

**SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NREGS ON
LIVELIHOOD OF RURAL PEOPLE
(A CASE STUDY OF CHAMOLI AND UDHAM Singh
NAGAR DISTRICT OF UTTARAKHAND)**

Sunit Kumar*

V.A. Bourai**

Abstract

This paper looks at the impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in Uttarakhand that was launched in the year 2005 as a social security measure aimed at providing 100 day employment security to the poor in villages. The NREGA was also meant to use this labour to construct rural infrastructure. In this paper the researcher has made an effort to find out the socio economics impact of NREGA on income, employment, poverty reduction and migration in the state of Uttarakhand. The study has revealed that MGNREGA has provided ample opportunities of employment to the women and weaker sections of the society, has increased their income levels and has reduced poverty level in chamoli district as well as in Uttarakhand state

For this research, a detailed survey of 360 households in a specific village of two districts was undertaken to highlight the impact of the NREGS. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) approach, questionnaire interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) were chosen as research method and was completed by worker interviews

Key words: MGNREGA, employment, poverty reduction and migration.

* Department of Economics, Govt. Degree College Billawar-184204 (J&K).

** Principal & Ex-Head Department of Economics, SGRR PG College Dehradun.

Introduction

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), enacted on 25 August 2005 and renamed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on 2 October 2009, was implemented on 7 September 2005 in phase manner in India. In Phase-I, it was introduced in 200 of the most backward districts of the country, an additional 130 districts were included in Phase-II (2007-2008) and the all remaining rural districts were brought under NREGA in Phase-III (2008-2009). The scheme provides guaranteed employment for 100 days in a financial year to one member of eligible household. The scheme MGNREGA includes activities under different heads to provide employment to village communities and improve their livelihoods. The Act has been implemented in three phases since 2006, providing 4.48 billion days of employment over a period of three years. About Rs 34,600 crore has been spent on wages, indicating the gigantic size of this programme intended to benefit the poor and the huge investment that has been made in it.

In Uttarakhand, the NREGS was initially launched in 3 districts i.e., Chamoli, Champawat and Tehri in 2006-07 comprising 206059 households of 1762 Gram Panchayats (Phase-1). In second phase (2007-08), two additional districts, i.e., Haridwar and UdhamSingh Nagar were added, covering about 38.5% of total districts, 36.84% of total blocks and 32.77% of total GPs of the State. Consequently, percentage of rural population and rural households covered under the scheme went up from 16.72% and 17.38% to 45.78 % and 42.62%, respectively. In the last phase, all the remaining districts have been notified under the NREGS. In this study, we have selected one district from the Phase-I and one district from the Phase-II districts of State of Uttarakhand.

The scheme MGNREGA has enhanced the socio-economic status of both men and women from the weaker sections. In addition to directly benefiting the landless and farmers with employment and wages, the scheme has created precious assets and infrastructure in the rural areas. There have been various studies looking into aspects such as its socioeconomic impact, its finances, and its administration and implementation (for instance, Shah 2007; Ambasta et al 2008 and Kareemulla et al 2009). Others focus on subjects such as rural poverty alleviation, gender issues, livelihood and food security, and migration. This study attempts to examine the socio economic impact of NREGA on the livelihood of rural people of Uttarakhand. The following are the main objectives of present study are:-

1. To analyse the impact of MNREGS on income and employment of poor people.
2. To analyse the extent of women empowerment and reduction in rural poverty consequent to the introduction of MGNREGS.
3. To identify the extent of migration of labour reduce after the implementation of the scheme.

Methodology

Research methodology

Both types of data i.e., primary and secondary, have been collected for the purpose of this study. While the primary data were collected through questionnaire interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and other participatory approaches involving workers, non-workers, GP members, the secondary data were drawn from the documented official records i.e., from the websites of the Ministry of Rural Development, GOI, Block Development Offices, and Gram Panchayat offices. In most of the GPs, NREGS staff was not available to provide the required details. Both kinds of information viz., quantitative and qualitative were gathered in order to supplement the information.

The following tools developed for this study were used for collection of data.

