

## **Attitude of Women Beneficiaries towards MGNREGA Programme in Karnataka : A Sociological Study**

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*Women are considered as a focal point and the unifying force in the family. Women play a vital role in human progress and have a significant place in society. The female population constitutes almost half of the total Indian population and they are directly and indirectly contribute to the socio economic parameters of the nation. The UN commission on status of women observed that women who contribute half of the world's population perform two thirds of the world's work, receive one tenth of its income and own less than one hundredth of its property. Majority of the rural women in India are concentrated in low paid, low skilled work and low productive job as well as women has remained as a neglected section of work force. The Government of India has declared 2001 as Women's Empowerment year. The national policy of empowerment of women has set certain clear-cut goals and objectives. The policy aims at upliftment, development and empowerment in socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects, by creating in them awareness on various issues in relation to their empowerment. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural*

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*Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is 100 days job guaranteed scheme for rural Indians. It was enacted by legislation on 25 August 2005. The purpose of this research paper is to examine the positive and negative attitude levels of women beneficiaries towards MGNREGA scheme. The study conducted in Blegavi and Koppal districts of Karnataka one gram panchayat selected for the study purpose.*

**[Keywords :** Women, MGNREGA, Attitude, Employment]

“To call woman the weaker sex is a libel; it is man’s injustice to woman. If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man’s superior.”  
—M.K.Gandhi

## **1. Introduction**

The constitution of India has given special attention to the needs of women to enable them to exercise their rights on equal footing with men and participate in national development. It aims at creation of an entirely new social order where, all citizens are given equal opportunities for growth and development and that no discrimination takes place on the basis of race, religion, caste, sex, etc.,. Keeping women with special attention and constructing welfare society, a planned approach to provide special thrust to the welfare of women was adopted with the launching of the first five year plan in 1951. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India was the pioneer of five year plans and he stressed on welfare of women, children and tribal’s in our country. All the five year plans stressed on the welfare services to be provided to women along with other weaker and handicapped sections. It was the Sixth Five Year Plan which considered the development of women in terms of economic independence of women particularly supplementing family income of tribal women. The seventh plan emphasized the need to open new avenues of work for women and perceive them as crucial resource for the development of the country. Under the same plan, a new scheme, “Women’s Development Corporation” has been taken up for promoting employment generating activities by supporting schemes from women’s group and women from poorer sections of society. A very significant step therein was to identify and promote beneficiary oriented programmes which extended direct benefits to women.

Some of the earlier employment programmes which were intended to benefit the women folk were :

- 1. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) :** The programme was started in 1982-83 and

focussed its attention on the women members of rural families below poverty line with a view to provide them with productive income generating assets and credits.

2. **Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) :** This programme concentrated on upgrading skills of women to take up employment cum income generating activities.
3. **National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) :** It was launched by the Government of India with the aim to strengthen the overall developmental activities related to poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of women.
4. **Mahila Samridhi Yojana :** with the objective of providing economic security to rural women and to encourage the saving habit among them, the programme on Mahila Samridhi Yojana started on October 2, 1993.
5. **Indira Mahila Yojana :** The Union Government launched this programme on August 20, 1995 with an objective to create awareness among women and provide income resources to them.
6. **Swayamsiddha :** This scheme was launched in March 2001 which aimed in empowering women who will demand their rights from family, community and government and will have increased access to, and control over material, social and political resources.
7. **Swashakti project :** This is a rural women development and empowerment project and is being jointly supported by the World bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

The benefits of the above programmes did not bypass the women at an expected level and there was a need of programme which would reach the women both quantitatively and qualitatively. Hence the approach of eighth plan was a definite shift from development to empowerment of women in all the areas.

The Government of India has declared 2001 as Women's Empowerment year. The national policy of empowerment of women has set certain clear-cut goals and objectives. The policy aims at upliftment, development and empowerment in socio-economic and politico-cultural aspects, by creating in them awareness on various issues in relation to their empowerment.

The central rural development department initiated a major rural development programme that is Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee act in 2005 to enhance the level of socio-economic conditions of the rural masses. The act provides 100 days unskilled employment in a financial year to any adult member of rural house hold it is a legal guarantee assured by government of India to the rural people.

**Mission of MGNREGA :** According to MGNREGA-2005 this is a largest rural employment programme in the history of independent India to uplift livelihood and social security to rural people.

## 2. Objectives of the study

1. To study the demographic profile of women beneficiaries of MGNREGA in Belagavi and Koppal districts of Karnataka state.
2. To analyze positive and negative attitude of women beneficiaries towards MGNREGA in Karnataka.

## 3. Review of Literature

Attitude of beneficiaries towards rural development programmes has been studied by many scholars. For examplr, The research findings of Bhuvana (2013) observed positive and significant difference between socio-economic status of beneficiaries before and after the implementation of MGNREGA programme ( $\chi^2 = 47.07$ ). The study related that majority of the respondents (38.33%) were in young age, 55% belongs to SC/ST category, equal percentage of the respondents (35%) were both agricultural laborers and possess land. 39% of respondents had low contact with mass media, 41.67 % respondents had low cosmopolitness, 43.33% had low achievement motivations, 39.17% had low risk orientation, 46.66% had medium aspiration level. 80.83% of woman beneficiaries belonged nuclear families. 69.17% of respondents had small families, 54.17% of respondents can read, write and sign.

