

Knowledge and attitude level of the MGNREGA respondents in Nalanda district of Bihar

ABSTRACT: Population wise Bihar is third populated state in India. In the state more than 85% of population stays in rural area and the state is the least urbanized state of the country and have a low source of income which leads to increase in poverty. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (or, NREGA, later renamed as the “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act”, MGNREGA), is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the ‘right to work’. The present study aims to analyse the knowledge and attitude level of MGNREGA respondents. The study was conducted in Nalanda district of Bihar which was selected purposively as the MGNREGA scheme is currently running in the district. Hilsa block was selected by purposive sampling for the study as the block has the largest number of MGNREGA beneficiaries. Total six villages were selected for the study by purposively considering the fact that these villages have greater number of MGNREGA beneficiaries. A total of 120 respondents were taken randomly. The data were collected by pre- structured interview schedule and appropriate statistical analysis was done to find out the meaningful results. The finding of the study reveals that the majority (47.50 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of knowledge about MGNREGA scheme followed by 32.50 per cent and 20 per cent of the respondents having high and low level of knowledge, respectively. It also reveals that 40 per cent of the respondents had medium level of attitude of MGNREGA scheme followed by 33.33 per cent and 26.67 per cent of the respondents having high and low level of attitude.

Keywords: MGNREGA scheme, Knowledge, Attitude, Respondents

1. Introduction

According to the 2021 census report, India crossed the one billion population mark and now stands at 1.39 billion. It is however said that even after 70 years of Independence the world's largest number of poor reside in India. India is home to almost 1/3rd of the world's population and it is estimated that 28 per cent of the total population of the country live Below Poverty Line (BPL) of which 75 per cent are said to be in the rural areas. This is a matter of serious concern. In view of this fact poverty eradication has been one of the major objectives of the development planning process (Census 2021).

Poverty and unemployment are the twin problem faced by the developing countries. According to the planning commission of India nearly 29.8% population is Below Poverty Line (BPL). Policy makers in India have realized the need for generating employment opportunities on large scale to bring the teeming millions of populations Above Poverty Line (APL). While the labour force in India is increasing in numbers at every year. Majority of population (72.22 per cent) live in rural areas and many of them suffer owing to seasonal unemployment, under employment and disguised unemployment. (Planning Commission).

Bihar is among the big states in India. Population wise it is third populated state in India. In the state more than 85% of population stays in rural area and the state is the least urbanized state of the country. The state is primarily a rural economy and 75% of main workers depend on agriculture for their livelihoods (Banerjee 2009). The state has 41.4 per cent BPL population. Almost 43 per cent of the total households are landless and another 39 per cent has less than 2.5 acre of land. Land distribution is highly skewed with almost 66 per cent of house hold owning only 20% of the total cultivable land. This percentage is gradually increasing as land is getting divided among the households. A survey conducted in 2005 reveals that while landless or those owning less than an acre of land increased from 67 per cent to 73 per cent, were as those owning more than 5 acres has also declined from 13 to 5.5 per cent (Sharma 2005).

In absolute terms but rate has reduced in recent years. Bihar is among the states which has highest migration. Lack of opportunity is the fundamental reason for the migration in Bihar. Migration in Bihar cannot be understood by the prevailing factors like periodic floods and drought, law and order or caste operation. Migration in Bihar is considered as structural. In spite of having higher economic growth rate in recent years due to continued increase in population and the backlog of unemployed among people in the state migration has increased however the rate of migration has slowed down (DLR 2009).

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was notified on 7th September 2005 and came into force on 2nd February 2006. The aim of the NREGA was to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The NREGA is a national law funded largely by the Central Government and implemented in all states of the country, creating a justifiable 'right to work' platform for all households in rural India. As per the law, employment is to be provided by local government when work is demanded by any worker or group of workers registered under the NREGA. It has now been renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)

on 2nd October, 2009. The scheme also provides protection to all those involved in social auditing. State Governments on their part should ensure that the scheme runs properly and transparently so that it fully benefits the rural poor. NREGA has reduced rural -urban migration, improved food security, generated employment with dignity, brought about the economic empowerment of women, created sustainable community assets and raised the standard of living of beneficiaries.

