

Periodic Research

A Sociological Study of Empowerment of Women through MGNREGS: with Special Reference to Akola Block of Agra District

Abstract

India is the biggest democracy of the world with more than 122 billion population, 70% of its population lives in villages. Almost 48% of the rural population is of women. Since centuries women in rural India are treated as secondary, marginalized and subordinate to men. They are dependent on their male counterparts for most of their social, economic and political needs. They are denied form social, economic and political rights. It is the biggest challenge for a democratic socialistic society in post-modern era. Therefore, for the development & empowerment of women, our governments have enacted a number of acts, scheme, policies and programmes. MGNREGS is one the the most important schemes for the development and empowerment of rural women. According to this employment scheme 33% participation will be of women and it is expected that this participation of women will be upto 40%. But the findings are not satisfactory. In some districts of Uttar Pradesh it is 5-20%. In Akola block of Agra district, the participation of women in MGNREGS is 26.29% but the active participation of women falls upto 15%. Though, this scheme could not create expected results regarding women empowerment, yet the women who are actively participating in this scheme are benefitted and being empowered. They are using their earnings for the betterment of their family conditions, spending it on the education, other needs of the children and to fulfil their personal needs. Through the power which is achieved by their personal earnings under the said scheme, they are participating in decision making process of family but outside family they are denied in decision making process such as in MGNREGS decision making they are discriminated by the Panchayat functionaries.

Keywords: MGNREGS, Women Empowerment, Inclusion, Information, Integration, Economic Empowerment, Social Empowerment, Political Empowerment, Legal Empowerment, Interpersonal Empowerment, Psychological Empowerment.

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) now MGNREGS is one of the most ambitious programme of the U. P. A. 1 Government. Including augmenting wage employment & poverty eradication, the empowerment of women is also an objective of this scheme. Since centuries, women have been neglected in socio-economic, political and cultural spheres of society. After independence the Government of India has taken a number of measures for the advancement and empowerment of our women. In these measures MGNREGS is one of the important scheme. This scheme has a number of objectives such as employment generation, poverty eradication and rural development. Though, 100 days employment guarantee to rural poor families is most important objective of this scheme yet women empowerment is also an important objective. But several studies and reports of the government departments and other organizations show a worried picture of the MGNREGS. Women are not included in decision making, funds allocation, use of materials and distribution of job cards. Their participation in MGNREGS in some regions of the country is very low, for example in some districts of western Uttar Pradesh it is less than 5 percentage of total work force. For this low participation, a number of socio-economic and cultural

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factors including political and administrative factors are responsible. Therefore, the description of empowerment of women through MGNREGS is required very seriously.

Importance of Study

India is the biggest democracy of the world with more than 122 billion of population. Women roughly constitute half of its population. Democracy is based on certain principles such as the principle of equality, liberty, fraternity and justice. But the principles of equality, liberty and justice are not practiced in some regions of Indian society. Some sections of India's population are neglected and discriminated. Even today, women in some areas of rural India are considered as secondary. Our government and civil societies are working to eliminate all the discriminations against women folk through various planning, policies and schemes. MGNREGS is one of them. Empowerment of rural poor women is one of the most important objectives of MGNREGS but there are several socio-cultural, administrative and political barriers in the empowerment of women. Because of these barriers they are discriminated in MGNREGS also. Therefore, it is needed to study the empowerment of rural women through MGNREGS whether they are getting empowerment or not. If not, what are the barriers of their empowerment? How they are treated at work place etc?

Review of Literature

Malik (2012) in his research paper depicts that MGNREGA is one of the most progressive legislation enacted since independence. It makes special provisions for women's empowerment. In the financial year 2010-11 women availed more than 50 percent of employment created under MNREGS. In Uttar Pradesh the women's participation was 22-23 percent. Nevertheless the Act provides many opportunities to rural women.

Rajasekhar, Davendrababu and Mangala (2012) concluded that MGNREGS funds have been embezzled because of the capture of the programme by rural elites with political backing and official support, lack of voice from below, and the absence of civil society agencies backing the rural poor.

