

A Study On The Awareness Of Job Card Holders Towards MGNREGA In Kamrup District, Assam

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Abstract: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is the first ever law binding flagship programme in India. The Act provides a legal guarantee of 100 days employment in a financial year to rural household for their unskilled manual work. This legal commitment is understood as a landmark event in the history of poverty reduction policy in India. However, the programme has been facing lots of criticism with regard to its implementation processes. Many researchers have begun to assess the reason of failure of the programme as lack of knowledge & perceptions of Job card holders towards MGNREGA. The basic objective of this paper is to study the perceptions of Job card holders of Kamrup district towards the programme. Over the past years, sincere efforts have been made by the state; the scheme has been receiving mixed responses from Kamrup district. So it becomes necessary to study the programme in the context of Kamrup district. In this regard a field survey was conducted over 70 nos. Job card holders to know their views about the programme.

Keywords: Mgnrega, Employment, Jobcard, Person Days.

I. INTRODUCTION

The concepts of employment and wages were found during the time of Lord Buddha (563 BCE-483 BCE). The work is very essential for a happy living. Life without work would be termed as an eternal holiday which causes unhappiness in life. The mental peace, self respect, social image may be lost due to unemployment & poor economic condition.

Poverty is a major barrier of economic development in India. Indian economy has been suffering from several distortions even after more than six decades of independence. Despite of considerable efforts by the Govt., the poverty has tenaciously persisted in India.

As per 2011 census report about 70% of people of the Country reside in Rural India. As such, Rural Development has always been an important factor of discussion. The continued rural development efforts have led to some dramatic changes improving the quality of life of economic well-being of rural people. Impact of concerted efforts of central and State Governments have changed the rural landscape though failed to bring about the desired improvements.

MGNREGA, being a major flagship programme of both Central & State Government has been launched after almost 56 years of experience of different rural employment programmes implemented by the Govt. The programme offers a legal guarantee of 100 days employment to every registered rural household in a financial year, whose adult members are willing to do the unskilled manual work. The MGNREGA enacted by legislation on 25th August, 2005. Initially the Act covered 200 districts as 1st phase, implemented on 2nd February, 2006. It was extended 130 additional districts in 2007 and all the remaining district are covered with effect for 1st April, 2008.

II. PROFILE OF STUDY AREA

According to the census report, 2011, the total population of Kamrup district is 1, 517,202 nos. The district has population density of 436 inhabitants per square kilometer (1130/sq mi). The population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 15.67%. The district sex ratio, female & male is 946: 1000 and literacy rate is 72.81%. The district

populations are belongs to various indigenous Assamese communities like Ahoms, Brahmins, Keots, Kaibarta, Sutia, Bodo, Rava, Mising, Sonowal, Tiwa, Karbi, Koch Rajbangshi, Hira etc. The District has followers of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Budhism and Animism. The boundaries of the district are Baska and Nalbari on the North, Kamrup (metro) on the east and Meghalaya on the South and Goalpara on the west.

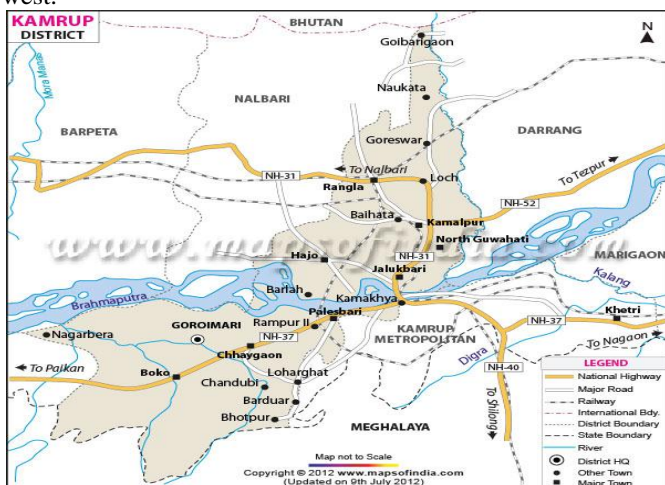


Figure 1

Total Population	1517202
Geographical Area	2740.74 sq. km
No of Blocks	14
No of Gaon Panchayat	139
No of Villages	1051

Sources: Census Report of 2011

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Komali Yenneti, Yehaua Dennis Wei & Wen Chen (2016) in their study found that the urban poverty has declined in respect to the poverty in rural India. Due to poverty & unemployment, the people of rural area often migrated to urban area. Access to housing has reduces the poverty level. There is obviously a big concentration of urban poverty in Assam.

