

Right To Work And Challenges for Youth in India's Rural Labour Market

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Abstract

Since over the last decade, various studies about the Indian labour market have established that India's 'Right To Work' program known as Mahtam Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA,2005) has benefited to poor rural households in providing some short of employment, income and financial inclusions. Many studies have also highlighted the spillover impact of the scheme as well. With this background, this intended study examines to what extent the 'Right to Work' has benefited the rural youth in their upward mobility and employment transitions in the labour market beyond the scheme. The most challenges issues that are likely to discuss are; the inclusivity, availability and accessibility of adequate alternate decent job and employment participation opportunities for the youth beyond scheme. Analyzing a primary cross sectional survey data of the randomly collected sample of 480 rural hiusholds in central India's province of Chhatisgarh, the study shows how the scheme has enhanced the participation in labour market and livelihood protection for poor, specially women and other youth from the marginalsied and other vulnerable communities.

Moreover, we find that a large public sector guranttred employment scheme like MGNREGS has significantly reduces distress type of youth and women's migration from the rural areas. Further, apart from economic factors, the result reaveals the importance of socio-culutral issues such as caste, gender, religion etc. in explaining the low workforce participation from certain social groups. However, analysis presents that 'Right to Work' in itself is not the only way forward towards dealing with issues concerning the plight of rural youth workers. The paper also explores the roles played by various actors including local governments (PRIs) fulfilling the larger goals of the scheme. The study indicates that there are still the challenges and a long road ahead for the rural youth's mobility, especialy from poor households in general and women in particular

Keywords: MGNREGS, Youth, Gender, Social Security, Employment Transitions, Governnace, India

Background

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With the fact that post 1990s, India's economy has witnessed a significant high growth rate. But the neoliberal growth agenda has been largely remained concentrated to urban locations, especially urban agglomeration or metropolitan areas. Consequently, a country like India, where 65% of its huge (1.25 billion) population reside in rural areas, the rural infrastructure continues to deteriorate in terms of both investment and employment generations beyond agriculture. This has caused widespread disparities, inequalities and vulnerabilities among people including youth and women across inter-intra sectors. In order to accomplish multi objectives of rural development, especially containing massive rural-urban migration due to unavailability of alternative adequate non-farm employment and deficit of decent work at large, Government of India implemented an employment guarantee or 'Right To Work' Act. Known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. (NREGA, 2005). Under the Act, Mahatma Gandhi Natinoal Rural Employment Gurantte Scheme (MGNREGS) was implemented from Feb 2006 and later in 2008 extended to whole of India for those rural adults who wish to do an unskilled manual job. The scheme focus on manadatory participation of women and and equity could translate growth into faster poverty reduction; reduce gender disparities and resultant impacts on the future of rural youth. MGNREGS intends to provide an opportunity to improve the livelihoods of unskilled rural youth.

The idea of implementation of MGNREGS is premised on the common belief that a legislation is needed to bring about inclusive development and ushering of social justice which in turn is capable of transforming the rural living condition, increasing sustainable agrarian activities and equality based employment transitions for the rural workforce, especailly youth, and women from poor, marginalsied and vulnerable communities. It is identified as one of the best programs in the world to provide an alternative source of livelihood which will have an impact on better human capital specially for the youth through enhancing spending on food consumption, school enrollment and growth in quality education and health care while reducing distress migration. Therefore, it is very important to ensure that the scheme performs well and helps in creating social security for the targeted community for better mobility of the rural youth. It is also more important in present context of universally committed sustainable agenda, in Sustainable Development Goals (UN-SDGs,2015), most of the goals do single out youth as a key target

group. The state, organisations and other institutions should develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth'(SDGs, Goal 8).

In this context, the present study is undertaken under the premises of Indian Social Institute, to study the implementation and impact assessment of MGNREGA across states including Chhattisgarh. The authors acknowledge Indian Social Institute, New Delhi for the same. MGNREGS is no doubt significant for various reasons. Based on this assumption this paper examines whether the implementation of the scheme would have helped in creating the social safety net for the rural poor and benefit the rural youth beyond that.