Gaiha and Imai (2005) in their research analyzed the experiences of previous employment schemes in India and the MGNREGA. They concluded that the MGNREGS has a positive impact on rural wages including women.

Khosla (2011) attempts to measure the effect of caste-reservation policies on the provision on public goods and services in Gram Panchayats in Andhra Pradesh by using data from National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The findings of the paper have unambiguously shown that the functioning of Panchayat Raj institutions is highly context dependent and the NREGS in Andhra Pradesh is insulted from politics because of the stalemate between political parties and caste alliances.

Khera and Nayak (2009) in a survey based work of six north Indian states of 98 worksites. 32% of sample workers were women. The study shows the major barriers to Women's participation is as follows in many areas tenacious social norms against women

working outside the home, continued illegal presence of contractors is the significant negative factor affecting the availability of work and its benefits for women. Besides this, the conditions of work at worksites run by contractors tend to be more exploitative.

Narayanan and Lokhande (2013) in a study focus on the Key issues of failure in governance, which is shifting the effectiveness of the programme. The study analyzed both primary and secondary data while investigating of three development blocks in Maharashtra to understand the reasons for deteriorating performance. The study is done at three different levels- the state level, the blocks level and the Gram Panchayat level.

Pankaj and Tankha (2010) in empirical based primary survey observed that women workers have gained from the scheme primarily because of the paid employment opportunity, and benefits have been realized through intra-household effects, and the enhancement of choice of capability.

Rajasekhar, Lakha and Manjula (2013) in a case study of five Gram Panchayats of Chitradurga district of Karnataka. The main objective of the study was to provide suggestions for the improvement in the design and implementation of social audits. The study shows that the poor and socially marginalized groups such as women have lack control over resources. In practice they do not make decisions about allocation of funds, use of materials and distribution of job cards. Ranaware, Das, Kulkarni & Narayanan (2015) in a survey based study of 4,881 beneficiaries out of them 15% were women under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Maharashtra. It was find out in the study that MNREGA promoted overall activities in villages by providing access to markets, schools, and health services and reduced the cost of human capital investment. The study also showed that this Act in Maharashtra is benefiting small and marginal farmers including women. Toilets constructed under this Act generated very positive responses. Now women had safer access to sanitation, and that village had become cleaner with a reduction of open defecation.

Singh & Singh (2013) in their study based on secondary sources of data show that during the five financial years, the women's participation in the scheme is highest in 2009-10 as evidenced by 48.54% and lowest of 34.71% is observed in 2012-13 while the overall participation rate is 40.84%. In national context this participation may be treated to be not good.

Empowerment

The term empowerment is a multidimensional concept. The core elements of empowerment have been defined as ability (the ability to define one's goals and act upon them), awareness of gendered power structures, self-esteem, and self confidence (Kabeer 2001). It can be measured in different angles. There are six indicators of women's empowerment (Paul 2012)- economic, social, political, legal, interpersonal and psychological. According to the United Nations (2001) women empowerment is the processes by which women take control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their

choice. World Bank (2001) defines empowerment as the expansion of freedom of choice and actions and increasing one's authority and control over the resources and decisions that affects ones life. For Kabeer empowerment is '... the process by which those who has been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability (Malhotra: 2004). Empowerment is a multi dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important (Page and Czuba 1999). Four 'Is' are also important in the empowerment- inclusion, information, influence and integration (Vij 2011).

There are six indicators of women's empowerment. Economic empowerment is a control over assess to employment, control over assets, relative economic contribution to family, family's support, asses to credit and markets. Social empowerment: freedom of movement, non-discrimination against daughters, commitment to educating children, women's visibility in and access to social spaces, participation in extra-familial groups, social networks. Political empowerment: knowledge of political system, domestic support for participation in political activities, exercising the right to vote, women's involvement in local system. Legal empowerment: Knowledge of legal rights, domestic support for exercising rights, community mobilization for rights, campaign for right awareness and effective local enforcement of legal rights. Interpersonal empowerment: participation in domestic decision making, ability to make child-bearing decisions, control over spouse selection and marriage timing, freedom form domestic violence, shift for marriage. Psychological empowerment: self esteem & self efficiency, feeling of psychological well being, sense of modernization, sense of inclusion and entitlement.