Ch Geethanjali, V Valli Kumari (2015) in their study found that, India has introduced lots of schemes for the welfare of rural poor. MGNREGS is one of the such major schemes. Due to lack of performance and faulty implementation process, the schemes become unsuccessful. If the Govt. enhances the monitoring mechanism in an effective way the scheme will surely change the rural scenery.

Techi Sissal, Ashok Sharma (2014), in their study found that Job card holder has not proper knowledge about MGNREGA, so they do not know the benefit to be received by the MGNREGA schemes. It has been noticed partiality in case of engagement of Job card holder. So awareness programme should be organized to make aware the rural people about the details of MGNREGA

Satveer Kaur (2013) has studied in Punjab to know the impact of MGNREGA in rural people. It reveals that a beneficiary household got average employment of 54% working days in a financial year out of the 100days guaranteed

employment as per the Guideline of MGNREGA. Only more stress was given for the construction of Road connectivity & Renovation of traditional water bodies. The MGNREGA reduces migration of rural areas to the urban areas.

Sanjay Kanti Das (2013) in his study found that MGNREGA has provided alternative source of income to Job card holder and reduces distressed migration. Many irregularities were noticed in Job card issue, providing unemployment allowance and delay payment. Muster roll have not been prepared and maintained properly.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The specific objectives of the study are
- ✓ To study the general profile of MGNREGA beneficiaries in Kamrup district, Assam
 - ✓ To study the responses of MGNREGA beneficiaries of Kamrup district towards Job card.
 - ✓ To study the knowledge and perceptions of MGNREGA beneficiaries towards MGNREGA.
 - ✓ To find out the lacunas in implementation of MGNREGA and to offer suggestions for better implementation.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The study is conducted in Kamrup district of Assam, where in there is need for unskilled labour employment to the rural people. The District is selected because the scheme has been implemented fully and it represents all the characteristics of other districts also. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through structured questionnaire & interview while secondary data are collected from books, journals, reports & MGNREGA web site. The collected data are analyzed using simple statistical tool. The study is conducted upon 70nos Job card holders using simple random sampling method.

V. DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Employment provided to household (in lakh)	0.28	Percentage %
Person- days generated (in lakh)	Total	7.04
	SC	0.51
	ST	0.61
	Others	5.92
	Women	1.26
Total works taken up (in nos)	2133	
Total works completed (in nos)	190	
Works in progress(in nos)	1943	

Source: www.nrega.nic.in (as on 14/12/2017)

Table 1: Brief Statistics Of Mgnrega, Kamrup District

Table (1) show the total household's employment provided in the district is 0.28 Lakh and total Person-days generated is Rs.7.04 Lakh (as on 14/12/2017). Among these person-days SCs are 7.22%, STs are 8.72%, others are 84.06%

and women are 17.93%. This also indicates that there is large no of others participation under this scheme than SC, ST. SCs are significantly low participation in the district. The number of total works taken up is 2133 among which works completed were 190 and works in progress were 1943.

Table (2) shows that 57.14 % Job card holders are illiterate. 21.43 % Job card holders got education up to primary level, 14.29 % Job card holders are educated up to secondary level and 7.14 % Job card holders have their education up to higher secondary level. These statistics indicates that higher educated Job card holders are very less in the district.

CHARACTERSTICS	NOS
Illiterate	40
Up to primary level	15
Up to secondary level	10
Up to higher secondary level	5
Total	70

Source: Field survey

Table 2: Educational Qualification Of Job Card Holders, Kamrup District

RESPONSES	OPTION	TOTAL NOS	% (PERCENTAGE)
Difficulties in getting Job Card	Faced	21	30
	Not faced	49	70
	Total	70	
Verification of Job Card	Yes	43	61.43
	No	27	38.57
	Total	70	
Individual A/C of members of Job Card Holder	Yes	13	18.57
	No	57	81.43
	Total	70	
Custodian of Job Card Holder	Job card holder	31	44.29
	Gaon Panchayat	29	41.43
	Others	10	14.28
	Total	70	
Allotment of works	Satisfied	15	21.43
	Not satisfied	55	78.57
	Total	70	
Satisfaction with per day wage rate	Satisfied	-	-
	Not satisfied	70	100
	Total	70	
Creation of assets	Seen	42	60
	Not seen	28	40
	Total	70	
Increases household income	Yes	16	22.86
	No	54	77.14
	Total	70	
Scheme becomes successful	Yes	24	34.29
	No	46	65.71
	Total	70	

Source: Field survey

Table 3: Responses Of Job Card Holders, Kamrup District

Table (3) indicates the responses of Job card holders towards MGNREGA. It is found that 70% Job card holders did not faced any difficulties in getting Job card. 61.43% Job cards had been found verified & 81.43% Job card holders had not individual accounts whereas the MGNREGA says that all the members of a Job card should have an individual account. 44.29% Job card holders keep the Job card with them while

55.71% Job cards remain in GP level or others. 78.57% Job card holders are not satisfied with the allotment of works & 100% Job card holder are not satisfied with per day wage rate. According to 65.71% Job card holders, the scheme is not successful, 77.14% beneficiaries claim that MGNREGA has not increased the household income, although 60% beneficiaries do support that MGNREGA has created some assets.