Overview of the Universe of the study: Chhattisgarh, Sampled areas, and Development Issues

The universe of the study, the province of Chhattisgarh (called 'state' of Chhattisgarh in Indian context) was chosen because of its early (Feb'2006) implementation of the scheme (MGNREGS) and containing vast vulnerabilities of youth's migration due to inadequate rural infrastructure. The province or state of Chhattisgarh is located in centre-east India and one among the few landlocked states in the country. Despite of its rich mineral and natural resources, the state is often listed in the poorer region and the most of its people still struggling with inadequate livelihood opportunities and have low human capital. Geographically, the province of Chhattisgarh was earlier part of India's central state (called Madhya Pradesh) and formed on 1st Nov 2000 with an area of 135,198.5 km².



Source : maps of India

Among India's 29 states, the Chhattisgarh province is the 10th largest geographically and the 17th most populated region. In 2018, under the Right To Work scheme (MGNREGS), Chhattisgarh

state is the third largest person-days (44,932,481) generator after the Southern states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, and have also fourth largest household beneficiaries (see GOI,2018).

Of the total population of 25.5 million in the state of Chhattisgarh, the Durg district is one of the densely populated and has high quality rich deposits of limestone. Raigarh is rapidly growing as an industrial district of Chhattisgarh, is situated in the fertile plains of Chhattisgarh region. The high-lands of Surguja district have peculiar 'pat formations', highlands with small tablelands. The average height of area is above 600 metres (2,000 ft).

Chhattisgarh has the presence of substantial workforce with a higher intensity of rural –urban migrant workforce due to lack of availability of productive work opportunities in rural areas. The state has the high worker participation rate (male and female) and a high labour force in the 15-39 age groups. It also has one of the lowest losses in person-days in the country attributed to labour problems. Hence, Chhattisgarh was selected for the study in order to understand the implementation status and its impact to make the scheme more effective as a 'safety net' to mitigate the deprivation, hunger and distress migration. The focus has remained to evaluate how so far MGNREGs has been effective in creating socially secure livelihood opportunities for the rural marginalised groups as its most of the population comprises schedule tribal (36%), 14% schedule caste and 58.6% women.

Methodology, Data Sources and Samplings

The study looked into the broad trends of MGNREGS, its impact in terms of creating social security, and its implementation using both qualitative and quantitative techniques in the state of Chhattisgarh. Multistage purposive and random sampling was followed to select the end-respondent from community. A systematic plan was prepared to select District, Block, Gram Panchayat, Village and Respondents in order to maintain scientific authenticity of sample selection. The random sample size of 30 each from the 17 Gram Panchayats of the four districts namely Surguja, Raipur, Raigarh and Durg were selected. From each Gram Panchayat 30 respondents were surveyed, thus a total of 480 respondent household were included in the survey. Local officials concerning MGNREGS such as Sarpanch, Panchayat Secretary, Gram Rozgar Sahayak and block level representatives were also interviewed. Desk research was conducted by compiling and analyzing available studies, researches, government data,

periodicals and relevant literatures. The details of households selected and surveyed for this research study are mentioned here (Table 1):

Table 1:
Selected Households

District	Development Blocks	Gram Panchayats	Sample Size	Name of Village
Surguja	Ambikapur	Khairwar	30	Khairwar
				Badiyachuwan
		Nawagarh	30	Nawagarh, Srigarh
	Surajpur	Govindpur	30	Govindpur
		Shivnandpur	30	Shivnandpur
	Raipur	Dharsinwa	Mandhar	30
Kurud Silyari			30	Kurud Silyari
Arang		Nardaha	30	Nardaha
		Gullu	30	Gullu
Raigarh	Dharamjay Garh	Vijaynagar	30	Vijaynagar Tedhasemar
		Sisinga	30	Sisinga
	Sarang Garh	Kosir	30	Kosir Bhatagaon
		Godihari	30	Godihari Hariharpali
Durg	Durg	Sirsa Khurd	30	Sirsa Khurd
		Chandkhuri	30	Chandkhuri
	Patan	Pahanda	30	Pahanda
		Selud	30	Selud

Reference: *Chattisgarh Bahu-uddeshiya Jankariyan (Panchayaton ke Sandarbh Mein (in Hindi) January 2006. Published by: samarthan – Centre for Development Support, Shankarnagar, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.*

Respondents' Profile and Household Details

In the proposed study, the selected 480 sample households from Chhattisgarh included 456 (95 %) of the MGNREGS beneficiary households and 24 (5 %) of the non-beneficiary households. Out of these 456 beneficiary households 117 (25.7 %) were from Durg district including 58 from Durg block and 59 from Paatan block; 113 (24.7 %) were from Raigarh district including 54 from Dharamjaygarh and 59 from Sarangarh; 117 (25.7 %) were from Raipur district including

59 from Arang and 58 from Dharsinva; 109 (23.9 %) were from Sarguja district including 57 from Ambikapur and 52 from Surajpur (Figure 1, Table 1).