Many scientist

The MGNREGA act has laudable objectives of providing a work-guarantee to the poor rural households on one hand and creating quality asset, strengthening rural resource base, ensuring social inclusion, and strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions on the other. However, questions have been raised about the timing and purpose of the act, its design and structure, about the logic of state intervention in labour market in an era of liberalization, likely impacts of the programme on individual life of the rural people after working under MGNREGA, how their lives and income has changed.

Many scientists like (Hirway 2006) revealed in his study that MGNREGA is an employment guarantee program (EGP). (Papola 2005) revealed that the motive of MGNREGA act is to provide employment to those who are willing and demand for it. Studies conducted by (Sharma 2007), (Mohan 2008) and (Bela Bhatia and Jean Dreze 2006) suggests that lack of awareness of people of the program, lack of job cards to the beneficiaries, lack of proper planning at the implementation level and too much paper work in finalization and completion of the scheme.

Objectives of the present Study

1. To ascertain the knowledge regarding MGNREGA scheme.
2. To assess the attitude of beneficiaries towards MGNREGA scheme

2. Research Methodology

Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the present study. Ex post facto study or after-the-fact research is a category of research design in which the investigation starts after the fact has occurred without interference from the researcher. The majority of social research, in contexts in which it is not possible or acceptable to manipulate the characteristics of human participants, is based on ex post facto research designs. The present study was conducted in Nalanda district of Bihar. Out of 20 blocks in Nalanda district, Hilsa block was selected by purposive sampling for the present study based on the assumption that the block has the largest number of peoples are working under MGNREGA in this block. From the selected block, six villages were selected purposively considering the fact that these villages have a greater number of MGNREGA beneficiaries. A total number of 120 respondents were selected randomly from the 6 villages of the selected block.

The information was elicited from the respondents with the help of structured interview schedule, pen, paper and camera was also used during data collection. The primary data was collected with the help of face-to-face interview techniques with the help of interview schedule with especially objectives for the study. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, research papers and other materials related to study. The entire data further transformed into score for tabulation and subjected to appropriate statistical methods like Arithmetic Mean, standard deviation, Percentage analysis and correlation co-efficient.

3. Result and Discussion

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their overall knowledge level

Sr. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (18-32)	24	20.00
2.	Medium (33-46)	57	47.50
3.	High (47-60)	39	32.50
	Total	120	100

The data presented in the table 1 revealed that the majority 47.50 per cent of the MGNREGA beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge on MGNREGA scheme, 20.00 per cent of the MGNREGA beneficiaries were having low level of knowledge on MGNREGA scheme and 32.50 per cent of the MGNREGA beneficiaries were having high level of knowledge on MGNREGA scheme respectively.

