Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry

Available online at www.phytojournal.com

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Quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries of northern Karnataka

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Abstract
Increasing population and declining trend in the average size of land holding in India poses a serious problem to the Indian farmers for maintaining a decent quality of life. Quality of life has been defined as the standard of health, comfort and happiness experienced by an individual or group. Quality of life can be maintained when the family possesses the financial ability to purchase the basic necessities. To improve the living condition and quality of life of the rural India, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India was conceptualized Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2005. Hence this study was carried out to study the quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries. The study was carried out during 2018-19 in seven districts of Northern Karnataka namely Dharwad, Uttar Kannada, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Haveri, Belagavi and Gadag to know the change in life style and food habits of M-NAREGA beneficiaries. From each districts 20 beneficiaries were selected making the sample size of 140. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. A scale developed by Patil (2018) was used to collect the data on quality of life of the MNREGA beneficiaries. Suitable statistical tools like mean, standard deviation and indices were used for analysis of the data. It was clear from the study that the overall quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries was 52.70 per cent. It was also observed that, 57.14 per cent of the beneficiary's families belongs to high category of quality of life followed by medium (25.71%) and low (17.14%) category.

Keywords: MNREGA and quality of life

Introduction

In India more than 70 per cent of people lives in rural areas and they are mainly dependent on agriculture and their purchasing power, infrastructure, connectivity, employment etc., are prone to seasonal. So a need was felt to improve the living condition and quality of life of the rural India. In order to address this, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 2005 was notified by Ministry of Rural Development. This law gives a legal guarantee of at least 100 days of wage employment to rural household who comes voluntarily to do unskilled and manual work in a financial year. The act provides the equal opportunities to both the men and women to get benefit and to improve the standard of living. The act provides the work to the beneficiaries within the five kilometers of village. MGNREGA is a big enlightenment in the rural India because it works for the eradication of rural poverty and become helping hand for their families (Khera R. and Nayak G., 2009) [3]. Hence this study was carried out to know the quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries.

Methodology

This study was conducted in seven district of University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad jurisdiction namely Dharwad, Uttar Kannada, Bagalkot, Vijayapura, Haveri, Belagavi and Gadag. From each districts 20 beneficiaries were selected making the sample size of 140. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Pre tested interview schedule was used to collect the data and suitable statistical tools like frequency and percentages were used for analysis of the data. A scale developed by Patil (2018) [6] was used for measuring quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries. The scale consisted of 10 parameters with items within the parameters. The parameters were nutrition, health, education, social participation, outings, housing and physical facilities, relationship, employment & income, environment and financial position. The Quality of Life (QOL) index was calculated to measure the same using the formula.

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$$\text{Quality of life Index} = \frac{\begin{array}{l}\text{Score related to of nutrition + health + education+ social}\\\text{participation+ outings+ housing and physical facilities+}\\\text{relationship+ employment and income+ environment+ financial}\\\text{position}\end{array}}{\text{Maximum possible score for quality of life}} \times 100$$

Results and Discussion

Quality of life of M-NREGA beneficiaries include many aspects nutrition, health, education, social participation, outings, housing and physical facilities, relationship, employment & income, environment and financial position. The ultimate aim of an individual is to lead a happy life. A happy life is one in which the basic needs are met with at least some comforts. Quality of life is not only includes material things but it is the mental status (Channal, G.P., 2016) [1]. Data presented in Table 1 represents the Quality of life of M-NREGA beneficiaries.