Figure: 1

Age-Wise MGNREGS Beneficiary Classification

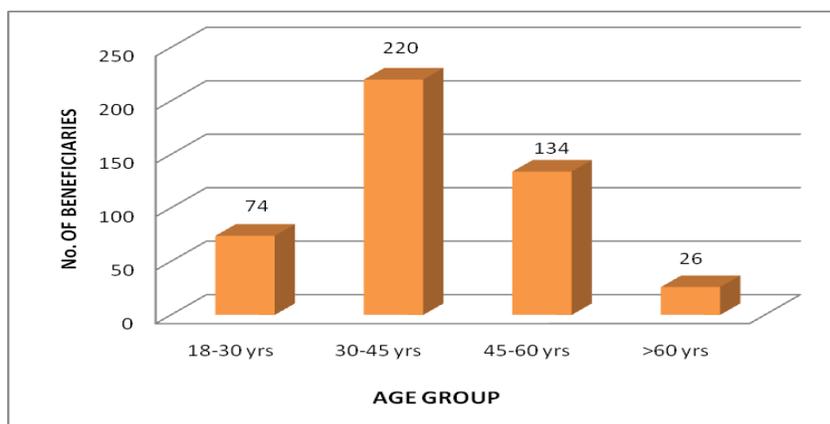


Table: 1

Age-Wise Social Groups of MGNREGS Beneficiaries

	18-30 yrs	30-45 yrs	45-60 yrs	>60 yrs	Total
ST	18	49	30	12	109
SC	18	44	29	3	94
OBC	37	122	72	10	241
General	1	5	3	1	10

The educational status of beneficiary respondents revealed that out of 456, an overall 249 (54.6 %) were illiterate; 110 (24.1 %) were educated only upto primary that is upto fifth class; 52 (11.4 %) had studied upto middle school; 20 (4.4 %) were matriculate ; 18 (3.9 %) were intermediate; 3 (0.6 %) were graduates; and 4 (0.8 %) were post graduates. The education aspect is a need of urgency for the upward mobility of youth engaged with MGNREGA work.

Youth and Rural Livelihoods

Most rural youth are either employed (waged and self-employed) or ‘not in the labour force’. The issue, therefore, is not so much about unemployment, but serious under-employment in low productivity, predominantly household-based activities. The unemployed are mainly better-educated urban youth who can afford to engage in relatively protracted job search. It is better, therefore, to focus on livelihood improvement of the most disadvantaged youth rather than unemployed.

It is widely alleged that rural youth are increasingly disinterested in smallholder farming, which is generally viewed by them as ‘non-decent work’. Thus, rural youth tend to be relatively mobile to urban areas. Recent research (Sinha: 2012) shows that migration from rural to urban areas will continue on a large scale and that this is an essential part of the livelihood coping strategies of the rural poor. Temporary migration and ‘commuting’ are also a routine part of the combined rural-urban livelihood strategies of the poor across a wide range of developing countries (Deshingkar: 2004). In many areas remittances from rural to urban migration are overtaking the income from agriculture. It is important therefore that young people in rural areas are prepared for productive lives in both rural and urban environments.

Rural youth tend to be poorly educated, especially in comparison to urban youth. The extent of ‘urban bias’ in the provision of publicly funded education and training services is commonly noted (Bennell: 1999). Poor quality education, high (direct and indirect) schooling costs and the paucity of ‘good jobs’ continue to dampen the demand for education among poor parents. As with the rural population as a whole, rural youth are engaged in a diverse range of productive activities, both agricultural and non-agricultural. Statistics are limited, but the proportions of rural youth engaged in waged and self-employment in both these main areas of activity varies considerably. Information on primary occupation of the beneficiary households besides their involvement in MGNREGS works was gathered(see below Figure: 2, Figure: 3).

