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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH MGNREGS : A CASE STUDY OF LALGOLA BLOCK, MURSHIDABAD.

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ABSTRACT:

MGNREGS is an important step by the Indian government through which rural development will be possible through the rural poverty Alleviation Program. The MGNREGA has completed 11 years of implementation in Lalgola Block under Murshidabad district, near indo-Bangladesh border. This Scheme has been universalized and is operational in all the 12 Gram Panchayats of the Lalgola Block. The Act aims at eradication of extreme poverty of marginalized people and making villages as self-dependence and try to increase women participation in employment through productive asset

creation and capacity building of People. In my research study, I discussed socio-economic profile of women of four sample Gram Panchayat. Various problem has been discovered in this research and several ways have been recommended to fix it. In my research study I discussed impact of MGNREGS of women development based on decision making at HH level, awareness about MGNREGS, and women workers who took their own decision to work under MGNREGS etc. Finally based on the information received from the field survey, it is discussed on women empowerment through MGNREGS.

KEYWORDS: MGNREGS, empowerment, women workers, employment, development, respondent. Etc.

INTRODUCTION

MGNREGS is an important step by the Indian government through which rural development will be possible through the rural Poverty Alleviation Program. The Lalgola Block adopted and implemented MGNREGA from 2nd February, 2006. Lalgola community block consists of twelve gram panchayats. In my research study, I discussed socio-economic profile of women of

four sample Gram Panchayat and I mentioned socio-economic and demographic status of sample Gram Panchayat. Various problems have been discovered in this research and several ways have been recommended to fix it.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- i. To understand the historical background of MGNREGA.
- ii. To analysis the actual scenario of MGNREGA project in Lalgola Blocks.
- iii. To evaluate the impact of MGNREGA on socio economic development of women in Lalgola Block.

- iv. To understand socio and economic status of women.
- v. To understand changing status of women wage seekers.
- vi. To analysis the facilitating factors of NREGA which encourage the women to participate in 100 days of employment and its effects on their personal life.
- vii. To study the impact of MGNREGA on standard of living of the rural people.
- viii. To know the extent of women participation.

METHODOLOGY :

The methodology used in this dissertation is explained in detail. Based on the report from different department of the government, census report 2011, journal and field survey. My research work is basically based on Analytical and Empirical examination in nature. The present study is intended to identify the impact of MGNREGA on socio- economic development of women in Lalgola block, Murshidabad district. For this purpose, I collected data from both the primary and secondary sources.

LOCATION OF THE STUDY AREA:

Lalgola is a community development block (India – Bangladesh border) of Murshidabad district which is purposively selected for finding out the outcomes of MGNREGA on the basis of certain criteria. It is situated 50 Kms from Berhampur Sadar of Murshidabad district. Its population is 3, 35,831 as per census report of 2011. There are 170997 (50.91%) males and female candidates are 164834 (49.08%). Total population of this block is considered as rural people. As I belong to the same district, thus it is possible for me to communicate and interact with people for collecting the data. I have good rapport with the field functionaries. Lalgola Block is composed with several gram panchayat: AirmariKrishnapur, Bahadurpur, Bilborakopara, Dewansarai, Jasaitala, Kalmegha, Lalgola, Maiya, Manickchak, Nashipur, Paikpara, Ramchandrapur.

Selection of panchayat: There are 12 panchayats in this block, out of 12 panchayats there are 4 panchayats are purposively selected for the above investigation on the basis of maximum activities undertaken under MGNREGA scheme.

Sampling Design:

I had visited these places and collected the list of beneficiaries from the panchayat office. It was randomly selected for the analysis. The total sample size is $4 \times 50 = 200$ respondents.

