
	Constraints related to job card					
Disparity in job card distribution	60.00	III	90.00	II	75.00	II
More job card and less employment	86.67	I	53.33	III	70.00	III
Misuse of job card	16.67	IV	10.00	IV	13.33	IV
Fake entries in job card	3.33	V	6.67	V	5.00	V
Elite group within workers capture most of job card	83.33	II	93.33	I	88.33	I

laborious and hard for women and was perceived as most serious constraint in both the districts because in morning and evening time they had to cook meal for family and apart from that per day they have to work 7 hours as a labourer in MNREGA. However, the constraints Work place at a distant place and Harassment during work was perceived as the least serious constraint.

Constraints faced by the beneficiary respondents related to wages: Data regarding wage constraints of MNREGA have been presented in Table-2 it show that in Ludhiana and Bikaner districts unnecessary delay in wage payment (73.33%) was the serious constraint. It was ranked I in their respective category. In case of beneficiary Ludhiana major constraint was wage rate are very low (60%) and in Bikaner major constraint identified was unnecessary delay in wage payment (100%). It was assigned rank I in their respective category. While comparing between Ludhiana and Bikaner districts it was observed that unnecessary delay in wage payment and wage rate are very low were perceived as the most serious constraints because there is no proper distribution system. Salary is not fixed of workers and payment is provided according to their work. Banking system is not up to level. The result of the study was in line with the finding of Channaba and Jayaraj (2014) research study in Karnataka.

Constraints faced by the beneficiary respondents related to job card: The Table-2 incorporates the findings of constraints related to job card encountered by beneficiary. The study revealed that out of five constraints, in Ludhiana and Bikaner districts elite group within workers capture most of job card (83.33%) constituted the most serious constraints with I rank in their respective districts. In the case of beneficiary in Ludhiana more job card and less employment (86.67%) and in Bikaner elite group within workers capture most of job card (93.33%) were the major constraints and rated I rank in their respective category.

While comparing between Ludhiana and Bikaner districts the observation indicated that more job card and less employment and elite group within workers capture most of job card were perceived as the most important work constraints because workers generally benefit their own family members and close ones thus the rural needy people are ignored.

Constraints faced by the beneficiary respondents related to facilities: A cursory look at the Table-3 show the constraints related to facilities faced by the respondents at the MNREGA site. In Ludhiana and Bikaner districts lack of child care facility with (90%) was the major constraints.

The study of beneficiary shows that in Ludhiana no resting place with (93.33%) and in Bikaner lack of child care facility with (90%) were the first ranked constraints respectively. Due to these constrains those who had small children they are not able to join MNREGA. And result of study was compatible with Kabita and Rimjhim (2014) finding like MGNREGA funds have been allocated for the provision of safe drinking water, resting place, changing room, first aid, and recreational facility for children etc. From the survey it is found that except drinking water facility all other facilities were generally absent. The beneficiary's women are not satisfied and they said that they had not got any other facility provided by MGNREGA.

Constraints related to social constraints faced by the beneficiary respondents: Out of the five social constraints mentioned in Table-3 in Ludhiana and Bikaner districts social prohibition was the most serious constraint perceived by respondents and these were given I rank to their respective category.

While analyzing both the districts social constraints it could be concluded that social prohibition constrain was higher in respondents because they basically belonged to rural society due to the social taboo.

TABLE 3: Constraints faced by the respondents related to facilities and Social

Constraints	Constraints related to facilities						
	Ludhiana(n ₁)=60		Bikaner(n ₂)=60		Pooled (n=120)		
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	
Transport facility is not available	36.67	IV	26.67	IV	31.67	IV	
Non- availability of drinking water	10.00	V	6.67	V	8.33	V	
Non-availability of medical aid	86.67	III	70.00	III	78.33	III	
No resting place	93.33	I	80.00	II	86.67	II	
Lack of child care facility	90.00	II	90.00	I	90.00	I	
		Social constraints					
Family does not allow to work	40.00	III	23.33	III	31.67	III	
Lack of motivation by family members	36.67	IV	16.67	IV	26.67	IV	
Tenacious social norms	10.00	V	6.67	V	8.33	V	
Social prohibition	70.00	I	80.00	I	75.00	I	
Women are not allowed to work	43.33	II	33.33	II	38.33	II	

CONCLUSION

Constraints like illiteracy, feel difficulty in filling form and complex procedure of registration, MNREGA work is more laborious and hard for women, wage rate are very low, unnecessary delay in wage payment, more job card and less employment, elite group within workers capture most of job card, and lack of child care facility were the major constraints which were perceived by the respondents in both the states.

REFERENCES

- Adhikari, A. and Bhatia, K. (2010). NREGA Wage Payments: Can we bank on the Bank? *Econ Pol Weekly* **55**: 30-37.
- Drèze, Jean and Christian Oldiges (2007). Commendable Act *Frontline* **24**(14):45-48.
- Kabita Borah and Rimjhim Bordoloi (2014) MGNREGA and its Impact on Daily Waged Women Workers: A Case study of Sonitpur District of Assam. *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance (IOSR-JEF)* **4**: 40-44.
- Tankha Pankaj (2010). Empowerment Effects of the NREGS on Women Workers: A Study in Four States, *Economic & Political Weekly*. **44**(43): 49-57.
- Pankaj A K (2008) NREGS: "Guaranteeing the Right to Livelihood" *Indian Social Development Report 2008 (Delhi Oxford University Press)* 221-23.
- Poonia Jyoti (2012). Critical Study of MGNREGA: Impact and women's participation. *International Journal of Human Development and Management Sciences* **1**:35-55.
- Channaba Savaiah H.M. and Jayaraj M. (2014). Analysis of Women Empowerment through MGNREGA in Karnataka. *Global Journal for Research Analysis*. **3**:1-3.
- Mishra, C. K. (2010) National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and Social Audit: *Development Alternatives*: **20**: 6.