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A Study on Knowledge and Perceptions of Beneficiaries towards MGNREGA in Doimukh Panchayat of Papum Pare District

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Abstract: The basic objective of this research is to study beneficiaries' perceptions towards MGNREGA programme in Doimukh Panchayat of Papum Pare district of Arunachal Pradesh. As the scheme promises to provide 100 days job guarantee to the rural people to empower them economically. The scheme has been receiving mixed responses from different parts/districts of our country time and again. So it felt very necessary to study about MGNREGA in the context of Arunachal Pradesh too. In this regard, a primary field study has been conducted with 50 job cardholder of MGNREGA regarding their view on the programme, that whether it has increased their livelihood and brought any changes in their family position or not. The paper focuses on some of the basic awareness issues like knowledge about days worked, wage rate, kinds of activities undertaken, social audit, job card, etc.

Keywords: MGNREGA, Job Cardholder, Beneficiaries, Wages, Social Audit, Days Worked.

I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is the root cause of all social evils. A country cannot excel unless its people came out from the acute poverty and hunger. Inclusive approach is the only way for bringing those economically unprivileged sections of the society into the mainstream of the country. In this regard government had attempted an innovative scheme called MGNREGA, to empower the rural and poor people of the country. MGNREGA is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradication rural poverty and employment, by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages (Jena & Ghosh, 2014). MGNREGA was implemented in the year 2006 with a main objective to eradicate poverty by providing 100 days of work per year to all rural households whose adults are ready to do unskilled physical labour at the minimum wage. Every year, on an average, 2320 crore person days are generated, 5 crore rural households and 9 crore adults are given guaranteed employment with about half of them being women and another half coming from Scheduled Tribe categories thereby constituting massive exercise at social inclusion (Goyal, 2014).

In the context of Arunachal Pradesh, MGNREGA was implemented in the phase wise manner. In its first phase it was implemented in one district (Subansiri District) and later on it has been implemented to two more districts (Lohit and Changlang Districts) in the second phase. The remaining districts implemented MGNREGA in the subsequent third phase. During the first implementation year 17 thousand household has been provided employment. The average of 4.53 lakh person days for employment provided, out of which 30.02 percent were women and 100 percent to the members of Scheduled Tribe in the district. Initially an amount of Rs. 211 crore was released to the state under MGNREGA.

In Papum Pare district around nine thousand employment provided to households up to 2013-14. Out of which 98 percent of beneficiaries are Scheduled Tribe 0.02 percent are Scheduled Caste and rest are from other categories. Around 30 percent of beneficiaries are Women in the district. In the Financial Year 2013-14, 405 household applied for job card in Doimukh circle

and all the job card holders are scheduled tribe. The total of 377 household demanded for work and the entire household got allotted. The total person-days worked are 11847 out of which 4524 person-days worked by the women in the circle. Out of 405 beneficiaries around 76 percent of beneficiaries are having individual bank account.

As the large number of rural people/beneficiaries of the circle is connected with MGNREGA, it felt necessary to study whether those beneficiaries are really aware of the scheme or not. So in this regard a micro study has been conducted in the Doimukh Panchayat of Papum Pare district to know about the individuals/beneficiaries' perceptions and knowledge about the MGNREGA programme.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

MGNREGA has been one of the issues for discussion among the social scientist since its implementation. Various studies were made in different period of time, touching the various aspects of MGNREGA.

Prasad (2012) highlighted the different objectives and features of MGNREGA and also revealed the performance and funding pattern of MGNREGA. According to his study MGNREGA is playing vital role for providing employment especially during off agricultural season.

Borah & Bordoloi (2014) conducted their study in 14 blocks of Sonitpur district of Assam. They have studied the impact of MGNREGA on women empowerment in the district. They concluded that the performance of MGNREGA is not fully satisfactory. The scheme could not ensure the 100 days job guarantee to the majority of job card holders in the studied district. Further, they have attempted to identify the various obstacle lies in the implementation of the scheme.