Figure: 2

Primary Occupation of Beneficiary Households beside MGNREGS Work Days

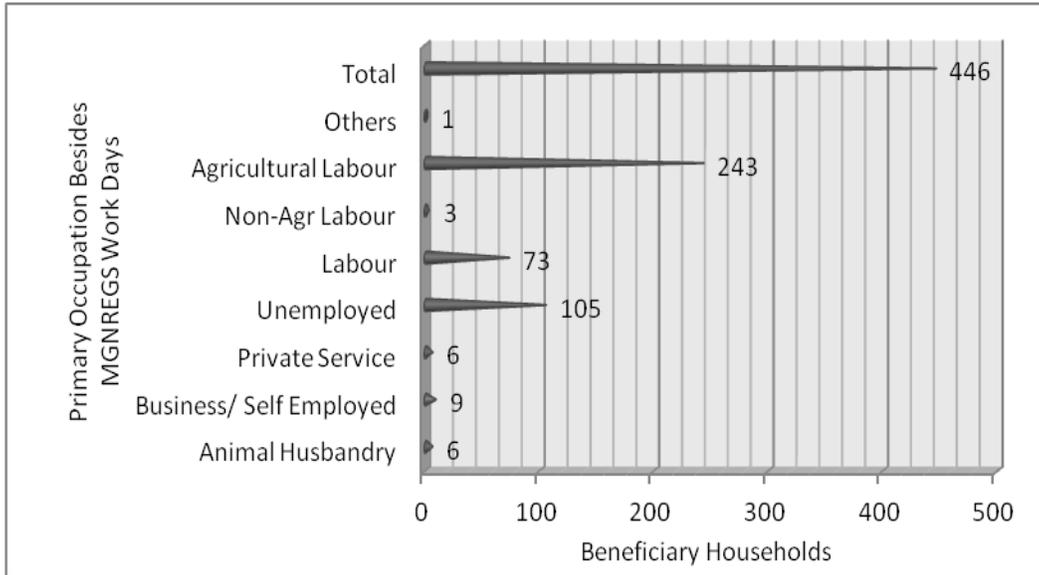
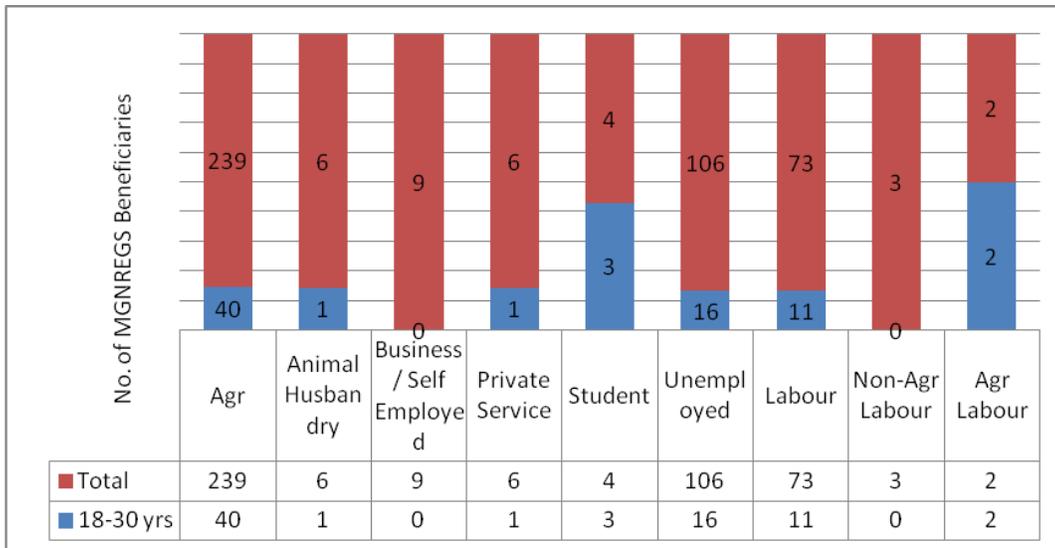