Age distribution of the respondents:

Age	Lalgola	Bahadurpur	Bilborakopara	Jasaitala	total
Below 25	7(14%)	7(14%)	2(4%)	4(8%)	20 (10%)
26-36	36(72%)	11(22%)	20(40%)	22(44%)	89(44.5%)
37-47	5(10%)	23(46%)	14(28%)	18(36%)	60(30%)
48-58	2(4%)	6(12%)	10(20%)	5(10%)	23(11.5%)
59 above	00	3(6%)	4(8%)	1(2%)	8(4%)
Total	50	50	50	50	200(100%)

Source: field survey

Among the four GPs maximum number of active participants are coming from the age group of 26-36 followed by the second highest of 37-47 as active participation. 72% of participation from former age group had been found during survey in Lal GP, later did it by 46% in Bah GP. respondents above 59 years are found at lowest number in participation. 8% of participation marked highest from this age group which is rated in Bil GP.

Education of the respondents:

Education	Lalgola	Bahadurpur	Bilborakopara	Jasaitala
Primary	27(54%)	14(28%)	17(34%)	16(32%)
Secondary	14(28%)	14(28%)	9(18%)	13
Higher secondary	4(8%)	7(14%)	1(2%)	2(4%)
Graduation and higher education	01(2)	00	00	00
Illiterate	4(8%)	15(30%)	23(46%)	19(38%)
Literate	92%	70%	54%	62%

Source: field survey

That programme mainly has been made to support the poor and backward families. Most of the participants have primary education in terms of educational qualification and it could be counted as highest degree amid them, whereas graduation degree is hardly seen in this frame.

Marital status:

Marital status	Lalgola	Bahadurpur	Bilborakopara	Jasaitala
Married	46	48	48	49
Unmarried	4	1	00	00
Widow	00	1	2	1
Total	50	50	50	50

Mainly married people showed up in participation to be counted. Average percentage varied between 46 - 48 in most of the GPs.

Women persondays year wise:

GP	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Lal	24.5	30.29%	34.12
Bah	37.56%	45.4%	21.36%
Bil	17.46%	17.77%	16.8%
Jas	30.14%	29.73	48.77%

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

A year wise survey from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 has been recorded to scale the successful implementation of women engagement in four GPs. Maximum growth has been attained in Lal GP. A consecutive increment of growth is sought every year in Lal GP, whereas other GPs arrest a result of ups and downs in their growth scale. In the year of 13-14 Bah GP ranked high with 37.56%, in 2014-2015 again it is Bah by 45.4% and in 2015-2016 Jas GP scored high by 48.77%. To conclude two points mainly comes under the scanner. First is Lal GP sees uninterrupted progress of women participation which is more important than scoring high abruptly in some year, Second is Jas GP scored high till date in the year of 2015-2016 over the setback of downfall in the previous year.

Persondays of respondents: FY 2015-16

Personday	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	BilborakoparaGP	Jasaitala GP
Below 10	8	3	6	22
11- 20	24	2	32	12
21 - 30	10	2	2	9
31- 40		13	2	6
41 - 50			2	1
51 Above			6	

Source: field survey

A detailed inspection of respondent's engagement in the year 2015 - 2016 has been made to probe the progress of the scheme. Statistics came with the result that above 50 days of attendance only had been seen in Bilborakopara GP by only 6 persons which is the highest in term of attendance made by respondents in MGNREGS. Respondent's engagement is mentionable in Bilborakopara GP followed by Jasaitala GP's attendance. A mentionable poor attendance made in Lalgola GP followed by BahadurpurGP, second lowest participatory GP.

Average annual income from MGNREGS of respondents individually:

Income	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP
Below 2,000	16	5	13	28
2,000 to 4,000	26		25	15
4000 to 6,000		8	2	7
6,000 to 8,000		7	3	
8,000 TO 10,000			7	
10,000 Above				
TOTAL	50 *	50#	50	50
Average Income	2200	1980	3900	2700

Source: field survey

*8 NO WORK, # 30 NO WORK

Payments drawn by employers manifest how much successfully that venture had made its attempt in the ground of successful implementation. Records shared a result that state payment drawn at Bilborakopara GP is highest. A steady growth has also been made over there, where Jasaitala GP's graph also a projection of progressive process. Average income shows that highest income made by Bilborakopara GP by Rs.3900 and Bah meets lowest score in that scale.