- (a) Gram Panchayat schedule
- (b) Worker schedule

Sampling Procedure

In this study, one district, namely, Chamoli from the first phase district and one district, viz., UdhamSingh Nagar, from the second-phase districts have been selected for the detailed field study. From each selected district, two development blocks are selected for the field survey. The selection of blocks was discussed with the State government officials also. Efforts have been made to identify one relatively better performing block and other relatively poor performing block. Thus, the sample comprises two blocks from each district, eight GP and eight villages (one from each GP) from each block. Table 1 gives the details of sample districts, blocks, GPs and workers' households.

Table 1. Sample Districts, Development Blocks, Villages and Workers Households

Name of	Names & No. of	No. of	No. of sample	No. of workers
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sample District	selected Development block	Sample GPs	villages	interviewed in the selected blocks
Chamoli	Dewal & Joshimath (1+1 =2)	8+8 =16	8+8 =16	80+80
Udham Singh Nagar	Jaspur & Gadarpur (1+1 =2)	8+8 = 16	8+8 =16	80+80
Total	4	32	32	320

Source: Based on Field Survey 2010-11

Random sampling was used in choosing the GPs. Further, 10 workers/GP have been randomly selected for the survey. Feedback has also been taken from other stakeholders. Selection of workers was made in such a way as to include equal number of workers from the selected GPs, who worked under the Scheme during the reference period. The schedule primarily comprised closed ended questions though a few open ended questions also existed to record the opinions and suggestions of the workers. As is evident from Table 1, feedbacks and responses from 320 workers (80 from each selected block) have been gathered. Table 2 contains names of GPs which were randomly selected from different blocks.

Table 2. Villages and Development Blocks in the Sample Districts

Districts	Name of Sample Blocks	Name of Sample Village
Chamoli	Dewal	Hatt Kalyani
		Mundauli
		Lvani
		Baank
		Lingari
		Lausori
		Vaan
		Khetamanmati
	Joshimath	Langsi
		Tangani Malli
		Tangni Talli
		Tapon
		Layari
		Dhaak
UdhamSingh Nagar	Jaspur	Bada Gaon
		Urgam
		Dharampur

Gadarpur	Talabpur
	Patrampur
	Khera Lakshmipur
	Babar Khera
	Kilawali
	Meghawala
	Bailjoori
	Lambakhera
	Motiapura
	Khanpur West
	Nandpur
	Bura Nagar
	Lucknow
	Dhimarkheda
Sakania	

Source: Based on Field Survey 2010-11

Data

The paper made use of the data from a project, 'A concurrent evaluation of NREGS in the state of Uttarakhand in 2010', funded by the UNDP with the collaboration of Department of Humanities and Social Science IIT Roorkee (the first author of this paper has worked as Research Assistant in that project). The data was collected with the help of a schedule and it was given to the workers in local language. Workers were asked questions on general information, source of household income, employment status before and after NREGS. Information was also sought of market wage rate and migration before and after the NREGS.

Collection of data from UdhamSingh Nagar and Chamoli was carried out in March-May 2010; therefore, the reference period for the survey is from March 2010 to the first week of May, 2010.

The data collected were coded, tabulated and converted into meaningful tables. Simple tables using absolute numbers, percentages, and averages techniques were formulated. Graphs were also used extensively in order to make comparisons much more visible and simple.

Result and Discussion

Socio Economic profile of Sample Population

Caste and Religion

Table 3 sums up information on caste and religious composition of the sample of workers. As is evident from the data, there is wide divergence in the sample population of the plain district of UdhamSingh Nagar and the hill district of Chamoli. For instance, most of the sample workers in UdhamSingh Nagar district belonged to the SC and OBC categories whereas most of the respondents in the hill district belonged to general category respondents. Similarly, Muslims form a sizeable part of the sample drawn from UdhamSingh Nagar district, no such respondent was part of the sample in the Chamoli districts. This is quite reflective of the caste and religious composition in the sample districts. While there is a sizeable population of SC, OBCs and Muslims in UdhamSingh Nagar district, there is hardly any population of Muslims in the rural areas of the sample hill district.