Figure: 3

Primary Occupation of Youth MGNREGS Beneficiaries

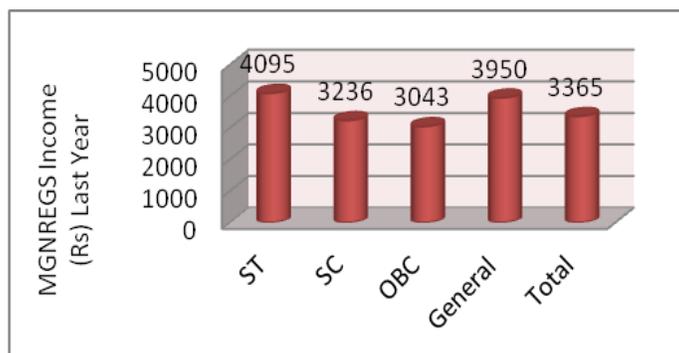


There is so much debate and uncertainty about the roles and contributions of the agricultural and rural non-farm sectors in the development process over the coming decade that is impossible to make robust projections of future labour demand in rural areas. Rural reality is changing fast. Many of the rural poor are part-time farmers or are landless. It is widely recognised that rural diversification will help in successful agricultural transformation in the future. Where rural diversification is not economically feasible, the alternative will be the transition of economic activity from rural to urban areas. Whatever the outcome, rural youth will be at the forefront of this process of change. High rates of youth unemployment are closely linked with high rates of landlessness. No uniform trends exist with regard to regional youth unemployment.

A district-wise closer observation of the lowest income category of upto Rs.12,000 per annum revealed that out of 140 beneficiary households, a highest proportion of 65 households belonged to Raigarh district, followed by 53 households from Sarguja district, 17 households from Durg district, and 5 households from Raipur district. It was interesting to note that out of 456 beneficiary households a highest proportion to 243 (52.8 %) who belonged to OBC category, out of which a maximum number of 84 households belonged to the next higher category of Rs.12,000 – Rs.24,000 per annum.

Further district-wise and social group wise (Figure: 4) inquiry into last year income (Rs) of beneficiary households by way of MGNREGS, revealed that 335 respondents had Rs.3365 as average income. Out of this, a Rs.4095 was stated by 85 ST respondents, followed by Rs.3950 as stated by 6 respondents belonging to general category then Rs. 3236 by 67 SC respondents; Rs.3043 by 177 OBC respondents. Within, the ST category, a highest average income of Rs.5358 was observed in Sarguja district; then Rs.3467 in Durg district; Rs.3000 in Raipur district; and Rs.2243 in Raigarh district. Within the SC category the highest average income of Rs.3740 was found in Raipur district, Rs.3331 in Sarguja district; Rs.2733 in Raigarh district; and Rs.2256 in Durg district. Within the OBC category, a highest average income of Rs.3756 was found in Raipur district; Rs. 3284 in Raigarh district; Rs.3208 in Sarguja district and Rs.2271 in Durg district (see fig 4).

Figure 4:
Average MGNREGS Income (Rs) of Beneficiary Households in Past Year



District-wise analysis of land holding status among the beneficiary households revealed that out of 423 responses, 279 (65.9 %) belonged to landless category, 94 (22.2 %) reported to own upto 2 acres land, 33 (7.8 %) owned 2-4 acres of land; 13 (3 %) owned 4-10 acres land; only 4 (0.9 %) owned more than 10 acres land. Within the landless category of 279 beneficiary households almost an equal proportion of 75 households were from Sarguja district (38 ST, 26 OBC, 9 SC, 2 General households); 74 households were from Durg district (61 OBC, 9 SC, 2 ST, 2 General category households); 72 households were from Raipur district (44 OBC, 24 SC, 4 ST); lastly 58 households were from Raigarh district (22 SC, 21 OBC, 13 ST, 2 General).

Governance of the Scheme and Awareness Status

Out of 466 responses, 287 (61.5 %) stated that Gram Sabha members were the main source of information providers about MGNREGA (104 households from Raipur district, 76 households from Sarguja district, 61 households from Durg district, 46 households from Raigarh district); 30 (6.4 %) who stated gram sabha notice board as the main information source (14 households from Sarguja district, 9 households from Raigarh district, 4 households from Durg district and 3 households from Raipur district).