DECISION-MAKING AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL:

Participation in family matter, such as food, clothing, expenditure on self, purchase of assets, children's education, health and marriages, attending social gatherings etc. are the few indicator among the 14 selected which are undertaken for analyzing how much independently women are making effort in decision making, while three more parameters also incorporated to secure a clear result (those are, whether women have made a single decisions or whether women are taking decisions with her husband jointly or only husband decided to make single decisions in the household).

Household matter	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP
House making	A:17(34%) B:31(62%) C:2(4%)	A:8(16%) B:32(64%) C:10(20%)	A:4(8%) B:35(70%) C:11(22%)	A:9(18%) B:37(74%) C:4(8%)
Food	A:50(100%)	50(100%)	A:35(70%) B:7(14%) C:8(16%)	A:46(92%) B:4(8%)
Clothing	A:37(74%) B:2(4%) C:1(2%)	A:28(56%) B:6(12%) C:16(32%)	A:14(28%) B:20(40%) C:16(32%)	A:21(42%) B:5(10%) C:14(28%)
Children's health	A:29(58%) B:21(42%)	A:12(24%) B:30(60%) C:8(16%)	A:9(18%) B:19(38%) C:22(44%)	A:11(22%) B:31(62%) C:8(16%)
Children's education	A:16(32%) B:22(44%) C:12(24%)	A:19(38%) B:12(24%) C:31(62%)	A:7(14%) B:16(32%) C:27(54%)	A:13(26%) B:18(36%) C:19(38%)
Children marriage	A:33(66%) B:6(12%) C:11(22%)	A:25(50%) B:8(16%) C:17(34%)	A:7(14%) B:41(82%) C:2(4%)	A:8(16%) B:32(64%) C:10(20%)
Attending Social Programme	A:20(40%) B:6(12%) C:24(48%)	A:8(16%) B:16(32%) C:26(52%)	A:00 B:28(56%) C:22(44%)	A:00 B:31(62%) C:19(38%)
Agricultural Activities	A:16(32%) B:30(60%) C:4(8%)	A:2(4%) B:40(80%) C:8(16%)	A:7(14%) B:32(64%) C:1(2%)	A:5(10%) B:20(40%) C:25(50%)
Politics	8(16%)	1(2%)	NIL	NIL
Participation of Labour	A:33(66%) B:3(6%) C:11(22%)	A:10(20%) B:15(30%) C:25(50%)	A:9(18%) B:11(22%) C:30(60%)	A:15(30%) B:18(36%) C:17(34%)
Purchasing of Asset	A:34(68%) B:2(4%) C:14(28%)	A:30(60%) B:6(12%) C:14(28%)	A:6(12%) B:31(62%) C:13(26%)	A:5(10%) B:34(68%) C:11(22%)
Participation of Beneficiary Organization	A:20(40%) B:15(30%) C:15(30%)	A:18(36%) B:20(40%) C:8(16%)	A:7(14%) B:12(24%) C:31(62%)	A:9(18%) B:28(56%) C:13(26%)
Participating in PRI	A:8(16%) B:26(52%) C:16(32%)	A:11(22%) B:30(60%) C:9(18%)	A:00 B:35(70%) C:15(30%)	A:4(8%) B:31(62%) C:5(10%)
To decide vote	22(44%)	4(8%)	INFLUENCED	INFLUENCED

Source: field survey A MEAN SELF, B MEAN ONLY HUSBAND, C MEAN BOTH JOINTLY

From the above chart we can say that in some of the areas women are making most of it while in some areas husbands are self-proclaimed president and being in clutches of long embedded practice of patriarch decision making authority still under their possession. Present survey says that women have a good say across all sample GP in the areas pertaining to children's food (70% - 100%) and clothing (50% - 70%). Regarding the cases of Education, Marriage and Health their decisions are just cooperation with their husbands', with slight variations same trend is observed across all sample GP. Though in sectors like participation of labour, purchasing asset sometimes has made exceptions in some areas, like in Lalgola GP women's decision in participation of labour is 66% while others are not remarkable and again in Lalgola GP women's decision making in the area of purchasing asset stands on

68% while others doesn't come under the scanner at all. As conclusion it can be said decisions are not made independently by women in most of the courses.