Nutrition

Table 1a indicates the nutrition aspects of MNREGA beneficiaries. The overall nutrition index of MNREGA beneficiaries was found to 70.28 per cent. It was seen that all the enterprises all the beneficiaries are consuming cereals/pulses, milk and milk products and fats, oils, sugar and jiggery. The cent per cent consumption of cereals and pulses is because all the respondents' families holds land who grow their own food grains. Cereals like jowar, wheat, maize and rice are staple foods in rural India so their consumption is high. Since all the respondent families also maintain a few milch animals for home consumption, they also consume milk and milk products. They eat well and have good nutrition index. Shortage of food is no longer a problem with country which has reached self-sufficiency in food production. Around 80 per cent of the beneficiaries are consuming green leafy vegetables because they know the importance of vegetables and they are easily available to them in their farms. Less than 50 per cent of the beneficiaries were consuming fruits (46.00%) and dry fruits and nuts (18.00%).The probable reason might be due to high cost and less affordable. The consumption of egg, meat & meat products was found to the extent of 48 per cent as many of them are vegetarians. The results are in line with the results of Yadav and Grover (2010) [7] Karigar (2017) [2].

Table 1: Quality of life of M-NREGA beneficiaries
1a: Nutrition n=140

Sl. No.	Food Items	Indices
1.	Consumption of Cereals/Pulses	100.00
2.	Consumption of fruits	46.00
3.	Consumption of GLV's and other vegetables	80.00
4.	Consumption of milk and milk products	100.00
5.	Consumption of dry fruits and nuts	18.00
6.	Consumption of egg, meat and meat products	48.00
7.	Consumption of fats, oils, sugar and jaggery	100.00
	Nutrition Index	67.85

Health

Data presented in Table 1b reveals the health aspects of MNREGA beneficiaries. The health index was found to be 52.90 per cent. It was seen that 82.85 per cent of the beneficiaries have access to health care facilities like Primary Health Centre's (PHC'S) & doctor and go for regular health check-up. Around 45.70 per cent of the beneficiary's families have no lifestyle diseases like diabetes, high BP and high cholesterol. Since the families under the study had good

nutrition index they also had a good health index. The other reason is that most of the villages now have the minimum medical facilities like primary health centres and doctors. Under the National Rural Health Mission many health care facilities are available to rural people. Increasing awareness creation through mass media has made people conscious of their health. They have begun to go for regular health check up's and some exercises apart from being active in their routine life at home and on the farm. The findings are similar with the results of Yadav and Grover (2010) and Karigar (2017) [2].

Table: 1b. Health   n=140

Sl. No.	Statement/Items	Indices
1.	Capacity to obtain health care facilities like PHC's and doctors	82.85
2.	Regular health check up	82.85
3.	No lifestyle diseases like diabetes, high BP and high cholesterol among the family	45.71
4.	Regular exercise/yoga	-
	Health Index	52.90

Education

Table 1c shows the education index of MNREGA beneficiaries. The education index was found to be 39 per cent. It was observed that, cent per cent of the beneficiaries were sending their children to school. This may be due to education is increasingly being recognized as a path to better employment opportunities and better quality of life. Beneficiaries are now insisting an education of children as they do not want their children to face the uncertainty that they themselves are facing. Nor do they want their children to do the drudgerous work in farm as well as in MNREGA. Moreover there are many government programmes like "Nali Kali", "Coolie india Shalege" to encourage children to go to school and get the dropouts back to school. The results are in line with the results of Yadav and Grover (2010) [7], Karigar (2017) [2] and Patil (2018) [6]

Thirty six per cent of the beneficiaries are sending their children to nearby town for high school and same per cent them are providing equal opportunities to education of boys and girls and transport arrangement for children to travel to school (28.57% each). It was also noticed that no one is ready to give higher education to their children because of financial problems.

Table: 1c. Education n=140

Sl. No.	Statement/Items	Indices
1.	Sending children to school	100.00
2.	Equal opportunities to education of boys and girls	28.57
3.	Sending children to nearby town for high school	36.42
4.	Transport arrangement for children to travel to school	28.57
5.	Facilitating children to acquire higher education-graduation, PG & Ph.D.	-
	Education Index	39.00

Social participation

A look at Table 1d indicates the social participation of

beneficiaries of MNREGA. The social participation index was found to be 49.85 per cent. It was also clear from the table that in 67.50 per cent of the beneficiaries families one or other member attended the meeting conducted by Gram Panchayat, 54.64 per cent of the beneficiaries families actively participated in fairs, field days and festivals at village and involved themselves in village development activities and 32.14 per cent of the beneficiaries families one or the other member is a SHG members.

