

Performance of MGNREGA and its impact on rural areas in Chitradurga district of Karnataka State

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ABSTRACT

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was implemented by the United Progressive Alliance after getting clearance from Parliament in 2005. Based on the successful implementation of MGNREGA UPA has branded the act as “the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world”. Even in the World Development Report (2014), the World Bank termed it a “stellar example of rural development”. MGNREGA was implemented with the objective of providing minimum 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work in a financial year to enhance the livelihood security in rural areas. One more major objective is to create durable assets in the rural areas. At present this is the largest social security act, which has generated 27000.61 Crore Person Days of employment as on 8th Dec., 2018. In this study an effort has been made to study the effectiveness and level of its implementation at the gross root level *i.e.*, in the Chitradurga district in Karnataka state. Due to its geographical location Chitradurga district is one of the drought prone districts in the state. The secondary data analysis relating to the MGNREGA programme in the district highlights that MGNREGA has been able to meet its many objectives like women employment, gender equality, creating rural assets, reduction in migration, etc., but the major gap, which is found that there is some lacunae in providing 100 days of employment to the households (HHs) who are demanding the work.

Key Words : MGNREGA, Rural areas, Assets, Rural manpower programme

INTRODUCTION

After Independence, Govt. of India has tried several programmes like “Rural Manpower Programme”, ‘Crash Scheme for Rural Employment’, ‘Drought Prone Area Programme’, ‘Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Scheme’, ‘Food for Work Programme’ to reduce unemployment to reduce poverty levels and to develop rural India so that agriculture products can be improvised and also quality of life in rural area can be improved. Finally, in 2005 United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government under the leadership of Mr. P.V. Narsimha Rao was able to identify a program which can be long lasting solution to provide employment and food security at rural areas, this programme got clearance from Parliament in the name of “National Rural Employment Guarantee Act” which was later named as “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act”. This act was brought into plan by merging Swaranjayanti Gram Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and National

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Food for Work (NFFWP).

The major objective of the MGNREGA programme is to provide minimum 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work and in addition to this creating durable assets is one more objective of the programme. At the earlier stage of implementation this programme was implemented in selected 200 most backward districts across India in Feb., 2006 and extended to another 130 districts in another one-year time. Based on the outcome and reviews, MGNREGA was implemented in all 625 districts of India from 1st April, 2008.

During the implementation of this programme there were lot of drawbacks and also even the renowned economists have criticized the programme mainly because there is a scope for the misutilization of the programme funds. Since its inception, the team of MGNREGA has actively taken action to overcome the drawbacks in the act and its implementation. These efforts have become the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world. At present MGNREGA is the world largest social programme which has generated 27000.61 Crore person days as on 8th Dec., 2018.

To ensure the effectiveness of the programme, Govt. of India, has ensured the involvement of stake holders starting from block level to gross-root level where this programme is implemented. Budget allocation and plan for implementation of MGNREGA work is worked out based on the feedback received from block panchayats, gram panchayats and Zilla Panchayats. Also third party audit teams and social voluntaries are given full access to audit the implementation and outcome of the programme in all the three tier panchayat raj institutions.

In the process of providing guaranteed employment, MGNREGA has created rural assets like water harvesting structures, canals, plantation, land development, flood control measures, rural infrastructures, etc... Since its inception, MGNREGA has created 3.89 crore rural assets which has increased agriculture products, maintained natural vegetation, rural infrastructure, reduced flood effects, etc. Some major assets created are rain water harvesting tank, Composite water tank, Check dam at various villages, water reservoirs, Irrigation pond irrigation channels, Renovation of natural ponds at various villages. In addition to these the block plantations, canal side plantations, road side plantations at various villages, afforestation in the villages common lands, etc., are taken up. In this way MGNREGA has created various rural assets to improve the livelihood for the people in the rural areas.

Salient Features of MGNREGA:

- Guaranteed 100 days employment for the needy on demand basis
- Generation of rural assets
- Ensuring 1/3rd of Jobs for women beneficiaries
- Equal wages without gender bias
- Unemployment allowance, that is work to be provided with in 15 days from the date of registration or from the date of demand. As per provisions of the act if the work is not provided as scheduled, unemployment allowance needs to be paid to the beneficiary who has registered under the scheme.
- Prerequisite conditions to decide work location
- Management Information system, that is all data like e-muster roll, work demanded and allocated, job card details, fund allocation, work completed, etc., are available on MGNREGA website to ensure transparency in system.