Dhananjaya (2009) conducted a research study in two talukas (Blocks) of Chitradurga district in Karnataka covering 120 women respondents Stree Shakti Groups (SSG). The results of the study reported that 50 per cent of the women beneficiaries had more favourable, 33 per cent favourable attitude and 16 per cent of women beneficiaries had shown less favourable attitude towards SSP.

The study conducted by Jayanta Roy (2012) in three villages under Kulai gram panchayat in Ambassa block of Dhalai district in Tripura state, revealed that 50 per cent of the women beneficiaries of MGNREGA programme had favourable attitude towards MGNREGA. Where as 36 per cent and 14 per cent women beneficiaries showed neutral and unfavourable attitude towards MGNREGA programme, respectively.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Research Design

Keeping in view the adaptability of the proposed design with respect to the type of variables under considerations, size of the sample and phenomenon to be studied, based on the objectives of the study ex-post facto research design was employed for the present research study.

### 4.2 Selection of Study Location

The biggest district Belagavi and backward district Koppal were purposely selected for the study where MGNREGA scheme is implemented and women beneficiaries are working. Two hundred women beneficiaries selected as respondents from each gram panchayat of each district thus the sample size constituted as four hundred.

### 4.3 Tools of Data Analysis

The data collected for the purpose of study was quantified, categorized and tabulated. Keeping in view, the objectives of the study, the data were subjected to different statistical measures including frequency, percentage and chi-square test.

**Table-1 : Distribution of women respondents of MGNREGA programme selected from Belagavi and Koppal districts for the Study**

District	Taluk	Gram Panchayat	Villages	N	Total
1. Belagavi	Bailhongal Now Gram panchayat comes under Kittur taluk	Ugarkhod	Ugarkhod	50	200
			Dematti	50	
			Timmapur	50	
			Bachchanakeri	50	

2. Koppal	Yelaburga Now Gram panchayat comes under Kukanoor taluk	Bhanapur	Bhanapur	40	<b>200</b>
			Komalapur	40	
			Chittapur	40	
			Talabal	40	
			Lakmapur	40	
			<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>

## 5. Results and Discussion

Table-2 : Frequency distribution and percentage of Demographic variables of women beneficiaries towards MGNREGA in Bhanapur and Ugarkhod

Profile	Bhanapur	%	Ugarkhod	%	Total / %
<b>Age groups</b>					
18-25 yrs	5	2.50	3	1.50	8 (2.00)
25-35 yrs	61	30.50	34	17.00	95 (23.75)
35-45 yrs	52	26.00	67	33.50	119 (29.75)
45-55 yrs	34	17.00	79	39.50	113 (28.25)
55 + yrs	48	24.00	17	8.50	65 (16.25)
<b>Caste</b>					
SC/ST	31	15.50	54	27.00	85 (21.25)
OBC	139	69.50	127	63.50	266 (66.50)
GM	17	8.50	6	3.00	23 (5.75)
Others	13	6.50	13	6.50	26 (6.50)
<b>Education</b>					
Illiterates	110	55.00	107	53.50	217 (54.25)
Primary	58	29.00	85	42.50	143 (35.75)
Secondary	20	10.00	6	3.00	26 (6.50)
PUC +	12	6.00	2	1.00	14 (3.50)
<b>Marital status</b>					
Unmarried	8	4.00	5	2.50	13 (3.25)
Married	174	87.00	168	84.00	342 (85.50)
Others	18	9.00	27	13.50	45 (11.25)
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>400 (100.00)</b>

Table-2 (Continued) : Chi-square (  $\chi^2$  ) and p-value

Profile Variable/Attribute		Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	p-value
1.	Age groups	42.7690	0.0001*
2.	<b>Caste</b>	12.0260	0.0070*
3.	<b>Education</b>	19.8210	0.0001*
4.	Marital status	2.5980	0.2730

### 5.1 Age

Results in table-2 revealed that In Bhanapur an average of 56 per cent respondents belong to age group of 25 to 45 years and 24 per cent 55 above years of age, whereas in Ugarkhod an average 73 per cent of the respondents are from age group of 35 to 55 years.

The independent variables analysis revealed that majority of the women beneficiaries were belongs to either young or middle age group they constitute more than half of the total work force. It is found that young and middle aged women beneficiaries have high level of family responsibilities further; they contribute their total dedication towards work. Young and middle age women beneficiaries will be proactive to carry out the unskilled work with complete efficiency. On the contrary old age people have less family responsibility and work efficiently.

### 5.2 Caste

The women beneficiaries Average of 69 per cent of respondents belongs to OBC category in Bhanapur and 63 per cent in Ugarkhod.