Table 1d: Social participation n=140

Sl. No.	Statement/Items	Indices
1.	Attending meetings conducted by gram panchayat	67.50
2.	Attending the national festivals like independence day, republic day etc.	54.64
3.	Active participation in fairs, field days and festivals at village.	40.35
4.	Involving in village development activities	54.64
5.	Active participation in SHG activities	32.14
	Social Participation Index	49.85

1e: Social participation n=140

Sl. No.	Statements/Items	Indices
1	Visit to nearby cities for shopping	80.00
2	Going on tours	50.00
3	Visiting relatives	80.00
	Outing Index	70.00

Outings/holidays
It was clear from the table that the holiday's index was found to be 70 per cent. It was observed in the table that 80 per cent the beneficiaries frequently visit nearby cities for shopping and the same per cent of the beneficiaries visit their relative homes. Half of the respondents go to tour once in a year.

With better transport facilities many rural peoples go to the cities for shopping as well as viewing cinemas in the theatres. Though women go less frequently, men go to cities at least once a month to get medicine for children, animals and other inputs needed for crop production. In India tourism is a fast growing sector which has made roots into rural areas. With more cash on hand farming families have also begun to travel. They travel mainly to pilgrimage places through organized tours. The findings are in line with the findings of Patil (2018) [6].

Housing & physical facilities
The results presented in Table 1f reveal that, the housing & physical facilities index was found to be 30.43 per cent.
The average living conditions of rural families are the same for all respondents. Since all respondents are in agriculture, they possess the equipment and tools needed for agriculture. Mode of transport like bicycle and two wheelers are owned by many families. Three fourth of the houses are pucca with minimum facilities to lead a decent life. However facilities like air cooler, refrigerator, washing machine and such others, which are considered as luxurious are lacking in these families. Hence the index is only to the extent of 30 per cent. The findings are in line with the findings of Patil (2018) [6].

Relationship
Table 1g shows the relationship index of MNREGA beneficiaries. It was found to be 62.82 per cent. In India agriculture is a family enterprise and all the members in the family work together. This leads to good relationship between the family members and also increases the co-ordination among the members of the family contributing to greater satisfaction in all aspects. The prevalence of joint family system, the tradition and culture of respect to elders and maintaining the honour of the family in the society contribute to harmonious relationship within the family members. Rural families are more homogeneous, stable, integrated and organically functioning than the urban family. The bonds that binds the members of a rural family are stronger and a last longer than those in case of the urban family.

Table: 1g. Relationship n=140

Sl. No.	Items	Indices
1	Husband & Wife	85.71
2	Father & Children	82.61
3	Mother & Children	76.19
4	Between siblings	79.28
5	Relationship with in laws	42.85
6	Grandparents and Grandchildren	39.76
7	Neighbors	33.33
	Relationship index	62.82

Table: 1f. Housing and physical facilities n=140

Sl. No.	Statements/Items	Indices
1.	Type of house	
a.	Kaccha	26.42
b.	Pucca	73.57
c.	Tiles	-
d.	Concrete building	-
2.	Cooking facilities in home	
a.	Fire wood	100.00
b.	Kerosene	100.00
c.	LPG	25.71
d.	Biogas/Solar	-
e.	Electricity	100.00
3.	Lighting system in house	
a.	Kerosene/candle	82.85
b.	Electricity	100.00
c.	Solar	-
4.	Means of transport	
a.	Bullock	19.28
b.	Motor cycle	73.51
c.	Tactor	-
d.	Jeep/Tempo	-

