

IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) ON DEBT LEVEL OF HOUSEHOLDS AT SELECTED AREAS OF CUDDALORE DISTRICT, TAMILNADU

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“Poverty is the worst form of violence” Mahatma Gandhi

ABSTRACT

India is known for its culture, heritage, renowned natural resources, ancient historical pilgrims, hospitality etc., despite of these popularities, it is not free from its dark side. The major problem is population. Population grows at greater fast while development aspects have very slow in its growth prospects. Our economy needs to undergo treatment. Treatments emerges since independence in several forms such as Food for Work Programme, Million Wells Scheme, Integrated Rural Development Programme, Indira Awas Yojana, Sampoorna Grameen Yojana, Employment Assurance Scheme, National Food-for-Work Programme, Jawahar Rozar Yojana and so on which was implemented time to time by the Government. It all strived to an extent of battling against the evils of the society particularly rural masses, or in other words it fails to fulfil the ultimate purposes of eradicating poverty, removal of unemployment problems, social injustice, balanced regional development and so on. So there arises the need for special or surgical treatment for poverty and connected issues. Hence the MGNREG Act is enacted to bring balance in our rural economy in terms assured wage employment, poverty apart, illiteracy apart, hunger death apart, debt apart and enhances rural masses by assuring food security.

Keywords: anti-poverty, awareness, debt level, food security, minimum need.

I INTRODUCTION

Since majority of Indian population are living in rural or semi-urban areas, they are moving towards urban for better access of employment, education, improved medical facilities and so on. Hence Migration is the outcome. To control migration, vanish poverty, hunger death, and all other clutches of rural poor MGNREGS gains importance. This is not only a capsule for anti-poverty but also all-round solution to range of problems met out by rural masses. Moreover, MGNREGS could serve better than any other scheme because of its unique features of providing employment opportunity to unskilled labours. It aims at enhancing the livelihood security of the

people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of employment in a financial year, to a rural household whose adult members are volunteer to do unskilled manual work. For the first time in India, it recognises the right to work as a fundamental legal right. Besides providing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year, to rural household, it also aims at developing rural infrastructure by undertaking the generation of employment schemes that address the causes underlying drought, deforestation and soil erosion and so on. Thus, MGNREGS not only improve rural masses simultaneously it aims to promote rural areas too. The common works undertook by MGNREGS includes public works relating to natural resources management, building infrastructure of rural, community and individuals.

II STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Even though MGNREGS seems to be the boon of rural masses there is numerous factors determine the success of the scheme. Presumptions are creating awareness for enrolment and participation of the scheme, registering for job cards, visiting panjayath raj institutions to knew about work allotment, seeking facilities such as first aid in case of accidents, water, shed or shadow, creche, accessing the unemployment allowances in case of non-allotment of works and so on. This is the strong legal framework of rights and entitlements that come together to make hundred days of work per year possible. Moreover, a decade past after its implementation. It is therefore essential that the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA secures importance. Hence the present study aims in assessing how far it generated employment opportunities, how far it has positive impact on income, and how better it could help to reduce expenditure pattern of households.

III OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

General objective of the study is to assess whether the MGNREGS is serving for eradicating poverty and enhancing the lives of rural masses.

Specific objectives of the study are,

- Impact of MGNREGS to improve income levels of households.
- Enrolment of MGNREGS aid to reduce debt levels.

IV METHODOLOGY:

The respondents selected for the study were beneficiaries who registered and working under MGNREGS of Cuddalore district in TamilNadu. The universe is 2,605,914 as per the senses report of 2011 and the population is 764,385. The sample size wasdetermined under Margan sampling decision. The total number of interview schedules collected from the respondents were 384.

TABLE 1 – MGNREGS AND INCOME LEVELS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Distribution based on Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Statistical inference
Income levels of households after join MGNREGS				
<i>Male</i>	158	2.06	1.107	T=.034 Df=382 .973>0.05 Not Significant
<i>Female</i>	226	2.05	1.098	

Source: Primary data

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant association between MGNREGS and Income levels of households.