MGNREGA

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislation enacted in India, since independence. It's a bold and unique experiment in the provision of rural employment in India and indeed in the world at large. Further, it is the first expression of the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement. In a country where labour is the only economic asset for millions of people, gainful employment is a prerequisite for the fulfillment of other basic rights – the right to life, the right to food, and the right to education etc. There is much that the NREGA promises from the perspective of women's empowerment as well. Most boldly, in a rural milieu marked by stark inequalities between men and women – in the opportunities for gainful employment afforded as well as wage rates – NREGA represents action on both these counts.

The act stipulates that wages will be equal for men and women. It is also committed to ensuring that at least 33% of the workers shall be women and there are expectations that 40 percentage of the employment would go to women. By generating employment for women at fair wages in the village, NREGA can play a substantial role in empowering

women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-esteem. In the initial stage, this scheme was being implemented in 150 most backward districts of the country. This was later scaled up to 600 districts. The scheme offers a guarantee of 100 days of paid employment at the level of minimum wages of the states. It also promises to provide at least 100 days work to poor rural households whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. According to this scheme, one member of a below poverty line (BPL) family would be offered a job. This member may be male or female.

This raises the bargaining power of rural workers through higher reservation wages and getting more organized. There are reasons to believe that the implementation of the scheme pushes up the rural wages. The scheme had raised the rural wages and this in turn it had an adverse effect on female labour supply. The wages for female labour from BPL families gone up, but the number of persons working did not increase. What is of greater concern is that as the number of earning members of the family goes up, the women might withdraw from labour force? There may therefore be difficulties in attaining the target of 33% job opportunities going to women. One may argue that whether or not women work, the scheme would help in the betterment of the economic conditions of the rural BPL households. But, there are clear adverse effects of women withdrawing from work in terms of awareness and empowerment.

The answer to the problem highlighted above lies to some extent in the proper designing of the schemes implemented at the ground level, particularly the type of activities in which employment opportunities are offered. Careful thinking is needed in this regard to ensure that the adverse effect of the scheme on female employment as indicated above is fully taken care of.

By putting cash incomes into their hands, NREGS is beginning to create a greater degree of economic and social independence among women implying empowerment and financial inclusion. As mentioned, this was one of NREGA's main aim and with the increased participation of women in household income generation a positive contribution to gender relations can be made. Both qualitative and quantitative social impact assessments suggest that women workers are more confident about their roles as contributors to family expenditure and their work decisions, and that they are also becoming more assertive about their space in the public spheres. This is because employment is being provided within their village, generating community assets and enhancing their spending capacity. However, most of the social scientists felt that the Act is important if not it created an equal opportunity for them. Now MGNREGA is connected with National Rural Livelihood Mission. In this mission there is a provision for the expansion of Rs.4000 cror. 150 Districts are chosen in this mission, out of them 83 districts are nuxalite affected. In these districts women's self help group will be provided loan on concession. The government will afford the interest of the loan (Singh 2015). Now this scheme has connected with assistance of women's self help groups.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are as follows-

1. What is the socio-economic background of MGNREGS women workers?
2. What are the areas of expenditure of MGNREGS wages of women workers?
3. What is the role of MGNREGS in the empowerment?

Design of the Study

The researcher has adopted descriptive research design to describe the research problem 'A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH MGNREGS: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AKOLA BLOCK OF AGRA DISTRICT'.

Area of the Study

The area of the research is Akola Block of Agra district of Uttar Pradesh. There are 34 village Panchayats in Akola block. This block is dominated by the Jat caste followed by Jatavs, Brhmins and Rajputs (Lodhe).

Universe of the Study

The universe of the research is constituted from all the women workers working in MGNREGS of Akola Block of Agra District. According Block Development Office, 3601 women workers (26.29% of total MGNREGS workers) were registered under MGNREGS in Akola. Amongst them 1929 were active MGNREGS women workers.

Unit of the Study

The unit of the study is the woman working in MGNREGS of Akola Block of Agra District.