An effort was made to understand the awareness about eligibility for employment under the scheme. With regard to ‘who can apply for employment under the programme’ a three point index was used for the same, where 3 denoted the highest and the correct answer (that is, a household having adult member desirous of seeking unskilled employed in MGNREGA may apply for registration); 2 denoted somewhat correct response; and 1 denoted an incorrect response. This composite index was used in the form of a three point scale to assess the awareness. Similarly, a three point scale was used to assess the awareness of the earlier two parameters on eligibility as mentioned above. Figure 6, below reveals that with regard to who can apply for employment an overall somewhat (1.63) awareness was observed, the highest observed in Raigarh district (2.22) and lowest in Durg district (1.26). Social group wise an overall highest awareness level was observed in ST (1.82) households and lowest among OBCs (1.49 households). An oral request for registration to Panchayat Secretary or Gram Rozgar Sahayak is needed to be done. The figure revealed that overall the respondents were observed to be well aware (2.70) on this front, the highest level of 2.98 was observed in Raigarh district and a lowest level of 2.35 was observed in Sarguja district. With regard to the third parameter of about 100 days of employment days per year, but at the same time, this check for 100 days can be relaxed if a state is so willing. The figures revealed that overall the respondents were observed to be well aware (2.67) on the provision of employment days per year

Information about the awareness among beneficiary households about unemployment allowance was gathered, and it was revealed that 73 beneficiaries were observed to be aware about provision about unemployment allowance. A highest awareness was found among 35 beneficiaries on this in Durg district (30 from OBC, and 2 each from ST and SC); 18 beneficiaries from Sarguja district; 16 beneficiaries from Raigarh district; and 4 from Raipur district. Further information about the awareness among the beneficiaries’ households about accidental compensation was gathered, and it was revealed that 111 beneficiaries were observed to be aware about such a provision. A highest awareness about the provision of accidental compensation was found among 53 beneficiaries in Durg district (18 from OBC, 6 from ST and 3 from SC category); 30 beneficiaries from Sarguja district; 20 beneficiaries from Raigarh and 8 beneficiaries from Raipur district.

Implementation Status and Governance

The MGNREGS seems to have mixed results. Whatever the problems, what is actually required to make the scheme reach its intended beneficiaries is a promise from various stakeholders involved.

Table 2
Process of Beneficiary Selection

District	Application for Registration	Whether Registration is open in Gram Sabha Throughout the Year	Job Card Regular Updates on Gram Sabha Notice Board
Durg	2.88 (117)	60	28
Raigarh	2.39 (113)	35	26
Raipur	2.97 (117)	15	10
Sarguja	2.36 (109)	29	43
Total Sample	2.66 (456)	139	107

Various aspects of implementation of the scheme among the selected beneficiaries' households were taken into consideration during the process of assessment. An analysis of the application for registration was done on a three point scale and a composite index was derived on the same. The correct response that is gram panchayat was attributed a score of 3, 2 denoted somewhat a correct response, and 1 denoted an incorrect response. Overall all the selected 456 beneficiaries' households reported almost correct response (2.66) on submission of application for registration. A highest index of 2.97 (by 117 households) was noted in Raipur district, followed by 2.88 (by 117 households) in Durg district, and almost similar indices that is, 2.39 (by 113 households) in Raigarh district and 2.36 (by 109 households) in Sarguja district. With regard to information whether registration is open in Gram sabha throughout the year, an overall 139 (30.4 %) beneficiaries' households reported a positive response on the same. A highest proportion of this was observed in Durg district (60 households), then Raigarh district (35 households), Sarguja district (29 households) and Raipur district (15 households). With regard to information whether job card details are updated and displayed on a regular basis, an overall 107 (23.4 %)

beneficiaries' households reported a positive response on the same. A highest proportion of this was observed in Sarguja district (43 households), then Durg district (28 households), Raigarh district (26 households) and Raipur district (10 households) (as shown in Table 2).