Kumar (2014) conducted his study in Sirsa, Ambala and Hissar districts of Haryana. His study attempted to explain the importance of social audit in developmental schemes like MGNREGA. The study found out that most of the gram panchayat has conducted social audit twice in a year. But very less number of issues raised by the people in those gram panchyats.

Sharma (2014) explained the reasons for migration in urban and rural area and how MGNREGA can be an effective tool for reducing such migration. She conducted a study in Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh and observed that MGNREGA brought down the migration levels due to availability of work. Her study in Gujarat, Maharashtra Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh found out that the migration has been reduced in the families of respondents and also children's education was positively benefited.

Hazarika (2014) examined the impact of MGNREGA on income and migration of people of Lakhimpur District, Assam. The study found that scheme has a positive impact on eradicating poverty by increasing income of people and decreasing the rural migration.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are:-

1. To study the general profile of MGNREGA Beneficiaries in Doimukh Panchayat of Papum Pare District of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To examine the responses of MGNREGA Beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat towards Job Card.
3. To know about Beneficiaries' Knowledge and Perceptions towards MGNREGA in Doimukh Panchayat of Papum Pare District of Arunachal Pradesh.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data are collected from well structured questionnaire, discussions with PRI members, workers, general public, block & district officials and Cardholders. For secondary data various

books, journals, handbooks, govt reports etc. related to the study has been duly referred. The collected data are analysed and interpreted with the help of simple percentage method.

For present micro study, out of total 405 beneficiaries, 50 numbers of beneficiaries holding job cards in Doimukh Panchayat have been selected with simple random sampling.

V. PROFILE OF STUDY AREA

Papum Pare District, the capital district of Arunachal Pradesh occupies an area of approximately 2,875 sq km inhabited by a population of 1,76,385 (2011 Census). The average literacy rate of the district is 82.14 percent and is the most populous district in Arunachal Pradesh (according to 2011 census). Yupia is the Head quarter of the district which is situated about 20 kms from the capital Itanagar. Papum Pare district is bounded by Kurung Kumey district in the northern side, Assam in the southern side, Lower Subansiri district in the eastern side and East Kameng district in western side. There are 274 villages and 2 towns in the district. Nyishis are the major ethnic group in the district and they belong to the Indo- Mongoloid group of people and their language belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family.

Papum pare district is divided into two administrative sub-division i.e. Sagalee sub-division and Itanagar capital complex sub-division. Beside that there are ten administrative circles i.e. Mengio, Leporiang, Sagalee, Taraso, Toru, **Doimukh**, Kimin, Balijan, Itanagar and Naharlagun. Doimukh is one of the administrative circles of Papum paper district.