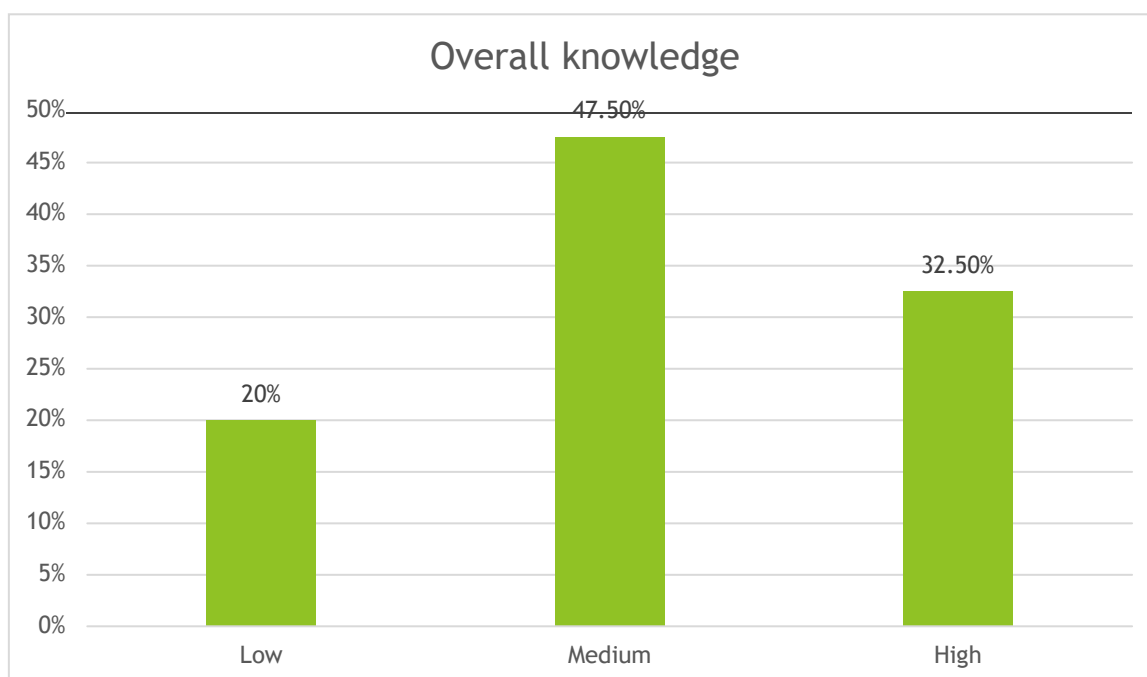


Fig. 1. Distribution of respondents based on their overall knowledge regarding MGNREGA scheme

The probable reason for majority of the MGNREGA respondents belongs to medium level of knowledge regarding MGNREGA scheme might be due to fact that the respondents might have been exposed to different communication channels of information sources. The above findings are in the accordance with the findings of **Mohanty (2012) and Sinha (2014)**.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to their overall attitude level

Sr. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (19-27)	32	26.67
2.	Medium (28-35)	48	40.00
3.	High (36-43)	40	33.33
	Total	120	100.00

From the 2 it is clearly visible that 40.00 per cent of the respondents had medium level of attitude, 33.33 per cent of the respondents had high level of attitude and 26.66 per cent of the respondents had low level of attitude respectively.