Further, an overall 390 (85.5 %) beneficiaries' households reported that the job cards were issued free of cost. A highest proportion of this was observed in Raipur district (107 households), then Sarguja district (100 households), almost equally in Durg district (92 households) and Raigarh (91 households). With regard to the information on method of obtaining job card, a composite index comprising of three point scale was used, where score 3 was used to denote the correct answer that is job card is issued within 15 days by gram panchayat after submitting an application on a plain paper or through oral request), score 2 denoted a somewhat correct answer, while score 1 denoted an incorrect answer. An overall somewhat correct response 2.18 was provided by all the 456 beneficiaries' households. A highest proportion of 2.87 (by 117 household) was revealed from Raipur district, followed by 2.57 (by 117 households) from Durg district, and almost similar response of 1.62 by (109 households) from Sarguja district and 1.59 (by 113 households) from Raigarh district. Also information on time period of obtaining job card after registration revealed the composite index for the same. An overall almost correct response (2.25) was provided by all the 456 beneficiaries' households. A highest proportion of 2.77 (by 117 households) was revealed from Raipur district, followed by 2.51 (by 117 households) from Durg district, then 1.97 (by 109 households) form Sarguja district and 1.71 (by 113 households) from Raigarh district). An overall 33 (7.2 %) out of 456 beneficiaries' households stated that within 15 days of submission of application they could procure employment under MGNREGS.

An assessment of the number of work days under MGNREGS beneficiaries' households (Figure 7) revealed that overall only 6 (1.3 %) out of 456 stated to have worked for more than '75 days-100 days' under MGNREGS, a highest proportion of which belonged to Raigarh district (5) households and merely 1 household from Sarguja district.

An overall 181 (39.6 %) out of 456 beneficiaries reported that muster rolls were adopted to ensure timely payment of MGNREGS labour, a highest proportion of which were from Sarguja district (68), followed by Durg (54), Raigarh (33) and lastly Raipur (26). If the MGNREGS

applicants are not provided with work, they will be permitted to a daily unemployment allowance after 15 days from the date of application. This allowance will be at least one-fourth of the prevailing statutory minimum wage for the first 30 days and not less than half of the minimum wage for the succeeding days. A total of 14 out of 456 beneficiaries' (3 %) respondent (10 from Raigarh districts and 4 from Sarguja district) were paid unemployment allowance. Social group wise 8 belonged to OBC category (7 from Raigarh district, 1 from Sarguja district).

An examination of the provision of facilities at the MGNREGS work site was done and it was revealed that out of 456 beneficiaries' households, 424 (92.9 %) were provided with safe drinking water at the work site; 295 (64.6 %) were provided with period of rest during the work hours; 161 (35.3 %) reported about provision of first aid box; 9 (1.9 %) reported about provision of crèche facility. Further information was gathered to understand the level of satisfaction with regard to these above mentioned worksite facilities. For this a composite index was used, where 4 denoted highly satisfied, 3 denoted moderately satisfied, 2 denoted not satisfied and 1 denoted when there was no response received for the same. An overall 2.83 (by 456 beneficiaries) was indicated which meant that there was almost no satisfaction to somewhat satisfaction level.

Programme Impact

MGNREGA is part of Indian Government's broader commitment to inclusive growth, aspiring to look into social and economic security and a safety-net for the poor. This study explores significant impacts on individuals (men and women), household level and community levels. Several parameters were used to assess the overall economic impact of MGNREGS on selected beneficiaries' households. With regard to MGNREGS impact as providing assured income to the selected beneficiary households an overall 116 (25.4 %) out of 456 reported positively. With regard to its effect on enhancing financial stability an overall 144 (31.5 %) out of 456 selected beneficiary households reported positively although varies across district. This stability or income security of their own and their parents helped the rural youth in enrollment for further education, ensure two time meals, learning extra skills etc. specially the children and young from the poor households.

Moreover, a maximum proportion was from Durg district (56) and lowest from Raipur district (20). With regard to its help in providing jobs in the lean seasons an overall 220 (48.2 %) out of 456 selected beneficiaries stated a positive response on the same. A highest proportion was from Raipur district (103) and lowest from Sarguja district (17). With regard to MGNREGS impact on improvement of agricultural situation an overall 149 (32.6 %) out of 456 selected beneficiary households reported a positive response on this parameter. A maximum proportion belonged to Raipur district (64), then Durg district (52), Raigarh (28), Sarguja district (5).