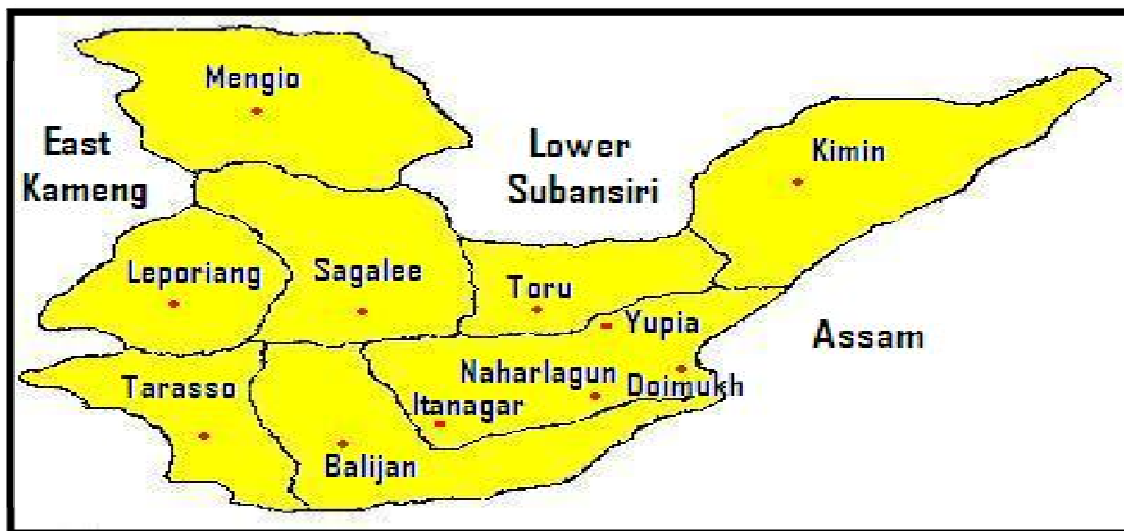


Fig: Map of Papum Pare District Showing Different Panchayats

VI. FINDING AND ANALYSIS

TABLE I
 Category of the MGNREGA Beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat

Sl. No	Categories	Number of Beneficiaries	Percentage (%)
1	Male	37	74
2	Female	13	26
Total		50	100

Source: Field Survey

From table 1 it can be seen that, out of randomly selected 50 MGNREGA beneficiaries, 74 percent of beneficiaries are male and rest 26 percent of beneficiaries are from female category.

TABLE II
 Age Classification of the MGNREGA Beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat

Sl. No	Age (in Years)	Number of Beneficiaries	Percentage (%)
1	18 to 30	04	8
2	31 to 40	13	26
3	41 to 50	24	48
4	51 and above	09	18
Total		50	100

Source: Field Survey

It is found from the table 2 that most of the beneficiaries (48%) are in the age group of 40-50 years in Doimukh Panchayat. Similarly, 26 percent of beneficiaries are in the age group of 30-40 years. The lowest share of beneficiaries (8%) lies in the age group of 18-30 years. Further, the 18 percent of beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat are in the age of 51 years and above.

TABLE III
Educational Classification of the MGNREGA Beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat

Sl. No	Educational Qualification	Number of Beneficiaries	Percentage (%)
1	Illiterate	22	44
2	Up to primary level	11	22
3	Up to secondary level	11	22
4	Up to higher level and above	06	12
Total		50	100

Source: Field Survey

Below table 3 shows that most of the MGNREGA beneficiaries are illiterate in the study circle. Around 44 percent of beneficiaries are illiterate in the circle. Around 22 percent of beneficiaries got education upto primary level. Similarly, around 22 percent of beneficiaries also have their education up to secondary level. The pictures of higher educated beneficiaries are very less in the Doimukh Panchayat. Out of 50 beneficiaries only 12 percent of beneficiaries studied up to higher secondary level or more (including graduate and post graduate).

During the survey, it is found that most number of male have job card whereas female beneficiaries got less number of job card. Further an age group of 'more than 30 years' is having more job card than 'below 30 years' of age group. Besides that it is also found that the all the beneficiaries who have studied up to higher secondary or above are holding job card in the Panchayat.

TABLE IV
Responses of the MGNREGA beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat on Job Card

Sl. No.	Responses on	Options	Numbers	Percentage (%)
1	Year of obtaining job card	Upto 2008	38	76
		2009	08	16
		2010 and above	04	8
		Total	50	100
2	Place of getting job card	Panchayat Office	48	96
		BDO	02	4
		Total	50	100
3	Use of job card	Know	42	84
		Don't know	08	16
		Total	50	100
4	Problem in getting job Card	Faced	08	16
		Not faced	42	84
		Total	50	100
5	Number of job card in the family	01	24	48
		More than 01	26	52
		Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

It is found from above table 4 that 76 percent of beneficiaries got job card in year 2008 or before. Further 16 percent of beneficiaries got their job card in the 2009 and rest of the beneficiaries got job card after 2010. Around 96 percent of beneficiaries had received job card from Panchayat Office whereas rest 4 percent beneficiaries got job card from block development office. Interestingly it was found that only 16 percent of beneficiaries do know about use of job card whereas rest 84 percent of cardholders doesn't know about its use.