Sampling Method

After consideration of total number village Panchayats, 10 village Panchayats were selected through Purposive Sampling Method for the study. Amongst these 10 Panchayats, 3 are road sides, 3 are near to Agra city, 4 are interior and far from the city. 8 respondents were selected from each Panchayats through Lottery method of Random sampling.

Tool for Data Collection

For the collection of required information which was needed for research questions, interview-schedule was prepared. This interview-schedule was divided into two parts, first part was related with the questions of socio-economic and familial background of the MGNREGS workers and the second part was concerned with the questions of working hours, working conditions area of expenditure of wages, empowerment of women and the problems of their empowerment.

Data Collection

In the present study, both types of data have been used. Primary data were collected from the respondents (MGNREGS women workers) with structured interview-schedule. Primary data were collected from the respondents in the months of July to December 2014. Secondary data were collected from the different books, journals, news papers and other documents.

Findings of the Study/ Data Interpretation

The major findings of the study derived from the data collection through interview-schedule from the MGNREGS women workers are as follows:

Table- 1

General Information of Mgnregs Women Workers

Age of the MGNREGS workers				Education of the MGNREGS workers			
S. No.	Age	Frequency	%	S. No.	Education	Frequency	%
1	18-25	18	22.50	1	Illiterate	38	47.50
2	25-40	30	37.50	2	Literate	26	32.50
3	40-50	26	32.50	3	8 th Passed	15	18.75
4	50 and >	6	7.50	4	H.S. and >	1	1.25
5	Total	80	100.00	5	Total	80	100.00
Caste Category of the MGNREGS workers				Family Structure of the MGNREGS Workers			
S. No.	Caste Category	Frequency	%	S. No.	Family Type	Frequency	%
1	General	13	16.25	1	Joint Family	18	22.50
2	O.B.C.	28	35.00	2	Nuclear Family	62	77.50
3	S.C.	39	48.75	3	Extended Family	-	-
4	S.T. / Others	-	-	4	-	-	-
5	Total	80	100.00	5	Total	80	100.00

As the above table shows that more than one third of the MGNREGS working women (37.50%) are from the age group of 25-40 followed by 40 to 50 years of age and there percentage is 32.50. 22.50% are from the age group of 18-25 years and rest (7.75%) are from the age group of 50 and above years. If we observe the literacy of women workers, it is clear from the table that 47.50% MGNREGS women workers are illiterate and 32.00% are only literate, 18.75% are 8th passed and rest (1.25%) is

high school and above passed. It is clear from the table that slightly less than half (48.75%) of the respondents are from scheduled castes followed by O.B.Cs. their percentage is just 35, and rest (16.25%) are from the general caste category. If we talk about the family structure of the respondents, it is shown by the table that slightly more than three fourth (77.50%) of the respondents are living in nuclear family and rest (22.50%) in joint family.

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Table- 2
Health and Economic Status of MGNREGS Workers

Personal Earnings of the MGNREGS workers in Rupees (Annual)				Family Earnings of the MGNREGS workers from all sources including respondent in Rupees (monthly)					
S. No.	Earnings (in Rupees)	Frequency	%	S. No.	Earnings (in Rupees)	Frequency	%		
1	Upto 1000	-	-	1	Upto 2000	15	18.75		
2	1000-3000	14	17.50	2	2000-5000	27	33.75		
3	3000-5000	15	18.75	3	5000-8000	31	38.75		
4	5000-8000	38	47.50	4	8000-10000	15	18.75		
5	8000 & >	13	16.25	5	10000 & >	-	-		
6	Total	80	100.00	6	Total	80	100.00		
Family land holding of the MGNREGS workers (In acre)				Types of House of MGNREGS Working Women					
S. No	Family Lanholding	Frequency	%	S. No.	Types of House	Frequency	%		
1	Landless	58	72.50	1	Pakka House with toilets	-	-		
2	1 Acre or less	15	18.75	2	Pakka House without toilets	11	13.75		
3	1-2 Acre	4	5.00	3	Mixed House with toilets	3	3.75		
4	2-3 Acre	3	3.75	4	Mixed House with out toilets	45	56.25		
5	3 or more acres	-	-	5	Kachcha House with toilets	-	-		
6	Total	80	100.00	6	Kachcha House without toilets	21	26.25		
Facility Available at the Work Site						Working Hours of the MGNREGS Workers at Work Place			
S. No	Facility	Observed in %				S. No.	Working Hours in a Day	Frequency	%
		Yes		No					
		No.	%	No	%				
1	Drinking water	20	25	60	75	1	8 and < hours	24	30.00
2	Toilets	0	0	80	100	2	9 hours	49	61.25
3	Shed	19	23.75	61	76.25	3	10 hours	7	8.75
4	Transportation	8	10	72	90	4	11 or > hours	-	-
5	Look after of the children	12	15	68	85	5	-	-	-
6	First aid	15	18.75	65	81.25	6	-	-	-
7	Security required for women workers	8	10	7	8.25	7	Total	80	100