Table 3. Block-wise Caste and Religious Composition of Workers

Variables	Freq & Percent	Chamoli		UdhamSingh Nagar		Total
		Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gararpur	
Caste						
SC	No.	12	16	30	20	78
	%	15.00	20.00	37.50	25.00	24.37
ST	No.	2	0	4	32	38
	%	2.50	0.00	5.00	40.00	11.88
OBC	No.	2	0	41	21	64
	%	2.50	0.00	51.25	26.25	20.00
GEN	No.	64	64	5	7	140
	%	80.00	80.00	6.25	8.75	43.75
Total	No.	80	80	80	80	320
	%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Religion						
Hindu	No.	80	80	43	77	280
	%	100.00	100.00	53.75	96.25	87.50
Muslim	No.	0	0	26	3	29
	%	0.00	0.00	32.50	3.75	9.06
Sikh	No.	0	0	11	0	11
	%	0.00	0.00	13.75	0.00	3.44
Total	No.	80	80	10	80	320
	%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100

Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

Size of Household

The average size of household, for a large majority, ranges between 4 and 8, as is highlighted by Table 4. The average size of households was found to be higher in UdhamSingh Nagar districts as compared to Chamoli.

Table 4. Size of Sample Households

Size of HHs (No)	No. & Percent	Chamoli		UdhamSingh Nagar		Total
		Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gararpur	
1-3	No.	10	16	14	6	46
	%	12.5	20.00	17.50	7.50	14.38
4-6	No.	49	58	46	52	205
	%	61.25	72.50	57.50	65.00	64.06
7-9	No.	20	6	19	17	62
	%	25.00	7.50	23.75	21.25	19.38
10-20	No.	1	0	1	5	7
	%	1.25	0	1.25	6.25	2.18
Total	No.	80	80	80	80	320
	%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Average Size (HHs)		5.36	4.46	5.22	5.73	5.19

Educational Level

Both block of UdhamSingh Nagar district majority of workers were found to be illiterate, while Chamoli district, only about 20% of workers were found to be illiterate, as is underlined by Table 5. It is this group which is most ill-equipped to earn for livelihood except for doing unskilled/semi-skilled jobs. While there appear to be fair amount of employment opportunities and remunerative wage rates in agriculture and construction sectors in plain district, such opportunities are rare in hill districts where from most of the distress migration takes place.

Table 5. Educational Status of sample Households

Education Status	No. & Percent	Chamoli		UdhamSingh Nagar		Total
		Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gararpur	
Illiterate	No.	16	12	45	42	115

	%	20.00	15.00	56.25	52.50	143.75
Literate	No.	17	12	3	9	41
	%	21.25	15.00	3.75	11.25	51.25
Primary	No.	10	10	10	15	45
	%	12.50	12.50	12.50	18.75	56.25
Middle	No.	17	15	14	7	53.
	%	21.25	18.75	17.50	8.75	66.25
High	No.	16	20	6	6	48
	%	20.00	25.00	7.50	7.50	60.00
Intermediate	No.	2	6	0	1	9
	%	2.50	7.50	0.00	1.25	11.25
Graduation & above	No.	2	5	2	0	9
	%	2.50	6.25	2.50	0	11.25
Total	No.	80		80	80	320
	%	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	400.00

Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

Household income Source

It would also be interesting to have an idea of the income earned by sample households from various sources and to which extent work in NREGS related projects have contributed to their incomes. As is highlighted by Table 6, the annual income per household is higher with respect to all the components (except wage employment) in both the block of Chamoli as compared to the UdhamSingh Nagar district. The table 6 also highlights that the earning from livestock and non farm sector is very low in both block of UdhamSingh Nagar while livestock in Chamoli district. The wage earning, other than NREGS, therefore, is the largest component of their incomes across all sample districts. The earnings from NREGS just contribute within the range of 9-14% in the sample districts. Thus, the role of NREGS related earnings is just supplementary to the total earnings of the household which was intended as well. However, increase in work opportunities would increase the relevance of NREGS.