Further it is also found that only 16 percent of cardholders faced difficulties to obtain the job card, while rest 84 percent of beneficiaries did not faced any kind of problem to obtain job card. 52 percent of beneficiaries are having more than one job card in their family whereas 48 percent beneficiaries told that they have one job cardholder in their family.

TABLE V
Knowledge of the Beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat on MGNREGA

Sl. No.	Responses on	Options	Numbers	Percentage (%)
1	Knowledge about various schemes	Do	31	62
		Don't	19	28
		Total	50	100
2	Knowledge about Wages per day	Yes	26	52
		Can't say	24	48
		Total	50	100
3	Knowledge about Opening bank account	Yes	26	52
		No	24	48
		Total	50	100
4	Knowledge about funding	Yes	00	00
		No	50	100
		Total	50	100
5	Knowledge of activities undertaken	Do	50	100
		Don't	00	00
		Total	50	100
6	Knowledge of social audit	Do	10	20
		Don't	40	80
		Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

It is found that 62 percent of cardholders are having knowledge about the schemes under MGNREGA like sanitation, flood control, rural connectivity, canals, horticulture, land development, etc whereas 38 percent of cardholders don't have any knowledge about the schemes comes under the act. It is also found that 52 percent of cardholders are receiving their wages regularly and had good knowledge about wages. Whereas rest 48 percent of cardholders don't have any knowledge about how much wages per day they supposed to get. Till now only 52 percent cardholders have opened a bank account whereas rest 48 percent cardholders don't have any bank account, they used to receive their wages in cash from ZPM. Whereas, act says that all cardholder should have an account and it also says that wages will be credited to their account when works completed.

All cardholders had knowledge about the activities undertaken under the MGNREGA but they don't have knowledge about the funds received in their village from the MGNREGA scheme. Besides that only 20 percent beneficiaries have the knowledge about social audit System. Surprisingly, 80 percent of cardholders didn't even heard about the social audit system in Doimukh Panchayat.

TABLE VI
Perceptions of the beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat on Work Undertaken

Sl. No.	Responses on	Options	Numbers	Percentage (%)
1	Work measurement	Satisfied	35	70
		Not satisfied	15	30
		Total	50	100
2	Improves livelihood	Yes	31	62
		No	19	38
		Total	50	100
3	Successful	Yes	32	64
		No	18	36
		Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 6 shows that 70 percent of cardholder feels that work measurement system done by leaders and officers are satisfactory. But 30 percent of beneficiaries are not satisfied with the measuring works as there is no such kind of tools and techniques available for measuring the works. In Doimukh Panchayat 62 percent beneficiaries feels that their livelihood has been improved because of MGNREGA. As those beneficiaries believe that act has increased their daily income for the household which leads to increase in savings for their household. But remaining 38 percent beneficiaries felt that their livelihood has not improved from MGNREGA as they are not receiving whole amount of wages.

It is found from above table that 64 percent respondents felt that MGNREGA has succeeded in their circle as they believe that through MGNREGA as retaining wall, roads, CC drain are constructed in their villages. Another reason is that act also helps in increasing the savings of household. But remaining 36 percent of respondents feel that MGNREGA is a failure programme in their circle. As they believe that programme is not providing 100 days of works and moreover people are not getting wages properly. Another reason was people do not know properly about the MGNREGA programme.

VII. CONCLUSION

From the above observation it may be concluded that most of the beneficiaries of Doimukh Panchayat don't have proper knowledge about the MGNREGA programme. The job cardholders don't get actual wage amount as per MGNREGA. Most of the respondents do not have proper knowledge about the schemes, benefits available, etc under MGNREGA. Some of the beneficiaries do not have bank account and their wages are not being credited in bank account. From the personal interview it also came to the notice that a favor system prevails in allocation of card and receiving wages. Job card are distributed as per the will of panchayati leaders. Hence, it is a big question that whether MGNREGA is successful in the studied circle or not, as mixed responses from beneficiaries has been observed in the present study. If government actively monitors all the activities under MGNREGA, there is a greater possibility that, knowledge and perceptions of beneficiaries will change in future towards MGNREGA.

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