Research hypothesis (H₁): There is significant association between MGNREGS and Income levels of households.

The first dimensions reveal that mean and S.D value of male (n=158) 2.06±1.107 and female (n=226) 2.05±1.098 beneficiaries perceive MGNREGS improved income levels of house hold. Hence, the calculated value greater than table value (.973>0.05).

Therefore, Null Hypothesis (H₀) rejected. Accepted Research (H₁) Hypothesis.

DISCUSSION:

Table - 1 Despites that the gender wise distribution of beneficiary’s perception towards the impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on income levels of households. The male respondents whose N value is 158, Mean = 2.06. while female beneficiaries whose N value is 226, Mean value is 2.05. Thus, it indicates the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS preferably improves the income level of beneficiaries. The income could be spent for repayment of old debts, purchase of food stuffs, cloths, consumer durable goods, livestock, electronic items especially mobile phones etc., or saved partially for near future.

TABLE 2 – MGNREGS AND DEBT LEVELS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Distribution based on Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Statistical inference
Income levels of households after join MGNREGS				
<i>Male</i>	158	2.27	1.284	T=1.471 Df=382 .142>0.05 Not Significant
<i>Female</i>	226	2.08	1.122	

Source: Primary data

Null hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant association between MGNREGS and Debt levels of households

Research hypothesis (H₁): There is significant association between MGNREGS and Debt levels of households

The second dimensions reveal that mean and S.D value of male (n=158) 2.27 ± 1.284 and female (n=226) 2.08 ± 1.122 beneficiaries perceive MGNREGS reduced Debt levels of households after joining MGNREGS. Hence, the calculated value greater than table value ($.142 > 0.05$).

Therefore, Null Hypothesis (H_0) rejected. Accepted Research (H_1) Hypothesis.

DISCUSSION:

Table - 2 depicts that the gender wise distribution of beneficiary's perception towards the impact of Mahatma Gandhi NREGS on reduction of debt levels of households. The male respondents whose N value is 158, Mean = 2.27. while female beneficiaries whose N value is 226, Mean value is 2.08. Thus, it could be inferred that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS preferably reduces the debt level of beneficiaries. Reduction in debt level of beneficiary signals green which in turn have scope for real enhancement of beneficiaries. Moreover, it can be assumed they may not borrow in future or at least size of borrowing could be minimised.

When we analyse the male, female composition; one third of the beneficiaries could be women as per the Mahatma Gandhi NREG Act. This is hence viewed as a special Act which enrolls and empowers women not only in papers but also on real time. When women participation improved logically it enable the rural women to be confident to face their day to day affairs and in turn it will encourage to give decent life, education, food will be accessed by their children. Moreover, it is assumed the enhanced economic position of rural women support them psychological and social angles thus reduces the evils against them.

V CONCLUSION:

According to National Crime Records Bureau's latest farmer-suicides data, more than 75 % of suicides across the country are due to debt. There are various reasons for borrowing may take place in a country's economy. The purpose of debt may be relating to agriculture or allied activities, running of a business or family, to meet out old debts and so on. Hence our country after the emergence of privatisation and globalisation of New Economic Policy, the scope of small and medium entrepreneurs diminished. They were unable to settle their debts. On the other dimension agriculture is also turned out of trend. The next generation started migrating due to employment opportunities provided by MNC's and corporates. Hence debts continue to be as debts with huge aggregate value which is double or triple in times as compared to original debt volume. From the above table and discussion, it can be concluded that Mahatma Gandhi NREGS viewed as a rainbow scheme which aid the rural peoples to improve their income levels by doing unskilled manual works. Not only it enables to earn more, but also it could help the house holds to settle their debts and arrest migration on other hand. Debt is one among the perceived parameter to measure nation's prosperity. Debt level of households determine the future development of India. Nevertheless, to say which could results in suicide attempts, committing suicide which occupies the news headlines now a days. To address these problems, it is worthy to conclude MGNREGS helps to remove or reduce the size of debts to some extent of the rural masses. Debt is greater burden of rural peoples, since this scheme can cost worthy, which enables the rural poor to eradicate poverty to some better extent.

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