Table 6. Block-Wise Sources of Income and their Share in Total Earnings of the Sample Households (Rs)

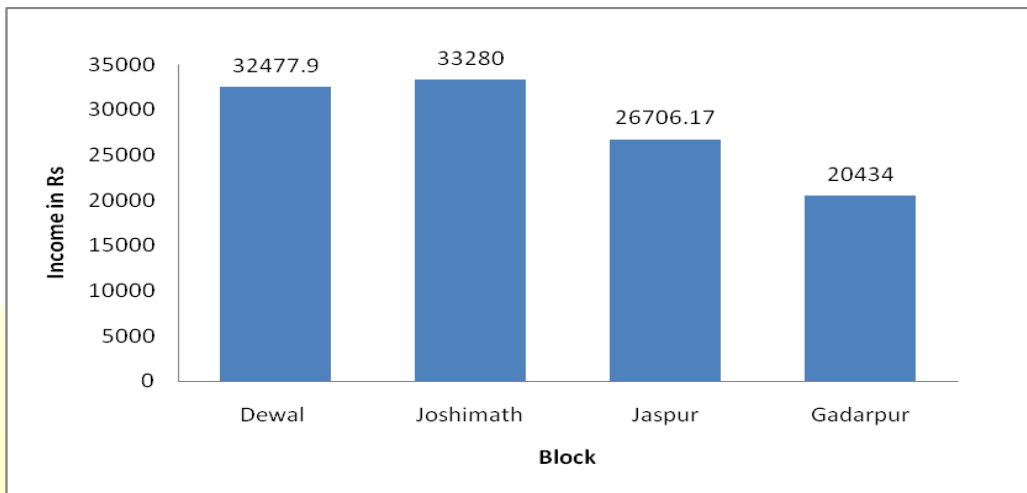
Average & %	Chamoli		UdhamSingh Nagar		Total
	Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gadarpur	

Annual Income from Agriculture Crops					
Average	14983	21981.25	6802.50	5187.50	12238.56
Share (%)	21.92	31.27	16.57	11.73	21.87
Annual Income from Live stocks					
Average	6265	7266.25	802.50	1132.50	3866.55
Share (%)	9.16	10.33	1.95	2.56	6.90
Annual Income from Self-employment in Non-farm Sector					
Average	16170	12903.75	578.75	712.5	7591.25
Share (%)	23.67	18.35	1.40	1.63	13.57
Annual Income from wage-employment (other than NREGA)					
Average	22330	21558.75	27183.50	33107.50	26044.9
Share (%)	32.69	30.67	66.21	74.92	46.52
Annual Earning from NREGA					
Average	8581	6594.1	5693.5	4048.75	6236.83
Share (%)	12.56	9.38	13.87	9.16	11.14
Total Income of Households					
Average	68328	70304.1	41060.75	44188.75	55978.09
Share (%)	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The average annual income sources of the sample workers' households has been classified into five categories, namely, agriculture, livestock, non-agricultural self-employment, NREGS wage employment and other wage employments. Block-wise average annual income of a worker is shown in Figure 1. It highlights that an average household in Joshimath block earned Rs.70304.1 which was highest among all the blocks. Next to this block is Dewal where an average household earned Rs. 68328 per annum. It was followed by Gadarpur (Rs.55978.09). The lowest household income was found to be in the Jaspur block (Rs.44188.75) of UdhamSingh Nagar district.

As expected, per worker average annual income was highest (Rs.33280) in Joshimath block, followed by Dewal block (Rs.32477.9) of Chamoli district (figure 1). Average per worker income was estimated Rs 26706.17 in Jaspur block and 20434 in Gadarpur block which is lowest among all the block of both Chamoli and UdhamSingh Nagar districts. A perusal of Figure 1 reveals that the income level of workers varies significantly across sample districts.