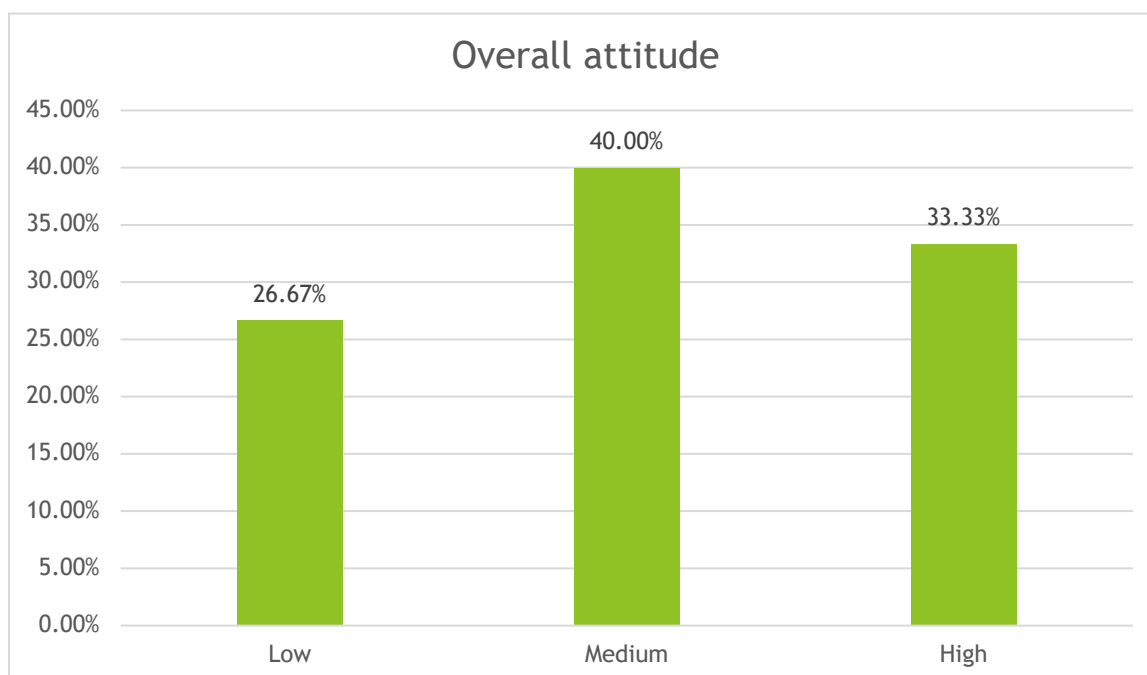


Fig. 2. Distribution of respondents based on their overall attitude towards MGNREGA scheme

The medium level of attitude of majority of respondents towards MGNREGA scheme might be due to fact that the respondents had medium to low level of knowledge, low to medium level of sources of information, medium social participation and medium to low extension contacts, that's why they are showing medium level of attitude. This finding was supported by finding of **Argade (2010) and Bhuvana (2012)**.

Table 3. Relationship between profile with Knowledge level of the MGNREGA respondents

Sr. No	Characteristics	Coefficient of correlation (r)
01.	Age	0.41945*
02.	Education	0.14287*
03.	Caste	-0.14886*
04.	Land holding	- 0.27627*
05.	Occupation	0.27125*
06.	Annual Income	3.70647*
07.	Size of family	0.68643*
08.	Sources of information	0.20187*
09.	Social Participation	0.58564*
10.	Extension contacts	0.50271*

* Significant

From table 3. it is interpreted that socio-economic characteristics like age, education, occupation, annual income, size of family, sources of information, social participation and extension contacts had positive and significant relationship with the knowledge level of the respondents. Meanwhile, caste and land holding had negative and significant relationship with the knowledge level of the respondents.

Table 4. Relationship between profile with attitude level of the MGNREGA respondents

Sr. No	Characteristics	Coefficient of correlation (r)
1.	Age	0.36950*
2.	Education	0.090816 ^{NS}
3.	Caste	-0.68242*
4.	Land Holding	-0.69359*
5.	Occupation	0.22047*
6.	Annual income	-0.32757*
7.	Size of family	0.64752*
8.	Sources of information	0.15028*
9.	Social Participation	0.54246*
10.	Extension contacts	0.45681*

NS- Non significant * Significant

From the table 4 it is interpreted that socio-economic characteristics like age, occupation, size of family, sources of information, social participation and extension contacts had positive and significant relation with the attitude level of the respondents. Whereas, caste, land holding and annual income had negative and significant relation with the attitude level of the respondent. Meanwhile, education had non-significant association with the attitude level of the respondents.

4. Conclusion

It is concluded that majority of the respondents had medium level of overall knowledge and overall attitude regarding MGNREGA scheme. Socio-economic characteristics like age, education, occupation, annual income, size of family, sources of information, social participation and extension contacts had positively and significantly related with the knowledge level of the respondents. Whereas, caste and land holding had negative and significant association with the knowledge level of the respondents.

Age, occupation, size of family, sources of information, social participation and extension contacts had positively and significantly related with the attitude level of the respondents. Meanwhile, caste, land holding and annual income had negatively and significantly related with the attitude level of the respondent. Whereas, education had non-significant association with the attitude level of the respondents. For the better successful implementation of MGNREGA scheme detail information should be given regarding the job under the act. Primary necessities such as drinking water, first aid, medical facilities etc should be provided timely and adequately at work place. Number of working days should be increased.

Consent

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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