

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

# Attitude of beneficiaries towards Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Programme

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**SUMMARY :** MNREGA is a demand driven scheme meant for providing 100 days employment on guaranteed basis with focus on improving rural infrastructure by providing labour work. Thus, the scheme is vital for uplifting poor people and rural youth through provision of employment. Study was conducted in Chotaudepur district of Gujarat by interviewing 100 selected beneficiaries through structured interview schedule. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage and correlation coefficient. Study revealed that majority of beneficiaries were of middle age mostly belonged to SC caste having a large sized family with no land based on MNREGA and other occupation for livelihood. Among the twelve variable only caste, annual income, occupation, attitude towards agricultural occupation and economic motivation had highly significantly effect while land holding and migration habit were negatively effecting on forming their attitude towards MNREGA.

**KEY WORDS :**

MNREGA, Beneficiaries attitude, SC.

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## **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

MNREGA is one of key component of the antipoverty strategy of Government of India counting as largest employment generating programme in world ensuring right to work in a country with a population of over a billion (Bishnoi *et al.*, 2012). After reviewing limitations of earlier rural employment schemes, government took a step to reinforce rural livelihood and enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2005 which renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) on

October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009. MNREGA is the first ever law, in the world that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale. It is demand-driven, unique effort which provide legally enshrines the right to work for at least 100 days of unskilled work to the beneficiaries and created rural community assets like village road construction, water harvesting structure, irrigation canal, soil and moisture conservation measures and plantations. It provides employment opportunities during lean agricultural seasons as well as in times of floods, drought and other natural calamities. Free registration with a job guarantee within 15 days

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of application and weekly disbursement of wages are the major advantages of MNREGA. It has enhanced livelihood security as well as standard of living of households.

Present study revealed the facts how people take this scheme which form their attitude towards MNREGA (Kumar and Haorei, 2010; Patel, 1995; Pushpa and Netaji, 1998 and Roy *et al.*, 2013). Attitude is complex attribute influence one's behaviors, inner mood and, therefore, participation which is important for success of scheme which is meant for people. Attitude depends heavily on different stimuli driven by many socio-economic and personal traits (Gulkari, 2011; Kyatanagoudar, 2011; Patel and Chauhan, 2004 and Ramjiyani, 2013). If focus can be done on this aspect, one can intensify the efforts towards successful implementation of MNREGA. Very fewer efforts have focused on this aspect of MNREGA study. So, present study focused on personal characteristics of beneficiaries including age, education, caste, attitude towards agriculture etc and its correlation with their attitude of towards MNREGA.

## **RESOURCES AND METHODS**

### **Study area and data collection :**

Present study was conducted in Chhotaudepur district comprises of six talukas out of which, two talukas *viz.*, Chhotaudepur and Kavant were selected for the study. From each selected taluka, five villages were selected randomly. From each selected village, 10 beneficiaries were randomly selected as respondents. Thus, all in all, 100 respondents *i.e.* beneficiaries were selected for the investigation. Ex-post facto research design is a systematic experimental inquiry in which the researcher does not have any direct control on independent variables. The independent variables were measured by using suitable scales and procedures adopted by various researchers with suitable modification, while for measuring the dependent variable, the scale was developed. Thus, structured interview schedule was prepared with suitable modifications. Data were collected by arranging personal interview with 100 MNREGA beneficiaries of two selected taluka during the month of November, 2014 contacted personally at their residence or at their work place in an informal way.

### **Analytical procedure:**

The data were classified, tabulated and analyzed for interpretation. Descriptive statistics, using frequencies

and percentages were used to describe socio-personal characteristics of respondents. This was done in order to relate (appropriately) the inference that may arise from the study. Also, co-efficient of correlation was calculated to find out the relationship between each of the independent variables and dependent variable. The correlation co-efficient gives two kinds of information (i) indication of the magnitude of the relationship and (ii) information about the direction of the relationship (whether positive or negative).

## **OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS**

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads.

### **Socio-economic characteristics :**

Socio-economic characteristics were analyzed in study revealed that more than half (56.00%) of the respondents belonged to the middle age group, slightly less than two fifth (38.00%) were illiterate while nearly half (46.00%) of them belonged to schedule caste. Considering family background, three fourth (75%) of beneficiaries belonged to large sized family and more than three fourth (77.00%) belonged to joint type of family.

More than two third (69.00%) of the respondents were landless, 37 per cent of them had annual income 48001 to 60000 thousand and early half (49.00 %) of them dependent on MNREGA alone or MNREGA and labour for their livelihood. More than half (51.00%) of beneficiaries had moderately favourable attitude towards agricultural as an occupation while majority (46.00%) of respondents had medium economic motivation. Table 1 also indicates that less than half (46%) of respondents belonged to medium category of migration which fell to low category migration by 79.00 per cent beneficiaries.