Awareness about MGNREGS:

Sl.no of particulars	LalgolaGP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP	Total (average)
1.Right to Work	100% (50)	75% (50)	31% (50)	51% (50)	64.25 (200)
2.Right to Information	10%	6%	2%	4%	5.5
3.Maximum no. of Days Guaranteed Employment(100 days)	90%	93%	50%	61%	73.5
4.Unemployment Allowance	3%	1%	00	00	1.0
5.Wage to be Paid if Work is Given beyond 5 kms	16%	13%	3%	7%	9.75
6.Minimum Wage	85%	95%	38%	49%	66.75
Time limit for providing employment after Submission of application	32%	30%	17%	19%	24.5
7.Time limit for payment of wages (15 days)	41%	32%	5%	9%	21.75
8.1/3 women	63%	70%	20%	30%	45.75
9.Equal wage *	84%	40%	100%	100%	81%
10.Worksite facilities	50%	55%	30%	35%	42.5

Source: field survey.

Study says that community awareness is the key point which takes implementation to success. MGNREGS is community oriented and demand driven scheme. A fruitful application only could be made through spreading awareness among workers and implementing authority among women workers. Beneficiaries should know about various procedurals like, the procedure for registration, obtaining a job card, the process of job application, submission of application form for work and various entitlements such as provision of work within fifteen days from the time of application, minimum wages, worksite facilities, unemployment allowance etc.

Many women have been effected by MGNREGA, hence the awareness about this scheme are increased among the women. Here goes the discussion about this awareness which got infected in women workers of MGNREGA. One of the most important factors, circulated among the respondents is right to work, that has been leading by 100% in Lalgola GP and 75% in Bahadurpur GP. Next is Maximum days guaranteed employment which varying between 50% - 90%. Lalgola and Bahadurpur GP has been seen making it higher than other GPs by consecutive 90% and 93%. Awareness about Minimum wages of this scheme is another mark able point which made people conscious about it. Here also Lalgola GP and Bahadurpur GP stand high comparing to others by consecutive 85% and 95%. Another field of successful implantation of awareness among respondents is equality of wages. Survey shows 80% - 100% people are aware of it. Bilborakopara and Jasaitala made it highest by 100%

followed by Lal's 84%. Awareness of worksite facilities still to reach its every corner. From the survey report we see it is 50% of them aware of this fact. Bahadurpur GP made high of it by 53%.

Some meters like right to information, Unemployment Allowance, Wage to be Paid if Work is Given beyond 5 kms, Time limit for providing employment after Submission of application, Time limit for payment of wages are the factors which need attention to evoke awareness for successful implantation of the policy.

Percentage of Women Workers who took Their Own Decision to Work Under MGNREGA:

Decision to Work Under MGNREGA	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP
Self	15(30%)	20(40%)	12(24%)	9(18%)
Influenced by Guardian	22(44%)	21(42%)	32(64%)	35(70%)
Influenced by Fellow	13(26%)	9(18%)	6(12%)	6(12%)
Influenced by Official	00	00	00	00
Total	50	50	50	50

Source: field survey. # LGL=LALGOLA, BHP=BAHADURPUR, BIL=BILBORAKOPARA, JAS=JASAITALA
Women participants in taking decisions on their own, has been just started. But majorly it can be said that decision making authority still seized by the patriarchal practice.

