

A Study Of Rural Development Schemes In India To Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act MGNREGA

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Abstract:-

With MGNREGA scheme India embarked on an ambitious attempt to battle poverty by guaranteeing employment to those who demanded work. It also aims at transforming the rural areas by scaling up the quality of life of people with guaranteed minimum wages and capital formation within rural economies which can redress poverty and boost overall development in the country. In this article author highlight the economic impact MGNREGA scheme on the overall quality of beneficiaries by gauging different indicators associated with the improvement overall quality of life.

Key Words: MGNREGA scheme, quality of life, economic impact, benefits

❖ Introduction:-

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), also known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) is Indian legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The MGNREGA provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Govt of India is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments. This act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. Roughly one-third of the stipulated work force must be women. Adult members of rural households

submit their name, age and address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his /her photo. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to Panchayat or to Programme Officer. The Panchayat/Programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at Panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid.

❖ Facts that users should know about MNREGA

1. MGNREGA guarantees hundred days of wage employment in a financial year, to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

2. Individual beneficiary oriented works can be taken up on the cards of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, small or marginal farmers or beneficiaries of land reforms or beneficiaries under the Indira Awaas Yojana of the Government of India.
3. Within 15 days of submitting the application or from the day work is demanded, wage employment will be provided to the applicant.
4. Right to get unemployment allowance in case employment is not provided within fifteen days of submitting the application or from the date when work is sought.
5. Receipt of wages within fifteen days of work done.
6. Variety of permissible works which can be taken up by the Gram Panchayaths.
7. MGNREGA focuses on the economic and social empowerment of women.
8. MGNREGA provides “Green” and “Decent” work.
9. Social Audit of MGNREGA works is mandatory, which lends to accountability and transparency.
10. MGNREGA works address the climate change vulnerability and protect the farmers from such risks and conserve natural resources.
11. The Gram Sabha is the principal forum for wage seekers to raise their voices and make demands. It is the Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat which approves the shelf of works under MGNREGA and fix their priority.

❖ **Implementation status**

- The scheme was introduced in 200 districts during financial year 2006-07 and 130 districts during the financial year 2007-08
- In April 2008 NREGA expanded to entire rural area of the country covering 34 States and Union Territories, 614 Districts, 6,096

Blocks and 2.65 lakhs Gram Panchayat.

- The scheme now covers 648 Districts, 6,849 Blocks and 2,50,441 Gram Panchayats in the financial year 2015-16.

❖ **Review of literature**

Mathur (2009) reported on the basis of a study that many job-cards issued to the labourers were found to be incomplete. Often, the inner pages of the job-card in which the work done was to be recorded, was itself found to be missing. Hence, it was quite obvious that the workers were paid less than the stipulated task rate. There was also found a great delay in the payments made to the beneficiaries. Even though the Scheme mandates payment within a fortnight, in some case wages were reported to have been received by the beneficiaries after about six months and in a few they were paid after a period of more than a year (Ramesh and Kumar, 2009). MGNREGS is touted as a powerful policy intervention for the empowerment of rural women (Sabana, 2016) through its strategy of providing livelihood security, democratic governance and social protections (Kaushal and Singh, 2016) which are of great importance to the disadvantaged sections of rural workers, particularly women workers.

❖ **Objectives:-**

1. To examine in detail, the inception, mandate, design and implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.
2. To examine the economic impact of the Mahatma Gandhi

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and its impact on standard of living.

❖ Research methodology

Area of the study: The study was conducted in two districts of Gujarat namely Mehsana and Panchmahal, which were selected purposively for this study. Mehsana is a district located in north Gujarat which has a well-developed agricultural sector; whereas Panchmahal is located in the eastern tribal belt of Gujarat, with a predominantly tribal population and an underdeveloped agricultural sector. Further, it was decided to select two villages from each of these districts. Hence, Kadi and Detroj from kadi block of Mehsana district; and Mor dungara and Sarangpur villages from Godhra block of Panchmahals were selected for the study. b) Sampling framework Out of the four selected villages, it was decided to select 20 respondents from each village who were currently working on the ongoing MGNREGS worksite in that village. Accordingly, 20 Beneficiaries were selected from each of the four villages; making the total number of Beneficiary sample respondents to be 80. Similarly, 80 sample respondents were also selected who were not engaged in MGNREGS works, i.e. they were Non-Beneficiaries of the Scheme. Thus, the total sample respondents from all the four villages totaled at 160.

❖ Conclusion:-

In FY 2016-17, a total of 52 per cent of the Households who demanded employment were provided with it; while in Gujarat, just 38.98 per cent

those who demanded employment were given work. The ratio of employment demanded to employment provided has fallen drastically over the years. Confirming to this trend, this ratio has also fallen in case of Panchmahals and Mehsana districts during the period of FY 2008-09 to FY 2016-17. 3. The number of total person-days of employment generated under MGNREGS in India and Gujarat State show a declining trend. The participation of STs in MGNREGS works has declined over the years both in India as well as in Gujarat State. The participation of Scheduled Tribes was fair enough in Panchmahals but in Mehsana the participation of Scheduled Tribes was almost nil. The participation of Others Category showed increasing trend from FY 2006- 07 to FY 2016-17 in India as well as in Gujarat State. After joining MGNREGS the daily wage rate of the Beneficiaries has increased in a statistically significant manner. A statistically significant difference is observed in the annual household income of the Beneficiaries 'before' and 'after' joining MGNREGS. A majority (54.16 per cent) beneficiaries reported that MGNREGS was helpful to increase their annual household income by more than ₹ 6000. There was a statistically significant increase in the amount of saving of Beneficiaries after joining MGNREGS. Summary, Findings and Conclusion Page 190. There was an increase in the number of Beneficiaries who saved money after joining MGNREGS and also a substantial increase in the number of selected Beneficiaries who saved above ₹ 1500 to ₹ 3000 and above ₹ 3000 per year. The number of Beneficiaries who

saved their money at home declined those who saved their money in banks had increased after their joining MGNREGS. Around 12 per cent of the respondents were completely rid of their debt; and majority of the Beneficiaries repaid their debt at least partially after joining MGNREGS. After joining MGNREGS there was an increase in the amount of expenditure made by selected Beneficiaries on the purchase of household assets. After joining MGNREGS the number of families that migrated together in search of employment declined while the those who did not migrate at all, increased. After joining MGNREGS the number of Beneficiaries who migrated for more than 9 months in a year declined to a great extent; as did the number of beneficiaries who migrated for 6 to 9 months in a year. Only 15 per cent Beneficiaries opined that MGNREGS indeed reduced the need for migration in study villages while 75.93 per cent of the respondents did not think so. Around 41 per cent of the respondents reported that there was no shortage of agricultural labourers experienced in the selected villages after the implementation of MGNREGS. The study found that the consumption of vegetables and edible oil had increased among the Beneficiaries while that of more protein rich food items such as milk and milk products, fruits and pulses did not increase substantially after joining MGNREGS. Majority (95 per cent) of the Beneficiaries reported that there was no change in their expenditure of non-food items after joining MGNREGS.

❖ Limitation of the study

The study is limited to selected villages only, so the results may not be replicable in a wider area. Due to time and cost constraints, the size of the sample is small, which may constrain the results of the study. The secondary data collected about MGNREGS were constantly being updated on its website. Therefore, the data presented in this study may seem outdated in some places.

❖ References

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