Literature review:

Sebastian and Azeez (2014), study examined the various activities done under MGNREGA such as water harvesting, soil conservation, plantations etc., The study has highlighted the fact that activities done under MGNREGA can bring positive results on environment security, biodiversity and environment conservation if necessary changes are brought in by stake holders, policy makers, professionals to formulate and fine-tune programmes and policies like preparing panchayat level biodiversity register and so on for integrating biodiversity conservation in a localized context.

Tiwari *et al.* (2015), study was mainly to access the impact of MGNREGA activities on environmental services and reduction in Vulnerability. This study was conducted in the villages of Chitradurga District. It was evident that activities like Water harvesting, De-silting tanks, plantations, afforestation works, construction of check dams, etc., have increased the water storage and availability of water for irrigation resulting in increase in agri production and productivity, increased soil fertility and also increased in the area of cultivation.

Reddy and Aswath (2016) in their paper based on the secondary data obtained from official websites and journals noted that this act has addressed 41 per cent of the problem of under employment in rural areas and also it has enhanced the livelihood in rural area by providing employment. Participation from SC, ST and Women was significant and it is increasing year by year since from the inception of the programme. According to the authors the MGNREGA programmes helped in strengthening of gross- root process of democracy.

Carswell and Neve (2013), this study analysed the impact on gender equality and migration level at rural areas due to MGNREGA act. This study was carried out in two villages Allapuram and Mannapalayam in rural Tamil Nadu. During the survey information like occupation, caste, education, debt, their opinion on MGNREGA was obtained and based on the analysis of the it is concluded that MGNREGA was implemented with a large degree of success in Tamil Nadu and is certainly helping the rural people especially women. It was also proved that there was significant political commitment to implement the MGNREGA programme successfully.

Pankaj (2017) in his study he has concluded that the NDA government tried to emphasize asset creation in a target driven in spite of demand driven without altering the major features of the act. Creation of individual assets that holds significant potentialities to change the socio-economic condition of the beneficiaries.

Gopal's (2009) study has proved that social auditing is not that effective in the programmes. Moreover, many things are said and written about the social audits but on ground the facts of social audits are impressive but their implementation is not proper and therefore it is clear that social auditing is not properly addressed.

With the above issues in mind the present paper tries to understand the awareness levels, effectiveness and also the benefits like employment and income generation for the needy in the rural areas. To study the above the paper contains both the secondary and primary data and analysed the same with appropriate statistical techniques.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Effectiveness of the MGNREGA programme in the Study District:**

To understand and study the effectiveness of the programme, a district level data from Karnataka state was selected. The details of the same are presented in the Table 1. The table clearly reveals that Chitradurga district is performing very well in terms of the employment provided

to people and the persons worked per lakh population. The employment is provided is about 11,33,085 person days and per lakh of population about 68 per cent of the HHs have got Employment per lakh of population in the district. Chitradurga district is followed by Raichur, Tumkuru, Davanagere, Vijayapura, Belgavi, Kalaburg, etc., are the other districts who are performing better.

Table 1 : Performance of MGNREGA across various Districts in the State (2017)			
Districts	Employment Provided to Persons	Districts	Total persons worked per lakh Population
Chitradurga	11,33,085.00	Chitradurga	68,280.51
Raichur	11,33,029.00	Ramanagara	61,815.70
Tumakuru	11,28,797.00	Raichur	58,742.32
Davanagere	11,12,135.00	Davanagere	57,164.57
Vijayapura	11,00,425.00	Vijayapura	50,540.09
Belagavi	10,71,025.00	Yadgir	50,465.01
Kalaburagi	10,44,942.00	Gadag	48,098.95
Bagalkote	8,00,965.00	Koppal	47,961.47
Hassan	7,35,933.00	Bagalkote	42,384.66
Ramanagara	6,69,239.00	Tumakuru	42,135.33
Koppal	6,66,626.00	Hassan	41,427.85
Shivamogga	6,28,867.00	Kalaburagi	40,717.43
Yadgir	5,92,596.00	Chikkamagaluru	38,810.21
Kolar	5,83,266.00	Kolar	37,963.14
Dharwar	5,47,827.00	Chamaraja Nagara	37,859.86
Ballari	5,31,193.00	Shivamogga	35,878.81
Mysuru	5,28,061.00	Haveri	32,115.81
Haveri	5,13,104.00	Dharwar	29,660.00
Gadag	5,12,047.00	Bengaluru Rural	28,094.11
Bidar	4,65,381.00	Chikkaballapura	27,690.45
Mandya	4,42,537.00	Bidar	27,322.32
Chikkamagaluru	4,41,645.00	Mandya	24,506.84
Chamaraja Nagara	3,86,470.00	Belagavi	22,407.97
Chikkaballapura	3,47,544.00	Uttara Kannada	22,129.27
Uttara Kannada	3,18,035.00	Kodagu	22,010.97
Bengaluru Rural	2,78,391.00	Ballari	21,658.41
Dakshina Kannada	2,08,825.00	Mysuru	17,595.42
Kodagu	1,22,055.00	Dakshina Kannada	9,993.31
Udupi	75,091.00	Udupi	6,377.91
Bengaluru	40,324.00	Bengaluru	419.10