As table II shows the health and economic status of MGNREGS working women, 47.50 % of them said that their annual income form MGNREGS is Rs. 5000 to Rs. 8000, 18.75% have Rs. 3000 to Rs. 5000, 17.50% have Rs. 1000 to 3000 and rest 16.25% of the respondents have more than Rs. 8000 personal annual income. The total family earnings from all sources 38.75% respondents said that their family earnings from all sources is Rs. 5000 to Rs. 8000, 33.75% have Rs. 2000 to Rs. 5000, 18.75% have up to Rs. 2000 and the same percentage (18.75%) have Rs. 10000 or more family annual income from all sources. The family landholding of the respondents, slightly less than three fourth (72.50%) of the respondents are landless, 18.75% have one acre

or less, 5.00% have 1-2 acre and 3.75% have 2-3 acre family land holdings. The types of the houses in which the respondents live, 56.25% said that they live in mixed (Pukka and Kachcha) house without toilets, 26.25% Kachcha house without toilets, 13.75% Pakka house without toilets and rest (3.75%) mixed houses with toilets. If we discuss about the basic facilities available as workplace such as toilets, drinking water, look after of the children, first aid and shed and security which is required for them are not available. The working hours of the MGNREGS workers, 61.25% of the respondents said that they do work 9 hours in a day, 30.00% 8-9 hours and rest 8.75% said that they do work more than 10 hours in day at work place.

Table - 3
Empowerment of MGNREGS Women Workers

Payment to the MGNREGS Workers				To have proper information about wage, work site, and other information about MGNREGS			
S. No.	Duration of Payment	Frequency	%	S. No.	Having information	Frequency	%
1	Monthly	23	28.75	1	Full	0	0
2	Fortnightly	22	27.50	2	Partially	23	28.75
3	Weekly	10	12.50	3	Less	25	31.24
4	Daily	0	0	4	Very less	14	17.50