e.	Bicycle	100.00
5.	Electronic items in home	
a.	Radio	-
b.	TV	100.00
c.	Mobile	10.00
d.	Air cooler	-
6.	Household gadgets at home	
a.	Grinder	-
b.	Mixer	57.14
c.	Refrigerator	-
7.	Furniture at home	
a.	Chair	74.28
b.	Table	-
c.	Cot	9.28
d.	Sopa	-
e.	Cupboard	-
8	Farm implements	
a.	Wooden plough	-
b.	Iron plough	19.28
c.	Harrow	-
d.	Sickle/Spade	71.42
e.	Seed drill	-
f.	Cultivation	-
g.	Hand Sprayer	25.71
9.	Farm Machineries	
a.	Tactor	-
b.	Pumpset	19.28
c.	Power sprayer	-
d.	Power tiller	-
e.	Bund Former	-
f.	Chaff cutter	-
	Housing and Physical facilities index	30.43

Employment and Income

Table 1h indicates the employment and income index of beneficiaries of MNREGA. The employment and income index was found to 31.90 per cent. It was noticed that in 47.85 per cent of beneficiaries' families everyone has employment and the same per cent beneficiaries said that the income that they obtain is sufficient to meet the expenditure. None of the beneficiaries hire labour for farm and home work because of financial crisis and the family members will make arrangements for work within themselves.

Table: 1h. Employment and Income n=140

Sl. No.	Statements/Items	Indices
1	Everyone in the family has employment	47.85
2	Labours are hired for farm and home work	0.00
3	Income is sufficient to meet the expenditure	47.85
	Employment and Income index	31.90

Environment

Results represented in 1i indicate the environment condition of MNREGA beneficiaries. The environment index of the beneficiaries was found to be 85.70 per cent. It was also seen that, cent per cent of the beneficiaries families had drinking water facility and 71 per cent of the beneficiaries families had toilet facilities in their home.

In recent times most villages have access to clean and filtered water due to installation of water purification plants at the community level. These are either installed by the government or the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs). Under the cleanliness drive (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan) the government has provided financial assistance for toilet construct within the homes. This has helped the families to keep their environment clean and also maintain good health. Due to mass media exposure village people have become conscious about the cleanliness and its importance for good health. The findings are in line with the findings of Patil (2018) [6].

Table: 1i. Environment n=140

Sl. No.	Statements/Items	Indices
1	Drinking water facility	100.00
2	Toilet facilities	71.42
	Environment index	**85.70**

Financial position

Table 1j shows the financial position of families of MNREGA beneficiaries. The financial position index was found to be 36.55 per cent. It was clear from the table that, cent of the respondents families had mad insurances and cent per cent of the beneficiaries' families have made some deposits to face uncertainties. Only 20 per cent of the beneficiaries had made some savings.

Table: 1j. Financial n=140

Sl. No.	Statements/ Items	Indices
1	Insurance	100.00
2	Loans	0.00
3	Possession of gold/silver	0.00
4	Savings	19.29
5	Deposit to face uncertainties	100.00
	Financial position index	36.55

Overall quality of life index of MNREGA beneficiaries

Table 2 shows overall quality of life index of MNREGA beneficiaries. The quality of life index was found to be 52.70 per cent. This might be because of poor housing condition, education and employment & income of the beneficiary's families.

Table 2: Overall quality of life index of MNREGA beneficiaries
N=140

Parameters	Indices
Nutrition	70.28
Health	52.90
Education	39.00
Social participation	49.85
Outings	70.00
Housing	30.43
Relationship	62.82
Employment and income	31.90
Environment	85.70
Financial position	36.55
Overall quality of life index	52.70

Categorization of MNREGA beneficiaries based on their quality of life

Table 3 indicates categorization of respondents based on their quality of life. It was seen that, 57.14 per cent of the beneficiary's families belongs to high category of quality of life followed by medium (25.71%) and low (17.14%) category.

Table 3: Categorization of respondents based on their quality of life
N=140

Sl. No.	Category	F	%
1.	Low	24	17.14
2.	Medium	36	25.71
3.	High	80	57.14

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study that, quality of life of MNREGA beneficiaries was found to be quite good. This implies that there is a need for other social, educational and extension interventions that should be given by the gram panchayats for improving their standard of living.

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