Performance of MGNREGA in the Study District:

The performance of Chitradurga district has been presented in the Table 2. The table clearly reveals that the employment demanded by the HHs is growing at the rate of 0.49 per cent per annum. Interestingly there is no major change in the employment demanded by the people as it is zero growth rate over a period of five years. However, employment provided for the HHs, persons, employment provided in person days and the families completed 100 days of employment are grown negatively showing that the performance is poor in Chitradurga district in real terms. If this is the case the food security is at threat in the district as the programme is not successful and moreover even Chitradurga district is also drought prone region in the state.

Table 2 : Performance of MGNREGA in Chitradurga District (CGR in %)						
Years	Employment Demanded by the HHs	Employment Demanded by persons	Employment provided for the HHs	Employment provided for persons	Employment provided in persons days	Families completed 100 days of work
2012-13	111,211.00	327,501.00	105,810.00	308,816.00	6,032,063.00	9,072.00
2013-14	131,310.00	423,579.00	74,322.00	225,059.00	4,578,504.00	7,783.00
2014-15	89,742.00	277,351.00	63,047.00	194,317.00	3,128,644.00	2,932.00
2015-16	98,870.00	253,220.00	71,902.00	179,834.00	4,047,972.00	8,227.00
2016-17	131,310.00	423,579.00	74,322.00	225,059.00	4,578,504.00	7,783.00
CGR in %	0.49	0.00	-7.13	-8.21	-6.52	-2.48

The next issue what is studied in this paper is relating to the performance of women in the study district. The data for five years starting from 2013-14 to 2017-18 reveal that the percentage of women in getting employment in the district quite impressive. In the year 2013-14 the total person days worked in the programme is 45,78,504 persons days of which women taken the share of 21,08,177 person days this constitute about 46 per cent. This has gone up to 48 per cent almost it is about 50 per cent of the MGNREGA works. This reveals that since the work is available with in the village surroundings the women are finding it easy to work and therefore, the participation rate is higher (Fig. 1).

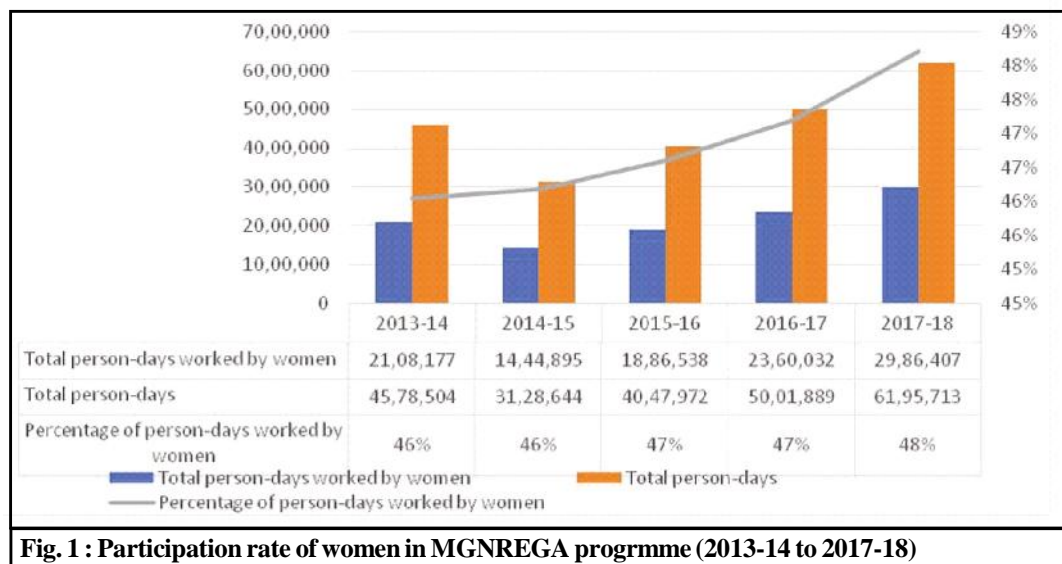


Fig. 1 : Participation rate of women in MGNREGA programme (2013-14 to 2017-18)