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5	Not Fixed	25	31.25	5	No information	18	22.50
6	Total	80	100	6	Total	80	100
Possession on the Earnings of MGNREGS Workers				Feeling of Economic Empowered after getting employment in MGNREGS			
S. No.	Possession on the Earnings	Frequency	%	S. No.	Feeling of empowerment	Frequency	%
1	Self	25	31.25	1	Full	4	5.00
2	Husband	29	36.25	2	Partially	12	15.00
3	Joint	16	20.00	3	Less	10	12.50
4	Not definite	10	12.25	4	Very less	13	16.25
5	Total	80	100	5	No / same as before	41	51.25
-	-	-	-	6	Total	80	100.00
Behaviour of the Panchayats functionaries towards the MGNREGS Workers				Participation in decision making of MGNREGS			
S. No.	Behaviour	Frequency	%	S. No.	Participation	Frequency	%
1	Very Good	9	11.25	1	Yes	5	6.25
2	Good	14	17.50	2	Partially	23	28.75
3	Average	44	55.00	3	No	36	45.00
4	Bad	11	13.75	4	Never	11	13.75
5	Very Bad	2	2.50	5	Can not say	5	6.25
6	Total	80	100	6	Total	80	100.00
Participation in decision making of process in Family *				Contribution to family economy in % *			
S. No.	Participation	Frequency	%	S. No.	Contribution	Frequency	%
1	In the education of children	24	30.00	1	In fulfilling daily needs	59	73.75
2	In the purchasing of goods	37	46.25	2	In children's education	24	30.00
3	In social relationships	21	26.25	3	In investing	10	12.50
4	Supporting to political party	4	5.00	4	In repairing of house	12	15.00
5	Purchasing and selling animals	29	36.25	5	In treatment of disease	21	26.25
-	-	-	-	6	Help to the relatives	15	18.75
Impact on the economic status of family				Impact on the social status of family			
So. No.	Impact	Frequency	%	So. No.	Impact	Frequency	%
1	Better than before	11	13.75	1	Better than before	10	12.50
2	Good than before	26	32.50	2	Good than before	23	28.75
3	Same as before	37	46.25	3	Same as before	40	50.00
4	Worse than before	5	6.25	4	Worse than before	6	7.75
5	Worsen than before	1	1.25	5	Worsen than before	1	1.25
Overall Empowerment of Women Workers through MGNREGS				Suggestions for Better Implementation of MGNREGS at Village Level *			
S. No.	Overall Empowerment	Frequency	%	S.No.	Suggestions	Frequency	%
1	Full Empowerment	10	12.50	1	Women should include in decision making	26	32.50
2	Partially Empowerment	14	17.50	2	Facilities should available at work place	41	51.25
3	Less Empowerment	13	16.25	3	Payment Should be in Time	44	55.00
4	Very Less Empowerment	15	18.75	4	Working Days should be Increased	37	46.25
5	Same as Before	28	35.00	5	Women should be Educated About MGNREGS	21	26.25
6	Total	80	100				

*included / multiple responses

As the table III shows the duration of payment of MGNREGS women workers, 28.75% of them are paid monthly, 27.50% fortnightly, 12.50% daily and 31.25% said that there is not fixed duration for the payment of MGNREGS. Whether the women workers have proper information about the

MGNREGS or not, 31.24% said that they have little information regarding workplace, wages and other issues, 28.74% have partial information, and 22.50% have very less information while 22.50% of the respondents said that they have no information regarding MGNREGS. Women who are working in

MGNREGS, 36.25% of them said that they give their MGNREGS income to their husband and 20.00% keep their income jointly with their husband. 38.75% of the respondents said that they spent their MGNREGS income on the needs of the children and selves and 33.75% responded that they spent their income on the education of the children. If we talk about the economic empowerment of women through MGNREGS, more than half of the respondents (51.25%) said that they have no empowerment or they felt same as before MGNREGS, 16.25% felt very less empowerment, 15.00% less empowerment and only 5.00% of the respondents felt full empowerment after getting employment through MGNREGS. The behaviour of Panchayati Raj functionaries towards women workers, 55.00% of the respondents said that their behaviour is average, 17.50% said good, 11.25% said very good and 2.50% of the respondents said that the behaviour of Panchayati Raj functionaries is very bad towards them. The participation in decision making regarding MGNREGS work, 45.00% of the respondents said that they have no participation, 28.75% have partial participation, 13.75% have never participation and only 6.25% of them had actively participation in the decision making process of MGNREGS at village level. Regarding participation in decision making process in family, 46.25% of the respondents said that they do have participated in decision making of purchasing of goods, 30.00% participated in education of children, 26.25% in social relationships, 36.25% in purchasing and selling of domestic animals and only 5.00% of the respondents said that they took part in decision making process of family in supporting political parties and candidates at the time of elections.

If we discuss about the contribution in family economy, 73.75% of the respondents said that they do have contributed in fulfilling daily need of the family, 30.00% in children's education, 12.50% in investments and 15.00% in repairing of house, 18.75% helped to relatives and 26.26% of the respondents said that they have contributed in treatment of diseases. In term of impact on economic status of the family, 46.25% of the respondents said that the economic status of their family is same as before while 32.50% said that their economic status has been good because of MGNREGS, 13.75% better than before, 6.25% worse than before and 1.25% of the respondents said that their family economic status has been worsen than before. If we talk about the social status of family, 50.00% of the respondents said that their social status is same as before, 28.75% said that it is good than before, 12.50% better than before, 7.75% wore than before and only 1.25% of the respondents said that social status of their family has been worsen than before.