### **Correlates of attitude of beneficiaries towards MNREGA:**

Selected independent variables were taken to measure their correlation with attitude of beneficiaries towards MNREGA using correlation co-efficient. Result showed in Table 2 that age, education, size of family and type of family had no significant influences on attitude of beneficiaries towards MNREGA. This is because irrespective of age, education, size of family and type of family beneficiaries must have realized the significance of MNREGA as major resort for their livelihood. Caste

**Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of selected MNREGA beneficiaries**

Sr. No.	Independent variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<b>Age</b>		
	Young age group (upto 35 years)	34	34.00
	Middle age group (36 to 50 years)	56	56.00
	Old age group (above 50 years)	10	10.00
2.	<b>Education</b>		
	Illiterate	38	38.00
	Primary School (upto 7 <sup>th</sup> std)	20	20.00
	Secondary School (8 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup> std)	27	27.00
	Higher Secondary School (11 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> std)	15	15.00
	Graduate and above	00	00.00
3.	<b>Caste</b>		
	Schedule tribe	43	43.00
	Schedule caste	46	46.00
	Other backward caste	11	11.00
	General	00	00.00
4.	<b>Size of family</b>		
	Small size of family (upto 4)	25	25.00
	Large size of family (above 4)	75	75.00
5.	<b>Type of family</b>		
	Joint type	77	77.00
	Nuclear type	23	23.00
6.	<b>Social participation</b>		
	No membership	24	24.00
	Membership in organization	39	39.00
	Membership in organization in more than one organization	31	31.00
	Membership along with position holding	06	06.00
7.	<b>Size of land holding</b>		
	Landless	69	69.00
	Marginal (upto 1.00 ha)	24	24.00
	Small (1.1 ha to 2.00 ha)	07	07.00
8.	<b>Annual income</b>		
	Upto 48,000	12	12.00
	48,000 to 66,000	37	37.00
	66,001 to 84,000	19	19.00
	84,001 to 1,02,000	30	30.00
	Above 1,02,000	02	02.00
9.	<b>Occupation</b>		
	MNREGA	24	24.00
	MNREGA+ labour	25	25.00
	MNREGA + Agricultural labour + animal husbandry	20	20.00
	MNREGA + farming + animal husbandry + other	31	31.00

Table 1 : Contd.....

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10.	<b>Attitude of beneficiaries towards agricultural occupation</b>		
	Least favourable (12 to 21)	12	12.00
	Less favourable (22 to 31)	27	27.00
	Moderately favourable (32 to 41)	51	51.00
	More favourable (42 to 51)	06	06.00
	Most favourable (52 to 60)	04	04.00
11.	<b>Economic motivation</b>		
	Very low (6 to 10)	09	09.00
	Low (11 to 15)	25	25.00
	Medium (16 to 20)	46	46.00
	High (21 to 25)	20	20.00
	Very high (26 to 30)	00	00.00
12.	<b>Migration habit</b>		
	<b>Before MNREGA</b>		
	Low migration (upto 2 score)	31	31.00
	Medium migration (3 to 4 score)	46	46.00
	High migration (5 to 6 score)	23	23.00
	<b>After MNREGA</b>		
	Low migration (upto 2 score)	79	79.00
	Medium migration (3 to 4 score)	21	21.00
	High migration (5 to 6 score)	00	00.00

**Table 2: Relationship between profile of beneficiaries and their attitude towards MNREGA**

Sr. No.	Independent variables	Correlation co-efficient ('r' value)
1.	Age	0.0115
2.	Education	0.0978
3.	Caste	0.2539**
4.	Size of family	0.0377
5.	Types of family	0.0405
6.	Social participation	0.1659*
7.	Land holding	-0.2000*
8.	Annual income	0.2217**
9.	Occupation	0.3490**
10.	Migration habit	-0.01770
11.	Attitude towards agriculture as occupation	0.3835**
12.	Economic motivation	0.2431**

\* and \*\* indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively

was positive and highly significantly associated in forming attitude might be resulted from difference in migration habit among caste who were bit less satisfied with MNREGA. It is indicated that social participation is positive and significantly correlated with attitude of beneficiaries. Because of high social participation, interaction, experience sharing and exchange of ideas and information with others might have increased which would have helped in cultivating more favourable attitude among them.

Furthermore, land holding had negative and significant correlation with the attitude of beneficiaries towards MNREGA. Majority of the beneficiaries were land less and for them MNREGA was either the sole source or the major source of livelihood. Hence, attitude towards MNREGA would have been comparatively more favorable among them. It was also found out that annual income and occupation was positive and highly significantly associated in shaping favorable attitude towards MNREGA. The significant association between occupation and annual income with attitude might be due to the fact that with increasing engagement of beneficiaries in other occupations along with MNREGA, rise in annual income would in turn improve economic condition and thereby their attitude towards MNREGA would also have been improved. Migration habit had negative and non-significant correlation with attitude towards MNREGA is indicative of fact that those who had to migrate less to urban area in search of employment had rather more favourable attitude towards MNREGA. Attitude towards agriculture occupation had positive and highly significant correlation with attitude towards MNREGA. There was a positive and highly significant relationship between economic motivation and attitude of beneficiaries towards MNREGA and predicted reason behind this might be that MNREGA was major/ one of the major sources of livelihood and hence, the beneficiaries who had higher economic motivation were more inclined to maximize the income from daily wage; this would have made them take more and more interest in MNREGA and thus they would have developed more favorable attitude towards MNREGA. Similar work related to the present investigation was also carried out by Dhakane *et al.* (2014); Bishnoi and Rampal (2015); Singh *et al.* (2013); Randhawa (2013) and Tiwari, and Upadhyay (2013).

### Conclusion :

It is concluded that majority of the beneficiaries

were from middle age group, were illiterate or had upto secondary level of education, had large and joint type of family and were from SC and ST category. Majority of them had membership in one or more than one social organization, 48,001 to 1,02,000 of annual income and were landless or had marginal size of land holding. Significant reduction in migration habit was observed after implementation of MNREGA. Beneficiaries had moderately favourable to less favourable attitude towards agriculture as occupation and had medium to low economic motivation. Out of twelve independent variables, seven variables *viz.*, caste, social participation, land holding, annual income, occupation, attitude towards agriculture as occupation and economic motivation showed significant influence on their attitude towards MNREGA, where age, education, size of family, types of family and migration habit failed to show any significant influenced on their attitude towards MNREGA.

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