Figure 1. Block wise average annual income per worker



Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

Employment level of Worker household before and after NREGS

A perusal of Table 7 highlights that the introduction of NREGS has brought some material difference to the lives of the sample population. For instance, in Jaspur block of UdhamSingh Nagar district, 65.86 percent sample households were getting employment for person-days ranging from 150 to 249 before the implementation of NREGS, and only 2.44 % for the 250-350 person days during a year. While 64.16 percent sample household in Gadarpur block getting 100-200 person days during a year and only 13.87 % for the 200-350 person during a year. An increase in the employment in terms of person-days can be seen from the fact that instead of 2.44% sample population, 27.64% sample population in Jaspur block, started getting employment for 250-350 person days in the post-NREGS period, while in Gadarpur Block 26.1% sample population started getting employment for 200-350 days after NREGS period instead 13.87%.

The employment situation in the Chamoli district in the pre-NREGS period was ranging 51.16 % to 58% sample household had been getting employment for 100 to 200 person-days and 24-84 to 33.20 % for 200- 350 person days during a year. After NREGS ranging from 49.71 to 58.13% sample population getting 200-350 person days' employment instead 24.84 to 33.20% in a year. A look at the average figures of employment brings to the fore that there has been 28.58% overall growth in the employment in all the districts in the post-NREGS period, although better progress was recorded as a hill district of Chamoli as compared to UdhamSingh Nagar

District. For instance, employment in the post-NREGS period had gone up by 21.57% and 14.97% in the Dewal and Joshimath blocks of district Chamoli respectively, it grew by 20.62% and 13.04% in the Jaspur and Gadarpur blocks respectively. Given the fact, NREGS provides a better economic alternative to locally available employment opportunities especially to women and aged people, further intensification of the Scheme would certainly bring cheers to the faces of the people who are poor and economically destitute.

Table 7. Percentage of Employment Level of workers' households before and after NREGS

Employment	Person days Range	Chamoli		Udham Singh Nagar		Total
		Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gadarpur	
Employment Before NREGS	1 – 49	1.78	0.00	1.62	1.74	1.29
	50 – 99	15.38	14.54	5.69	20.23	13.97
	100 – 149	29.00	18.60	24.39	38.15	27.53
	150 – 199	29.00	32.56	35.78	26.01	30.83
	200 – 249	7.69	25.58	30.08	12.13	18.88
	250 – 299	3.55	5.82	2.44	1.74	3.38
	300 - 350	13.60	2.90	0.00	0	4.12
	Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Average	164.26	171.21	170.39	138.80	161.16	
Employment After NREGS	1 – 49	1.12	0	0.81	1.16	0.78
	50 – 99	5.00	6.40	4.88	10.98	6.81
	100– 149	18.74	18.60	16.27	39.88	23.38
	150 – 199	25.43	16.87	21.95	21.97	21.55
	200 – 249	20.71	34.30	28.45	17.34	25.2
	250 – 299	13.00	18.02	17.89	7.51	14.10
	300 - 350	16.00	5.81	9.75	1.16	8.18
	Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100	100.00
Average	199.69	196.84	205.53	156.91	189.74	

Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

Job provided to an average household during 2007-8 and 2008-09, 2009-10

Table 8 exhibits the block-wise employment status of sample households during the last three financial years. As is evident from the table, there has been significant improvement in number of person-days employment provided under the scheme in 2009-10 over the preceding year. Table 8 reveals the significant variation in the number of days of job provided per

household across the blocks. It reveals that in the sample blocks of Chamoli district, number of days of employment per household is highest (85.34 in Dewal block), while it was found to be lowest (35.98 in Gadarpur block). This suggests a positive sign in the process of improvement in the scheme.

Table 8. Average No. of job provided per household by NREGA during 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 (person days)

Year	Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gadarpur
2007-08	15.90	6.16	0	0.2
2008-09	48.38	32.81	30.70	29.24
2009-10	85.34	53.75	56.53	35.98

Source: Based on Filed survey 2010-11

Gender-wise Status of Employment provided under the Scheme

Gender –wise employment status under the scheme during the last three years is shown in table 9. On average, number of person-days of job provided to male workers was higher than their female counterparts. However, in Dewal block, in last 3 years, females worked for larger number of days under the scheme than male workers (table 9). In case of female employment, the performance of UdhamSingh district is relatively poorer, while in Chamoli district, it is better. However, employment figures show that female workers have significant share in the total employment generated under the scheme. In a nutshell, female workers appeared to have participated more in the hill district than in the plain district. Apart from the lesser socio-economic constraints, non-availability of the male workers due to their significant migration to plains for economic pulls and pressures could be the basic reason for the larger participation of women in NREGS in the hill district. In any case, the trend suggests that NREGS is an important step towards the socio-economic empowerment of rural women of the State.

