



MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME – AN EVALUATIVE CASE STUDY OF WEST GODAVARI DISTRICT

Dr. P. Lakshmi Narayana

Department of Economics,
Andhra University, Visakhapatnam

Dr. Surya Rao

Director, P.G. Courses & Research
Centre, D.N.R. College, Bhimavaram

In this paper an attempt is made to examine performance of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme considering the case Study of West Godavari District.

Data and Sample:

Primary data constitutes the major data source. A well structured questionnaire is designed and campaigned to obtain the necessary data. At the same time, secondary data also collected to analyze and understand the problem and its dimensions. The data is taped from the UGC sponsored field trip conducted by the Post Graduate Students, Department of Economics, D.N.R. College, Bhimavaram. Sample respondents are selected by adopting the Simple Random Sampling Technique among the job card holders attending for MGNREGS works. For the purpose of the present study, three mandals dominated by Scheduled Tribe households were selected. Thus, Buttayagudem, Gopalapuram and Polavaram mandals were selected. Again, three villages were selected from each selected mandal. Based on the number of job cards 30, 40 and 30 households were selected respectively from three villages namely Muddappagudem, Kothaa Rajanagaram and Patha Rajanagaram of Buttayagudem mandal. Similarly, 40, 50 and 30 households were selected from the three villages namely Guddigudem, Kovvurupadu and Sagipadu villages of Gopalapuram Mandal. Further, 60, 30 and 30 households were selected from the three villages namely LND Peta, Manugopala and Polavaram mandal. Thus, altogether the study is based on a sample of size 340 such that 100, 120 and 120 households were selected from the three mandals namely Buttayagudem, Gopalapuram and Polavaram. The data is collected during the second week of February 2011.

Major Employment Programmes in India:

Alleviation of poverty and provision of employment remains a major challenge before the Government. While there has been a steady decline in rural poverty over the last two decades, there were 244 million rural poor (37 per cent of the rural population) in the country in 1993-94, but it declined to 28.3 per cent during 2004-05 as per the latest available estimates. Acceleration of economic growth, with a focus on sectors which are employment-intensive, facilitates the removal of poverty in the long run. However, this strategy needs to be complemented with a focus laid on provision of basic services for improving the quality of life of the people and direct State intervention in the form of targeted anti-poverty programmes. The following are the



major employment programmes implemented in the country in recent years. These are Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): April 1, 1999; Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY): September 25, 2001; The Swarana Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana: December 1 1997; Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY): 1992; The National Rural Employment Programme (NREP): April 1, 1989; The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP): August 15th, 1983; The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP): 1978-79; The Scheme of Training Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM): 1979; Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY): February 1989; The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS); 1996-97; National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP): 2004.

The researchers have concluded that the following problems existed and caused failure of the major employment Programmes implemented in India so far Lack of awareness, lack of planning, quality of assets created not always of requisite standard, reports of false muster rolls, problems in payment: often less than prescribed wages, disparity between wages paid to women and men, contractors persisted, no comprehensive data-base, inadequate capacity of implementing agencies and no public accountability have been observed reasons for the limited success of these programmes.

The latest employment generation programme NREGS has been designed to plug all the loopholes and made massive allocation and applied the people's participation method by mandatory social audits and signing of muster rolls by workers.

Rural unemployment has sharply accentuated in India in the recent years between 1993-94 and 1999-2000 rural employment grew at the annual rate of 0.58 per cent while the growth rate of labour force was much higher, an increasing number of rural households have faced complete collapse of their incomes. This miserable plight of the rural households has driven an unprecedented numbers of farmers to commit suicide. Recognizing these humanitarian crises, the government of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) at the centre made a commitment in its Common Minimum Programme (CMP), that it would immediately enact an employment Guarantee Act. The draft proposed by the National Advisory Council (NAC) envisaged legal guarantee to every households in rural areas for 100 days for doing causal manual work.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme:

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) enacted by the Parliament of India on 7th September 2005 is a landmark legislation which empowers the rural population with the legal right to demand work. NREGA can be viewed as a shift from supply side to a demand side approach. The Act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household. On February 2, 2006 the NREGA came into force, in its first phase, covering 200 districts across the Country. In the second phase beginning 2007-08 it has enhanced to cover other 130 districts making the total coverage to 330. In these districts, the earlier wage employment programmes like the National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP) and Sampoorna



Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) were merged with NREGA. Further, other 266 districts have been notified on 28th September, 2007 where the NREGA came into force with effect from 1st April 2008. Thus, fulfilling the commitment of the UPA Government and implemented in all the districts of the Country. This is the largest ever public employment programme visualized in human history in rural areas over the last 60 years in India. Recently, the scheme was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