Table (4) shows the knowledge of Job card holders on MGNREGA. During the survey, it is found that majority of Job card holders does not know the various provisions of MGNREGA, such as 52.86% card holders about per day wage rate, 78.57% card holders about Job demand facilities, 68.57% card holders about 100 days employment, 95.71% card holders about provision of unemployment allowances & delay payment compensation, 67.14% card holders about the selection of schemes in Gaon Sava, 61.43% card holders about the provision of display board before starting of works and more than 75% card holders about MIS & Social Audit system. It shows the overall negative impact of the programme.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT	INDICATORS	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	% (PERCENTAGE)
Per day wage rate	Yes	33	47.14
	Can't say	37	52.86
	Total	70	
Job demand facility	Know	15	21.43
	Don't know	55	78.57
	Total	70	
100 days maximum employment	Know	22	31.43
	Don't know	48	68.57
	Total	70	
Getting unemployment allowance & delayed payment compensation	Yes	3	4.29
	Can't say	67	95.71
	Total	70	
Selection of every scheme in Gaon Sava	Yes	23	32.86
	Can't say	47	67.14
	Total	70	
Provision of Display Board	Know	27	38.57
	Don't know	43	61.43
	Total	70	
Social audit system	Know	17	24.29
	Don't know	53	75.71
	Total	70	
MIS	Know	15	21.43
	Don't know	55	78.57
	Total	70	

Source: Field survey

Table 4: Knowledge Of Job Card Holders On Mgnrega: Kamrup District

VI. FINDINGS

- ✓ Most of the Job card holders are found illiterate, so naturally they don't know the facilities to be availed by the Act.
- ✓ The verification of Job card is not maintained properly as a result of which active Job cards are not trace out to allot the works.

- ✓ For all members of a Job card, individual account is not opened as a result of which they lose the individual buying power.
- ✓ All the Job card holders do not know the per day wage rate prevailing in the state.
- ✓ Most of Job card holders do not know the job demand facility for which they become unable to claim unemployment allowance & compensation for delayed payment.
- ✓ All the Job cards must stay with card holders, but in reality it fails.
- ✓ The Job card holders do not know that they can avail maximum 100 days employment in a financial year.
- ✓ Job card holders are not satisfied with the allotment of works.
- ✓ Job card holders do not know the role of them in Gaon Sava and particularly in implementation process of schemes.
- ✓ Job card holders are not aware of MIS & Social Audit system.
- ✓ Most of the Job card holders do not know about the schematic display board from which people can get the basic information of a scheme.

VII. SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ The Job card holders must have to aware about the programme by the Department.
- ✓ The verification of Job card must have to carry out to delete the death, migrated person & to find out the active Job card holder.
- ✓ All the members of a Job card hold must have to open individual account to receive their wages for work done through own account.
- ✓ All the Job cards must have to keep in own custody to avoid misuse.
- ✓ Job card holders should place demand for the work in writing so as to avail unemployment allowance for not providing employment within 15 days of demand and to receive the compensation for delayed payment.
- ✓ The schematic display board with local language should be erected in every scheme to get the initial information by the rural people. This will also make aware of local people.
- ✓ Assets created through the programme needs regular maintenance.
- ✓ Training and capacity building of implementing agency along with awareness campaign of Job card holders must be conducted so as to facilitate their involvements.
- ✓ Local NGO, Club etc. may be involved to spread the information & beauty of the MGNREGA among the rural people as it is the largest workforce programme in the world to eradicate poverty.
- ✓ Inter district & Inter -state idea exchange forum may be constituted to share the practical ideas & knowledge along with exposure visit which will provide a good peer group learning prospect.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India & State Government is continuously trying for the effective implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. Recently lots of new strategy is adopted & allocated more fund in Budget. But it will only remain in Books & Papers unless the root level implementing agency are trained up and specific awareness among the Job card holders are undertaken for those welfare the scheme is introduced. Timely payment of wages to Job card holder as per their work demand will certainly attract them for more work which will simultaneously improve the individual household income providing livelihood security. Transparency in maintaining all records, three stages Geo tagging in every scheme, provision of Community Information Board before starting a scheme, involvement of local people with the programme in selection of schemes in Gaon Sava & Social Audit system may certainly lead the programme to a esteemed level of vision of the department in near future.

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