Table 9. Gender-wise No. of person-days of job provided during 2007-08, 2008-09 & 2010

Block	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Dewal	4.35	11.55	22.60	25.78	31.88	53.46
Joshimath	4.75	1.41	21.53	11.28	35.65	18.1
Jaspur	0	0	28.53	2.17	51.56	4.97
Gadarpur	0.2	0	19.26	9.98	22.91	13.07

Source: Based on Field survey 2010-11

Improvement in Household Income and Employment

The extent of improvement in the household employment and income level of the workers was also estimated based upon the responses of the workers. The responses have been classified into five categories: very significant, significant, significant somewhat, less significant and not significant. In response to the question whether the scheme has improved household employment and income level, 7.81% respondents at the aggregate level indicated that there has been very significant improvement in their income and employment, A majority of workers indicated that there has been significant improvement in household income and employment after getting job in NREGA. Table 10 shows the block-wise responses of workers about improvement in their income and employment. As is obvious from table10, the rating of improved income and employment in Dewal block (24.40 %) and lowest (4.70 %) in Jaspur block.

Table 10. Improvement in household income and employment (%) as perceived by worker after getting job in NREGA

Improvement income/emp.	Dewal	Joshimath	Jaspur	Gadarpur
Highly significant	5.00	3.75	8.75	13.75
Significant	33.75	37.50	35.00	25.00
Sig. somewhat	25.00	27.50	30.00	31.25
Less significant	8.75	20.00	3.75	15.00
Not significant	27.50	11.25	22.50	15.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
% Improved	24.40	24.03	4.70	6.06

Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

The rating suggesting that the earnings from NREGS has not significantly improved the income and employment of the workers as expected, as can be seen from the fact that NREGS earnings at best are supplementary source of income for the fact that not much of employment could be provided under the Scheme for the reasons already pointed out in the preceding sections. Unfortunately, there were exceptions when a household could get a full hundred days of employment.

Reduction in Household Indebtedness

In response to the question whether indebtedness among the households declined after getting employment under the scheme, majority of the worker in all block (except Dewal block) has response that NREGA has not significant reduction of indebtedness. Table 11 reveals that 56-94 percent worker felt that income received through the scheme did not help in reducing their household indebtedness. Only in Dewal block, 68% worker responses of significantly (31.45 %) reduced of household indebtedness after getting job in NREGA.

Table 11. Workers' responses in reduction of HHs indebtedness (%)

Block	Yes	No	% reduced
Dewal	68.45	31.55	31.45
Joshimath	6.25	93.75	1.68
Jaspur	43.75	56.25	4.40
Gadarpur	28.75	71.25	4.65