Motivating factor :

factors	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP	Total
Financial security	100	100	100	100	100.0
Minimum wages	50%	45%	70%	65%	57.5
Work taken up on their own land	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0
Assets created which are beneficial	90%	60%	80%	90%	80.0
Support from family	50%	60%	25%	35%	42.5
Higher MGNREGS wages than market	25%	35%	55%	45%	40.0
Equal wage	75%	65%	50%	35%	56.25
Group arrangement	80%	80%	70%	75%	76.25
Mode of payment	70%	55%	35%	40%	50.0
Worksite facilities	50%	45%	35%	58%	47.0
Attitude	10%	15%	7%	6%	9.5

/sensitivity of official					
Timely employment	30%	15%	5%	6%	14.0
Gathering with fellow	70%	65%	45%	25%	51.25
Working time	70%	85%	30%	40%	56.25
Others factor	25%	7%	10%	11%	13.25

Source: field survey

Factors that have curved the graph high in motivating people to join the programme to secure a successful implantation of the venture are like financial security, work taken up their own land, asset creation, equal wages, group arrangement, model payment, worksite facilities etc.

Factors hindering women's participation:

factors	Lalgola GP	BahasdurpurGP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP	total
Household work load	46%	32%	50%	30%	39.5
Controlled by patriarchic system	50%	80%	90%	88%	77.0
Own agricultural work	10%	21%	50%	45%	31.5
corruption	80%	75%	90%	90%	83.75
Lower than market wages	50%	35%	20%	10%	28.75
Unequal wages	10%	5%	3%	6%	6.0
Health problem	35%	30%	20%	30%	28.75
Gender and caste discrimination	4%	6%	2%	5%	4.1
Harassment at worksite	10%	20%	25%	30%	21.25
Rigid timing	20%	15%	5%	7%	11.75
Delayed payment	50%	70%	60%	55%	58.75
Problems in getting employment	90%	75%	90%	85%	85.0
Untimely employment	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0

Source: field survey

The survey has been made on the accounts which amounts to create hindrance in the way of women participation in the programme and from it we can make proposition that controlling patriarchal system, corruption, untimely employment etc. attribute majorly to accumulate hindrance in women participation. It is clearly visible that it is not possible to give women absolute freedom without ablation of patriarchal system. Further the harassment at worksite and not generating its remedy make the graph of their participation more declining. Their opinion about getting a job, is registering a fight between the nepotism, corruption and on the other side their helplessness goes so pale for

coercion. The employment is not arranged timely which add more barriers in participation, where official and political interest incite more apathy in them.

EFFECT ON RESPONDENT :