MGNREGA works done by various age-group of people are presented in the Table 3. The population taken part in the programme has been divided in to five groups. According to this analysis in Chitradurga district there is a negative growth rate of the various age-group of people getting involved in the work. The decline rate is higher side in case of the first group *i.e.*, in the age group of 18-30 years and it is the lowest in case of the people who are above the age of 60 years. This means that the aged people are trying to concentrate in the wage works with in the village and the youngsters are going to far off places in search of job. Annual percentage change also has shown

the negative rate. The similar trend is noticed even across various age groups.

Table 3 : Age-wise person days worked from 2013-14 to 2017-18

Year/Age group	18-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	>60
2017-18	26,484.00	79,759.00	86,880.00	59,049.00	19,889.00
2016-17	20,884.00	71,092.00	77,068.00	53,507.00	19,425.00
2015-16	16,025.00	52,201.00	58,773.00	39,231.00	13,606.00
2014-15	18,043.00	59,092.00	60,589.00	40,493.00	16,088.00
2013-14	19,755.00	68,041.00	70,934.00	47,448.00	18,870.00
CGR in %	-7.063	-4.903	-6.257	-6.911	-2.894
% Change per Annum	-5.082	-2.938	-3.671	-3.929	-1.025

MGNREGA works completed in Chitradurga District:

Chitradurga was covered in the first phase of NREGA and recorded highest number of activities (10,282 activities) implemented in the state of Karnataka. MGNREGA works were mainly focused on works like renovation of traditional water bodies, De-silting tanks, construction of check dams, land development, tree plantation, afforestation, etc. According to the officials, farmers and the MGNREGA beneficiaries the works have positive impact on Environmental services like increase in ground water level, extent of the cultivation of land and increase in the fertility of the soil. Moreover these works have reduced the vulnerability of agricultural production system and livelihoods in the district.

Table 4 clearly reveals that in the district in all the six talukas the works are seriously taken in the year 2015-16 as they have completed about 97.80 per cent. The following year this has declined to 77.82 per cent and this has further seriously declined to 43.48 per cent. 2017-18 is the worst year as the performance is all the time low. However, on an average for all the years about 77.63 per cent of the works are completed. Some efforts have to be put in to reach the targets of the programme. One thing we need to keep in our mind - in case if there is a good rainfall there will not be major scope for the MGNREGA works and *vice-versa*. Therefore, during the drought years the budget for the MGNREGA works has to be enhanced.

Table 4 : Percentage of works completed in Chitradurga district

Sr. No.	Block	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19 (Up to Dec'18)	Total
1.	Challakere	97.11	78.42	54.41	1.73	78.74
2.	Chitradurga	99.33	65.59	32.48	0.55	76.82
3.	Hiriyur	96.97	70.01	28.47	0.87	73.37
4.	Holalkere	97.16	73.60	40.74	0.98	79.54
5.	Hosdurga	98.36	89.14	57.96	2.56	81.67
6.	Molakalmuru	98.70	81.63	37.45	1.45	73.39
	Total	97.81	77.82	43.48	1.42	77.63

Conclusion:

MGNREGA programme is well known program in the rural areas as it is providing employment, income and in turn the livelihood of the people is taken care. Implementation of MGNREGA works has improved the livelihood and social security in the rural areas. Moreover, the works carried out

under MGNREGA have been providing long lasting solutions in environmental services and vulnerability of Livestock and Agricultural products. The analysis of the secondary data obtained from MGNREGA website is highly evident that MGNREGA is able to achieve its aim like creating rural assets, providing minimum 1/3rd of employment to women out of total person days worked. Hence the gender equality is maintained. It is also evident that there is increase in job card registration year on year resulting increase in demand for work which signifies acceptance of programme by localities and benefits obtained by the people in terms of income received during agricultural lean season. In spite of several corrective actions and measures taken by Govt. of India. Chitradurga district analysis reveals that still, even now, the authorities are not able to provide the guaranteed 100 days of employment to all the beneficiaries, the percentage of households reaching 100 days against demanded are very less and also work is not provided to all the demanded persons. Since this being a major aim of the programme, necessary measures to be taken to bridge this gap.

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