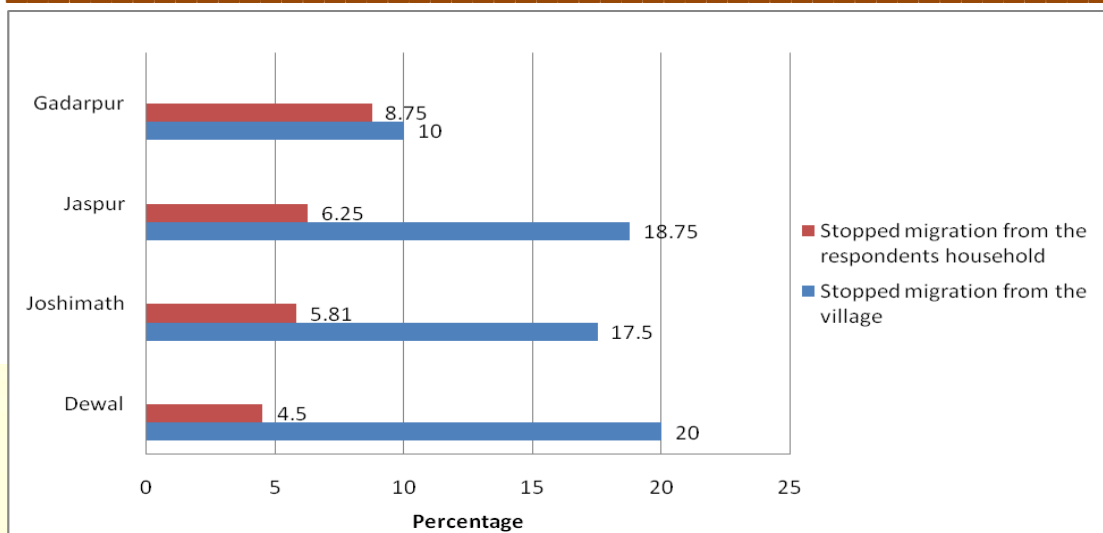
Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

Reduction in the Distress Migration

During our field survey, Gram Pradhan, and the workers reported that the temporary and seasonal migration of workers declined to some extent after the implementation of the scheme. They indicated that the migration would decline significantly if 100 days of employment is provided to each willing working member of household rather than 100 days of employment to each household. Further, providing 100 days of employment to a household is not desirable because it would provide relatively lesser benefits to large size of households where more working members are willing to work. In response to the question whether migration of workers has reduced after the scheme, nearly 17 percent sample workers in sample districts indicated to a reduction in the migration. Figure 2 shows the block-wise percentage of responses on this issue. As is apparent from the figure, migration has highest (20 %) reduced in Dewal block and lowest (10 %) in Gadarpur block.

Figure 2

Workers' responses on reduction in migration from the village and from the respondent household



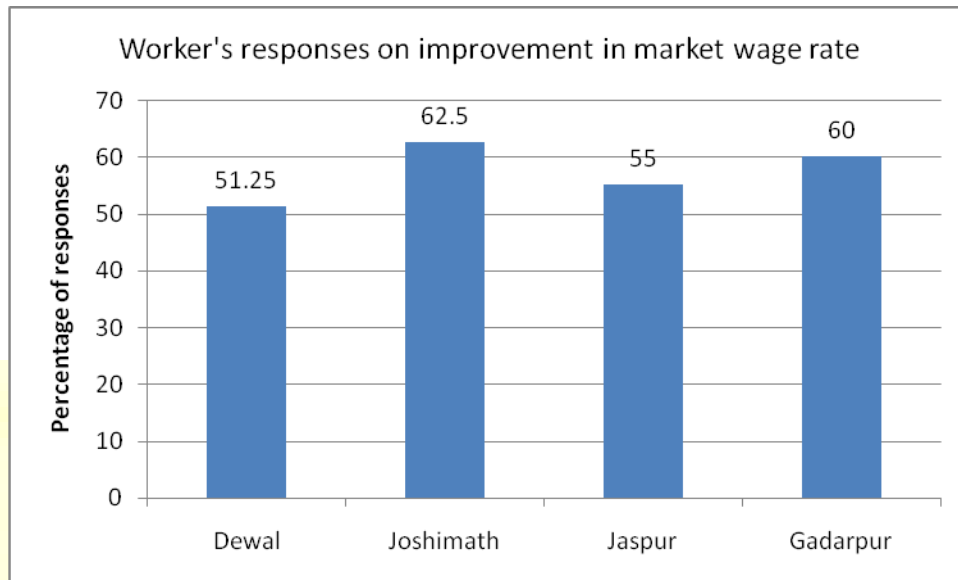
Source: Based on Household survey 2010-11

The workers were asked if any member of their household stopped migrating after the scheme. In this context, only 6% workers accepted that migration has stopped in their household. The highest percentage of such responses was found to be in Gadarpur and lowest in Dewal block.