In MGNREGA women get opportunity to become self-employed and felt a huge effect of development in their lives. Now they can respond by many ways which prove their progress. Now women are allowing in the concept of equality and they are feeling equal. In the all gram panchayat 100% of women workers felt the concept of equality. Under this act woman can earn money and for that they became able to give food security in their family. In the LGL gram panchayat 42 or 84% of women worker became able to give food security and in the BHP gram panchayat this numbers are 20 or 40%. In the BIL and JAS gram panchayat there are 50 or 100% of women workers who became able to give food security. So the highest numbers of women who became able to give food security are in BIL and JAS gram panchayat (100%) and the lowest numbers are in BHP gram panchayat (40%). Under this act woman became able to increase their income. In the LGL gram panchayat 84% of women became able to increase their income and in the BHP gram panchayat 40% of women became able to increase their income. In the BIL and JAS gram panchayat 100% of women workers became able to increase their income. Therefore, the highest numbers of women workers who became able to increase their income are in BIL and JAS gram panchayat (100%) and the lowest numbers are in BIL gram panchayat (40%). Under this scheme where women became self-employed naturally their self-confidence became extend. Now they can participate in any other development organization. In the LGL gram panchayat 30% of women workers participate in any other development organization. There are 32% of women workers in BHP gram panchayat who participate in any other development organization. In the BIL gram panchayat only 2% of women workers and in the JAS gram panchayat there are only 4% of women workers who participate in any other development organization. So the highest numbers of women workers who participate in any other development organization are in BHP gram panchayat (32%) and the lowest numbers are in BIL gram panchayat (2%). After earn money by the women under this act the male migration became reduce. In the LGL gram panchayat 12% of male migration became reduce and in the BHP gram panchayat this reduce numbers are 26%. In the BIL gram panchayat 50% of male migration became reduce and in the JAS gram panchayat 36% of male migration became reduce. Now we can say the highest male migration became reduce in the BIL gram panchayat (50%) and the lowest male migration became reduce in LGL gram panchayat (12%). Under MGNREGA women do their work as group work. In all gram panchayat there are 100% of women workers do their work as group work. Under this act many women get confidence to speak freely with the official clerk of this scheme. In the LGL gram panchayat 22% of women workers speak freely with the official clerk and in the BHP gram panchayat 15% of women workers speak freely with the official clerk. In the BIL gram panchayat and in the JAS gram panchayat there are no one women workers who speak freely with the official clerk of this act. When women able to earn money and became self-employed, then they positively take decision about their self-matters. In the LGL and BHP gram panchayat there are 50% of women workers now take decision about their self-matters. In the BIL gram panchayat 18% of women workers take decision about their self-matters and in the JAS gram panchayat 35% of women workers take decision about their self-matters. So we can see the highest numbers of women who take decision about their self-matters are in LGL and BHP gram panchayat (50%) and the lowest numbers of women who take decision about their self-matters are in BIL gram panchayat (18%). All of the numbers in all gram panchayat are counted under 50 women workers.

Effect on	Lalgola GP	Bahadurpur GP	Bilborakopara GP	Jasaitala GP
Concept of equality	100%	100%	100%	100%

Food security	42(84%)	20(40%)	100%	100%
Income consumption	84%	40%	100%	100%
Participation in any other development organization	30%	32%	2%	4%%
Male migration	12%	26%	50%	36%
Group work	100%	100%	100%	100%
Freely speak with official	22%	15%	00	00
Take decision by self	49.0%	39.71%	15%	22.85%
score	60.12	51.58	58.37	57.85

Source: field survey.

Recommendation for policy and programme design:

Suggestion for policy and programme layout procured from the research includes the following.

- i) Difficulties lying in the programme could be overcome through running proper system and transaction to get full utilization out of it.
- ii) There must be a planning of work which is essential for extensively increasing the work assignment for those who take benefit in these Block. However, work should be given on the basis of reasonability per month. It can inspire the livelihood certainty. The work period in a month of off-season must be assigned at least 15 days. On the other hand, detaining planning of payment must be avoided.
- iii) Systematic usage of resource under the scheme is recommended for lucidity and responsibility. Inspection on regular basis at panchayat level would be instrumental.
- iv) A democratic guidance will shoot greater community participation, information sharing, expression of opinion by the rural mass, and improvement of social network.
- v) There should be the capacity and willingness of local Govt.(BDO) and panchayat to plan work and run the programme efficiently.
- vi) A perfect observing should be progressed that can guarantee correct policy in job card.
- vii) Social inspection should be carried out in daily basis.
- viii) Strengthening citizenship is the modus operandi to attain the desired result. Making women's participation in Gram Sabha's is likely to be expanded as they become more knowledgeable of their citizenship rights and duties.
- ix) Should be think about delayed payment.

MGNREGA has been appraised as it set off the rise of people's standard of living. It has changed people's aspects on the socio cultural ground. If above recommendations are sincerely exercised to derive the result at the fullest in MGNREGA, the participation of worker's rate has to be expanded. The more they are assigned with the entitlements more their surpluses will increase which would amount to a progressive life process ahead of them. MGNREGA is a system by which the penury will be eliminated in the rural section. It guaranteed the employment option for the unemployment people and income generation programme. The programme of MGNREGA will annihilate the differentiation between the man and woman. It is the way for achieving the equitable society.

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