

Original Research Article

Change in life style and food habits of M-NAREGA beneficiaries of Northern Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is providing vital employment opportunities to the rural poor and is helping to revive the local economy of the Indian villages. The study was carried out in seven districts of Northern Karnataka namely Dharwad, Uttar Kannada, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Haveri, Belagavi and Gadag to know the change in life style and food habits of M-NAREGA beneficiaries. From each districts 20 beneficiaries were selected making the sample size of 140. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Pre tested interview schedule was used to collect the data and suitable statistical tools like frequency and percentages were used for analysis of the data. It was clear from the study that, 84.29 per cent of the beneficiaries family health status was improved, followed by education, housing and food habits. It was also noticed that, the consumption of cereals, pulses and vegetables of the families of MNREGA beneficiaries had increased.

Keywords

MNREGA
beneficiaries,
Life style and
Food habits

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), also known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) is Indian legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. This act was introduced with an aim of improving the

purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India. Hence this study was conducted to know the change in life style and food habits of M-NREGA beneficiaries.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted in Seven district of University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad jurisdiction namely Dharwad, Uttar Kannada, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Haveri, Belagavi and Gadag. From each districts 20 beneficiaries

were selected making the sample size of 140. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Pre tested interview schedule was used to collect the data and suitable statistical tools like frequency and percentages were used for analysis of the data.

Results and Discussion

Data presented in Table 1 represents the socio-personal characteristics of M-NREGA beneficiaries.

It was clear from the table that 62.86 per cent of the respondents belongs to middle age group, 45.17 per cent of the respondents has primary education, 91.43 per cent of the respondents were married, 67.86 per cent of them belongs to joint families and they have large families. It was also noticed in the table that, cent per cent of the responds are working in others fields as labours as all of

them are having less than 1 acre of land. Change in life style of MNREGA beneficiaries is presented in table 2. It was noticed that, 84.29 per cent of the beneficiaries said that their family health status was improved after joining to MNREGA because they are taking their family members to nearby cities for hospital by the money earned from MNREGA. It was observed that 80.71 per cent beneficiaries are providing good education to their children by keeping them in hostels or by sending them to the good schools or colleges. Around 31 per cent of the beneficiaries said that they have improved their housing condition by constructing toilets, improving drinking water facility and increasing one or two rooms from the money earned by MNREGA. Only 15 per cent of the beneficiaries said that their food habits have changed. They included vegetables, fruits and pulses in their food and which in turn ensures food security.

Table.1 Socio-Personal characteristics of the M-NAREGA beneficiaries

n=140

Sl.No.	Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young (18-35yrs.)	44	3.43
		Middle (36-50 yrs.)	88	62.86
		Old (>50yrs)	08	5.71
2	Education	Illiterate	18	12.86
		Primary	64	45.71
		Middle school	38	27.14
		High school	20	14.29
3	Marital status	Married	128	91.43
		Widow	12	8.57
4.	Occupation	Agriculture	140	100.00
		Business	-	-
		Labour	140	100.00
5.	Type of family	Nuclear	45	32.14
		Joint	95	67.86
6.	Size of the family	Small (1-3)	10	7.14
		Medium (3-5)	34	24.29
		Large (>5)	96	68.57

Table.2 Change in life styles of the M-NAREGA beneficiaries

n=140

Sl. No.	Life styles	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Food habits	21	15.00
2.	Health aspects	118	84.29
3.	Education of the family members	113	80.71
4.	Recreation	-	-
5.	Clothing	-	-
6.	Housing	44	31.43

Table.3 Change in food habits of the beneficiaries of M-NREGA

n=140

Sl. No.	Items	Increased		Same		Decreased	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Cereals	140	100.00	-	-	-	-
2.	Pulses	140	100.00	-	-	-	-
3.	Vegetables	140	100.00	-	-	-	-
4.	Fruits	70	50.00	70	50.00	-	-
5.	Milk and Milk Products	-	-	140	100.00	-	-
6.	Meat and Meat products	-	-	140	100.00	-	-

It was noticed in the Table 3 that, cent per cent of the beneficiaries said that their food habits has changed i.e. consumption of cereals a, pulses, vegetables has increased. Half of the beneficiaries said that they have increased the consumption of fruits after joining the MNREGA. It was also observed that, cent per cent of the beneficiaries said that consumption of milk & milk products and consumption of meat and meat products remains the same. Every individual works to lead a healthy life and the main reason for consumption of milk & milk products and consumption of meat and meat products remains the same is for dietary pattern.

MGNREGA is landmark legislation in the history of social security legislation in India after independence. Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is a very good step from the Government to reduce unemployment.

MGNREGA is a well thought out legislation, a powerful tool in the hands of the rural people to get their basic livelihood. MGNREGA has produced benefits for rural India, particularly through the provision of extra income during tough times. MGNREGA has brought positive changes in the respondents in terms of house, education, increase in monthly expenditure on food items, improvement in fuel use for cooking, improvement in the source of drinking water, improvement in the use of toilet facility and reduction in social evils like untouchability.

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