The overall empowerment of women through MGNREGS 12.50% of the them said that they have felt full empowerment through employment in MGNREGS, 17.50% said that they have partial empowerment, 16.25% less empowerment, 18.75% very less empowerment and 35.00% of the respondents said that they have no empowerment through MGNREGS. Suggestions for better implementation of MGNREGS 32.50% said that

women should be included in decision making of the work, 51.25% said that basic facilities should be available at work place, 55.00% payment should be in time, 46.25% working days should be increased, and 26.50% said that women should be educated about MGNREGS.

Summary and Conclusion

It is observed from the study that the women working in MGNREGS are young, and either illiterate or only just literate. It shows a worried picture of women education in rural India. Most of the women workers are either S.Cs. or O.B.Cs. lived in nuclear family.

The annual income of MGNREGS women is Rs. 5000-8000; they are using their income on fulfilling the daily needs of family, children's, education and investment. More than half of the respondents' family monthly income is Rs. 8000; they are landless and are living in mixed (Pukka and Kachcha house) house without toilets. Only 3.75% of them have toilets in their house. It is the most worried picture of rural India regarding women's health, honour and security. Most of the MGNREGS women are working because of there is no other earner in their family or having only one earner in the family excluding them. Most of the workers work 9 hours a day and their working conditions are very poor and facilities available at workplace are a few. Most of workers have monthly and fortnightly payment and have less information about this scheme. The behaviour of Panchayats functionaries such as village Pradhan, work supervisor and secretary towards working women is satisfactory but these women do not play their role in decision making process of MGNREGS at village level. They are totally denied in the decision making process of work, audit etc. but they have role in family decision making in the education of children, purchasing of goods and animals etc. The social and economic status of the family of working women is either same as before or is better than before after participating in MGNREGS but the overall empowerment of women through MGNREGS is the biggest achievement of this scheme. This empowerment is little but it a good beginning in Indian society where women are considered as second sex since centuries. Some of the respondents said that their family economic condition and social status has worse or Worsen because of MGNREGS. The cause of this worse or worseness is not MGNREGS, but their husbands have withdrawn from the work or are drunker. It is not the Side effect of MGNREGS. Social and economic condition of the family decreased but their overall empowerment has grown up. For the successful implementation of this scheme, women workers did suggest that the women should be included in decision making process. The facilities such as drinking water, medical facility and sheds and look after of the children should be available at the work place. No worker was found who completed her 100 days work because of different causes. There was the problem for delayed payment; some of the workers got their payment after 60 days after completion of the work. Most of the works were running late.

Field Experience

Village Panchayats Pradhans, work supervisors & village secretary were suspicious towards the researcher. Some of them did try to interfere in the questioning answering with women workers. Some family members such as husband and other relatives also did interfere in the questioning and answering with the respondents. Most of the respondents (women workers) were taking help from their in-laws or Panchayat functionaries in the answering of the questions. There were some work sights, where actual work was not going on; photography was major concern for the Panchayats functionaries. There was a lack of medical, drinking water, and transportation facilities in emergency at the work sights. Women's issues were totally neglected at work sights such as toilets for women, shelter from the Sun and rain and caring for the children was not available at the workplace. Indications and symbols of women empowerment were not appearing at the work places. The researcher did observe that some the women workers are not getting their full payment. Discrimination was being made with the women workers in terms of work, payment, facilities etc.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher did his best efforts in completion of the research yet following may be the limitations of the study-

1. In the given study the data were collected from a particular block of Agra District, i.e., from a small geographical area.
2. The universe of the study was small.
3. Sample size was also small.
4. Data were collected in a short duration of time; it was last 6 months of 2014.
5. SPSS and other statistical calculation did not use in calculation and interpretation of data.
6. Limited variable were used in the study.

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