The attributes contributing for larger number of beneficiaries falling under OBC category is may be due to financial constraint to take up any sorts of occupation, women in these category are allowed to work comparatively than in other categories, they take up any kind of work than other category people in general, not enough land to take up farming occupation, lack of better encouragement and support in the society for these category may be the reason for majority of the beneficiaries to fall under this category. The results were similar to the research results of Bhuvana (2013).

### 5.3 Education

On an average 55 per cent of women beneficiaries were illiterate. Hardly 6 per cent women completed above pre-university education level.

Low education level must be due to the fact that beneficiaries are women and from rural areas still today the women are not much permitted to leave their houses, the traditional socio-economic privileges lies with male members of the society. Male members of the family play key role in the family matters where women restricted from such privileges like education. Due to male dominant social system women will have no reason to go to school instead of domestic work.

#### 5.4 Marital Status

The result depicts that in Bhanapur and Ugarkhod around 87 and 84.50 per cent of women were married respectively.

Marriage is a compulsory obligation for women in rural India due the reason the high rate of marital women beneficiaries could be noticed. The married women work both at domestic as wells as in field to meet familial responsibilities. Majority of women beneficiaries are illiterate and young they had responsibilities towards their dependents they do not go to far away from home to work. MGNREGA is women friendly scheme provides unskilled work within the range of village limits due to the reason women beneficiaries willing to work under MGNREGA programme.

Table no. 2 clearly depicted that the demographic variables of women beneficiaries of MGNREGA showed the similar results in both the gram panchayat with regards to Age, Caste, Education and Marital status between Bhanapur and Ugarkhod were statistically significant and marital status found to be non-significant.

**Table-3 : Comparison of MGNREGA women beneficiaries of Bhanapur and Ugarkhod area with levels of attitude and empowerment**

	Bhanapur	Ugarkhod	Total	<sup>2</sup> test	p-value
<b>Levels of Attitude</b>					
Unfavourable	70	101	171	19.164	0.00***
Indecisive	112	19	131		
Favourable	18	80	98		

\*\*\* = significance @ 1% level

To study the association of district with level of attitude chi-square test statistic is used. The results obtained from table-3 showed significant association between two regions (Bhanapur and Ugarkhod) with 1 per cent level of significance. It is identified that



about 56 per cent of respondents in Bhanapur are indecisive to the attitude and 35 per cent were unfavourable to attitude. Whereas in Ugarkhod 50.5 per cent were unfavourable, 40 per cent were favourable and only 19 respondents (9.5 %) are indecisive to level of attitude.

## **6. Discussion**

Results in table-3 found that there is significant association between two gram panchayats. Continuous work not provided, delay in payment, lack of work site facilities, problems to get job cards, non transformation of information, non creation of 100 days work to a house hold are the main reasons for influencing the attitude of the women beneficiaries towards MGNREGA programme. Attitude levels of women beneficiaries of MGNREGA programme under Bhanapur gram panchayat was unfavourable they feel that MGNREGA programme does not brought any changes in their personal life as well as in their community life. They have very low level of awareness about the scheme this is due to the reason of poor implementation of the scheme by the local authorities this could be seen in indecisive results. Women beneficiaries of MGNREGA under Ugarkhod gram panchayat had positive attitude towards MGNREGA programme they are benefitted by the scheme. They are much satisfied the work and wages provided under the programme. They feel their personal and family life was improved being employee under MGNREGA.

## **7. Findings of the study**

The present study was under taken with the below mentioned objectives. The results obtained from statistical evaluation help in learning and drawing policy guidance for the future.

The primary data for the study was collected from 400 women beneficiaries of two villages Bhanapur and Ugarkhod (200 each). To analyze the above mentioned objectives suitable statistical techniques were employed.

Major findings of the study are as follows :

1. On an average 85 per cent (87 disagree and 83 undecided) of the women beneficiaries in Bhanapur district disagreed and indecisive towards positive perceptions/attitude. Around 70 per cent of respondents were indecisive and 13.5 per cent were disagreed to negative perceptions.

2. In Ugarkhod district 74.5 per cent of women beneficiaries from MNREGA agreed the positive perceptions and 75 per cent dis-agreed the negative perceptions.
3. There is a significant association between districts (Bhanapur and Ugarkhod) and level of attitude with 1 per cent level of significance.
4. In Bhanapur most of the respondents belong to age group of 25 to 35 years whereas in Ugarkhod most of the respondents are from age group of 35 to 55 years.
5. Around 69 per cent of respondents belongs to OBC category in both Bhanapur and Ugarkhod.
6. On an average 55 per cent of women beneficiaries were illiterate. Hardly 6 per cent women completed above pre-university education level.

## 8. Conclusion

The significant factors influencing the attitude of women beneficiaries of MGNREGA programme were age, caste, education and marital status.

In Bhanapur gram panchayat community-based work was a major issue followed by delay in payment of wages. The people from this village was least worried about the awareness to be given for MGNREGA programme,

In Ugarkhod, the major thing was found to be need based work is not provided followed by community-based work and the people were least worried about the enough awareness not created about MGNREGA programme.

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