MGNREGS in Andhra Pradesh is extended to all the 22 districts covering 1098 mandals and 21860 grama panchayats by July 2011. So far, it has issued job cards to 1,22 crore individuals spreading across 69002 habitations in Andhra Pradesh. MGNREGS in the state so far provided wage employment to 91,33,801 households covering 1,83,30,066 individuals, since its inception in 2005. Further, it has provided wage employment to 85,74,626 men (47%) and 97,55,440 women (53%). Moreover, the scheme so far covered 46,45,346 persons belonging Scheduled Caste (25%), 25,28,733 persons belonging to Scheduled Tribes (14%) and 1,08,365 Physically Challenged (PH) persons (0.6%). The scheme so far completed 15,95,586 works with an expenditure of Rs. 2,31,73,65 lakhs. The scheme so far spent Rs. 1,23,34,03 lacs on wages and Rs. 33,36,64 lakhs on materials skilled wages. The scheme so far generated total numbers of 1,36,23,62,071 Person days and on the average paid Rs. 90.53 as wage rate. Total number of 34,72,311 households so far completed 100 days of wage employment. Further, the ratio of labour versus materials in the scheme stood at 79 to 21 per cent.

Facts & Figures relating to MGNREGS-AP at a Glance

Total No of Districts under MGNREGS	
Total No of Mandals	
Total No of Grampanchayats	
Total No of Habitations	
Total No of Jobcards Issued	
Total No of SSS Groups	
Total No of Labour in SSS Groups	
	Financial Year of 2011-2012



Source: MGNREGS, Ministry of Rural De

Conclusions:

The study arrived at the following broad co

1. Based on the average age, it is inferred that MGNREGS workers are in the productive age group.
2. The ratio of male to female MGNREGS workers is 1:1.
3. The analysis clearly implies that only 10% of workers belong to OC community, so the rest belong to weaker sections of the society.
4. About 70% of the respondents reported that the tribal culture of existence of joint family system is still prevalent.
5. 57%, 17%, 12% and 13% of Sample reported to be engaged as labour, depending on their occupations respectively.

Works in-progress	Number	9,15,555	-
	Value-(Rs in Lakhs)	1,09,40,45.64	-
Total No of Works Completed	Number	62,671	15,9
	Value-(Rs in Lakhs)	3,74,10.19	2,31,73
Total Expenditure	Wages (Rs in Lakhs)	13,95,35.25	1,23,34
	Material and Skilled Wages(Rs in Lakhs)	3,62,81.18	33,36
	Contingency (Rs in Lakhs)	98,24.44	7,95
	Total (Rs in Lakhs)	18,56,40.87	1,64,66
Wage Employment Provided	Household (Nos)	38,42,246	91,3
	Individual (Nos)	67,78,083	1,83,3
	Men (Nos)	29,97,816	85,7
	Women (Nos)	37,80,267	97,5
	SC Individual(Nos)	18,31,983	46,4
	ST Individual(Nos)	10,68,043	25,2
	Disabled (Nos)	46,634	1,0
Total No of Person days generated		13,99,95,863	1,36,23,6
Average Wage rate per day per person (Rs.)		99.67	
Average No of days employment provided per Household		36.44	-
Total No of Households completed 100 Days of Wage Employment		2,20,869	34,7
% payments generated within 3 days		49.53	-
Labour Vs Material (%)		79.36	20.64
		78.71	



6. The sources of information relating to MGNREGS are found to be village labourers (34%), Neighbours (20%), Officials (13%), Sarpanch (21%) and media (5%).
7. The average number of work available per annum is found to be about 78 days.
8. About 80% of respondents expressed satisfaction with regard to implementation of MGNREGS.
9. About 77% of sample MGNREGS workers expressed that the scheme is very much useful.
10. Majority of the sample MGNREGS workers expressed that though the scheme is good, yet the wage rate is to be enhanced.
11. About, 72% of the sample MGNREGS workers accepted that the scheme is very much useful to fill the gap of seasonal unemployment.
12. Women expressed happiness appreciated over non discrimination of wage rate in the scheme.
13. Only 35% of the sample MGNREGS workers reported that their incomes are being increased with the scheme.
14. 70% of the sample MGNREGS workers accepted that the scheme enabled them to have consumption of better food package.

Thus, broadly the study observed that, MGNREGS fill the gap of seasonal unemployment, subsistence incomes, bring out qualitative change in food consumption package, promote welfare of women and children, reduces debt burden, and hence, improves overall livelihoods of rural poor households. Scientific management of the employment scheme is central to the success in terms of delivering the benefits to the targeted rural poor.

Policy Suggestions:

Despite the merits and advantages of MGNREGS that are observed, the following are the policy changes suggested for effective implementation of MGNREGS:

1. Payment of wages through banks may be best solution, since payment through SHGs also is found to be not smooth.
2. Wage disparity seems to appear between rural and urban rates and hence, it is necessary to hike the wage rate.
3. MGNREGS should be directed to convert uncultivable lands of rural poor into cultivable productive assets of the rural poor through the better implementation of employment guarantee schemes.

MGNREGS should be so planned to enhance the capacities of the rural workers, develop leadership skills among the youth to involve in better implementation of MGNREGS.