Increase in the Market Wage Rate

Market wage rate has increased in rural area after the implementation of NREGA. To find out if market wage rate has increased in the post-NREGS period, the response of the workers were recorded. On an average, near about 57 of sample workers indicated that NREGS has exercised positive impact on the market wage rate. The highest percentage of workers suggesting improvement in the market wage rate as a consequence of NREGS was found to be in Joshimath and lowest in Dewal block (figure 3). Based upon the information gathered formally and informally from the workers, it appears that, on an average, there was a net increase of Rs. 21 to Rs 30 in the market wage rate in the sample districts.

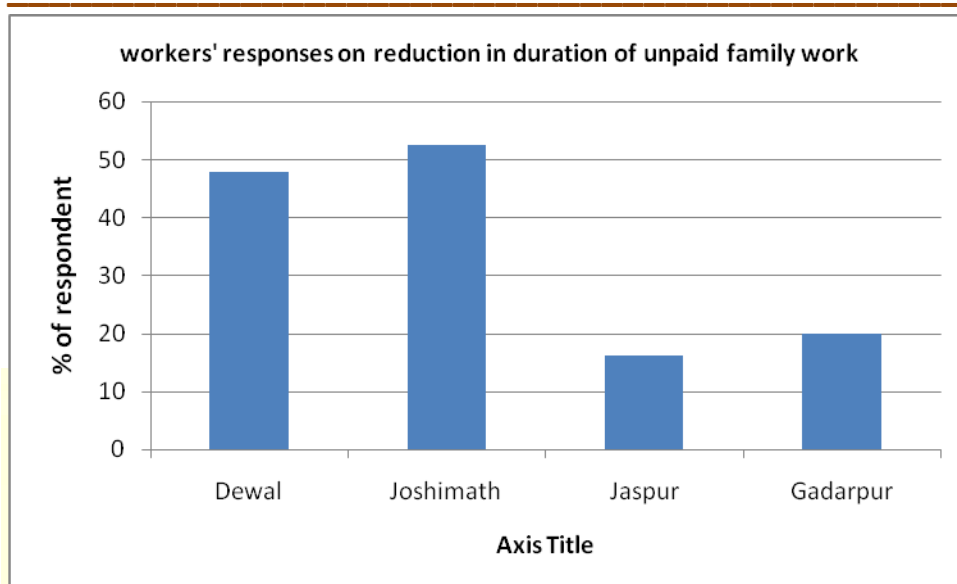
Figure 3



Reduction in the Unpaid Family Work

It was also expected that with the execution of the scheme, duration of unpaid family work, mostly done by female workers, would decline. More than half of the workers in Chamoli district and more than eighteen percent worker in UdhamSingh Nagar district opined that the duration of the unpaid work has declined due to NREGS. The percentages of those reporting decline in the duration of unpaid work varied from 16.25 percent in Jaspur block of district UdhamSingh District to 52.50 percent in Joshimath block in district Chamoli. A perusal of Figure 4 reveals that block of hill district have reported more decline in the unpaid family works as compared to plain district of UdhamSingh Nagar district. Although women in the rural areas of hill district might still be spending a good amount of time collecting fuel, fodder and water from long distances, other family members might be getting engaged in the work provided under NREGS.

Figure 4



Conclusion

The result of the study reveals that NREGA has positive impact on the livelihood of rural people. It is significant improvement on household, income and employment level and also marginal reduction of poverty and migration. The overall growth in employment both (Chamoli and UdhamSingh Nagar) districts were 28.58% in the post-NREGS period. The scheme increases the socio-economic empowerment of rural women of the State. It also decreases the unpaid family work of women especially in Chamoli district. The study has revealed that MGNREGA has provided ample opportunities of employment to the women and weaker sections of the society, has increased their income levels and has reduced poverty level in chamoli district as well as in Uttarakhand state. The study also suggests that the migration would decline significantly if 100 days of employment is provided to each willing working member of household rather than 100 days of employment to each household.

The role of NREGS related earnings is just supplementary to the total earnings of the household which was intended as well. However, increase in work opportunities would increase the relevance of NREGS.

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