Individual case studies also suggest an increase in productivity on the land of farmers where MGNREGA work was undertaken. In Chhattisgarh a small farmer with one acre of land increased his yield such that his income went above Rs 1200. With regard to the impact of MGNREGS in terms of its help in improvement of family life an overall 124 (27.1 %) out of 456 selected beneficiary households responded positively on the same. A maximum proportion belonged to Durg district (51) then Raipur district (26) and Sarguja district (26) equally, and lastly Raigarh district (21).

With regard to help of MGNREGS in providing employment to the female members of the beneficiary households, an overall, 366 (80.2 %) out of 456 selected beneficiary households reported a positive response on the same. A highest proportion of this belonged to Raipur district (113), then Durg district (106), Sarguja district (76), and Raigarh district (71). The higher rate of young women participations ensure better health for themselves, their children, their enrollment in education, good food, learning extra skill such cutting& tailoring, pickle and other things with tendu leaves, and even further education. The extra skills led to the formation of some self help groups and got financial help from NGOs and banks also, as they have opened their bank account through MGNREGS scheme. Self help group formations by Young women are needed to further support from the state, NGO and Banking institutions to extend their operations to create a credit and institutional support for the rural youth.

Conclusion

Although the state of Chhattisgarh is one the emerging and relatively fast developing state in recent times, but the majority of its population is still poor at most of the development indicators. Most of the youth including both male and female continue to experience their exclusion form the neoliebral benefits. Most of them continue to feel apathy in the overall governance due to lack of quality education, poor infrastructure, skill and training for improving youth employability, and gainful livelihood opportunities in most of rural areas. Further, inefficiency of preserving and improving the rural knowledge trapped under the widening of state-naxal conflicts in these regions. Many youth joined the Naxal activities due to the incapacity or inefficiency of the state to create better youth support system and human development infrastructure such as road, school, ITI, sports facility, skill enhancement, decent work, and skill certification institute for further gainful employment. These conflicts led to stagnation of the regional development, deterioration of youth development in terms of education, skill, health etc.and resulted in acceleration of mass migration from those areas. As the study shows that the scheme has a potential to become a youth empowerment tool through100 days guaranteed employemnt opportunities especially in the poor regions of the country and a backbone social security environment for the young people from the marginalized groups, if implemented with transparency. By creating skill and training institute in rural areas will surely enhance the educated youth participation in decision making without any discrimination. Equity based empowerment of the marginalized section and the especially women may improve the real situation in the near future. The gainful employed and secure rural youth will certainly help in achieving of the demographic dividend if due consideration given in time without delay. The MGNREGS help in containing the state-naxal like conflicts, through regular work and timely income help poor to avoid hunger and malnutrition. Further, access to MGNREGS have created more equal wages for both men and women and would serve as a backbone platform for poor to send their wards to a better school, colleges, enhancing their skill and training etc., and would not be constrained by geographic, social or economic consideration to empower women and youth in particular. Since young women form an essential part of the labour force, like to number of studies (Rao & Singh, 2015: 2017) have shown a spillover impact of the scheme beyond rural settings, to some extent rural youth joining urban and rural informl sector, especially young women and men are now more informed and they can better bargain before joining other informal employment and jobs beyond the scheme as per market terms and conditions. Thus the

scheme can also be seen here as an opportunity, especially young workers and youth joining informal workforce to organize these unorganized masses to ensure equal opportunities, wages, and social justice.

For better outcome of the governance of the scheme and further policy implication, the paper emphasises on the multi level accountability and the need to understand that proper implementation of MGNREGS is very much connected to sustainable Goals as well. Thus it all depends on the collective efforts of all actors involved from federal government to provincial and officials at local governnaces. The collective committmnets to acheive the sustainable goals will bring the inclusive development and better mobility of the rural youth beyond the scheme via new innovative ways, keeping in mind the local needs of the youth.

Finally, in 21t century as ‘productive and decent work’ is the foundation of modern society in general and youth in particular; everything else that we value or prioritise, dream of, treasure, take of grantte, concerns or vulnerability etc; is based on type of work and the better mobility of the workers. Thus to achive the decent work agenda and sustainable goals at large, the MGNREGS induced empowerment should further strengthen with the help of new innovative methods and techniques, keeping in mind the local needs of the poor, especially young women and men to ensure more inclusiveness, mobility and sustainability.

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