



## IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) ON RURAL WOMEN IN RAYALASEEME REGION OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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### **Abstract**

*The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), 2005 is landmark legislation in Indian history of social security legislation after independence. Enacted after a successful struggle for an employment guarantee legislation, this legislation is a partial victory towards a full-fledged right to employment in any developing country. For the first time, right to work has been made a legal compulsion and entitlement for unemployment allowances in case of non-allotment of employment assured through this act. The present study covers Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh and selecting poor rural women who are effectively involved in MGNREGS works. It is found that if the MGNREGS is undertaken on a scale and implemented well, it can reduce poverty at the bottom level as well as it can empower the poor rural women in the short run. The multiplier analysis has demonstrated the positive impact of MGNREGS on social and political upliftment of rural women in the study area.*

**Key words:** *Rural Developmental Programmes, MGNREGS, Empowerment, and Rural women.*

### **Introduction**

Development is a subjective and value-loaded concept and, hence, there cannot be a consensus as to its meaning. The term is used differently in diverse contexts. It basically means ‘unfolding’ revealing or ‘opening up’ something which is talent. When applied to human beings, it therefore means unfolding or opening up their potential powers. Generally speaking the term development implies a change that is desirable. Since what is durable at a particular time, place and in a particular culture may not be desirable at other places or at other times at the same place and in the same culture milieu. It is impossible to think of a universally acceptable definition of development. But, generally speaking, development could be conceptualized as a set or vector of desirable societal objectives or development index, which does not decrease over time. Development is cherished by all individuals, communities and nations, irrespective of their culture, religion and special location. Some of the objectives that are usually included in the set are as follows.

1. Increase in real income per capita (economic growth).
2. Improvement in distribution of income (equity).
3. Political and economic freedom.
4. Equitable access to resources, education, healthcare, employment opportunities and justice.

Thus, the concept is applicable at all levels ranging from individuals to communities, and nations and the world as a whole.

### **Rural Development**

Since time immemorial, India has been still continues to be and will remain in the foreseeable future a land of village communities. As a matter of fact, the village was the basic unit of administration as far back as the vedic age. There is a reference to gramini (village leader) in the rigveda, the oldest of Indian scriptures. The predominantly rural character of India’s national economy is reflected in the every high proportion of its population living in rural areas. It was 89 per cent in 1901, 83 per cent in 1951, 80 per cent in 1971, 74 per cent in 1991 and 72 per cent in 2001. with more than 742 million of its population living in rural areas and with agriculture- including forestry and fishing –contributing about 18 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices in 2007. No strategy of socio –economic development for India that neglects rural people and agriculture can be successful. The rural character of the economy and the need for regeneration of rural life was stressed by Mahatma Gandhi.



Gandhi further wrote in Harijan on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1936, “I would say that if the village perishes, India would perish too. It will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of village life is possible only when it is no more exploited”.

Rural development is, therefore, an absolute and urgent necessity in India now and will continue to be so in future. It is the ‘sine qua non’ of development of India.

### **Development and Change**

Development is both a cause and a consequence of change. There is a two –way relationship between them, that is, development influences and influenced by change. The change implies a physical, technological, economic, social, cultural, attitudinal, organizational or political change. Whereas all manifestations of development can be traced to some change somewhere, sometimes not all changes lead to development. A change may be either for better (development) or for worse (retrogression) in the context of rural development, a change may be considered to be an instrument which can be used to promote rural development in India. The introduction of technological changes in the mid -1960s (new high-yielding varieties of crops, fertilizers, improved farm machinery and pesticides) led to the so called Green Revolution in agriculture. Similarly, technological innovations such as modern milk processing and feed processing plants, artificial insemination of dairy animals and organisational innovations such as the Anand pattern dairy cooperatives introduced in India on the large scale in the early 1970s under the operation flood programme contributed significantly to the modernization and development of the dairy industry of the country. Elsewhere, such as in Taiwan and the peoples Republic of China, agricultural development was largely a result of institutional reforms, especially land reforms and technological advances. Karl Marx was one of the great advocates of revolutionary (socio-economic) change as an instrument of development.

A change may occur naturally or autonomously, or may be induced. A development manager may accelerate the pace of development by both including a desirable change in a given system and by properly directing the autonomous change. It is important that likely impact of a contemplated change on various segments of the society be carefully evaluated ex ante (before the change is introduced)

### **Review of literature**

Appra Rao Rajulu and Balakotaiah (2016)<sup>1</sup> they stated that by and large the MGNREGS is being implemented well in Vizianagaram district. Right from registration, issuing cards and allotment of work have done as per the norms of the Act. It has been observed that the key man in the whole programme is the Field Assistant and he has to be watched carefully. About 84.4 per cent of the sample respondents completed more than 100 days of work with an average wage of Rs.131 during 2014-2015. The study found that about 15 per cent of the sample respondents reported that political interference in the proceedings of the MGNREGS. Awareness about medical provisions and worksite facilities has been reported good number in the study areas. They suggest that the MGNREGS has immense potential for initiating the socio-economic development of the Tribal communities. The study shows, a majority of Scheduled Tribe respondents perceived that the MGNREGS had led to more employment generation in the interior rural areas and hence stopped the migration of the people in search of jobs. Therefore, delivering the potential benefits to the target groups requires significant institutional reforms at all levels. This will help to bring in the transparency and accountability that are important for efficient utilisation of the resources for the maximum benefit of these communities. For this micro level execution is needed to find out problems involved in implementation of the scheme in Tribal areas.

Ravindar (2016)<sup>2</sup>, he is conducted a study on “Empowerment of Women through MGNREGS: a study in Warangal district of Telangana State”. He found in his study that number of days of employment got is less than 50 in case of 80 percent respondents and work is not provided on demand and the average wage earned is Rs 60/ which is very much lower than mandated wage of 180 and district average wage of Rs 102.(aggregate for men and women). It is also found that, participation of women in decision making over family affairs is 98 percent, 30 percent increase (on aggregate) in the incomes of the respondents due employment provided by MGNREGS and ninety percent respondents are carrying out transaction with banks and other agencies on their own. Finally he



concluded that Women's decision for participation and their share in NREGA jobs is hindered by various factors such as structural problems, ineffective and improper implementation of scheme, social attitudes, exploitation and corruption.

Karinjimalar.R., (2017)<sup>3</sup> he is conducted a study on "Impact of MGNREGP on Women Empowerment among respondents of Tiruvarur District, Tamil Nadu, India R. Kurinjimalar". He found that there was an existence of unemployment in Tiruvarur district in agriculture during summer season. To avoid this seasonal employment, there was a necessity to work with MGNREGP. Even though they could not control the effects of poverty fully, there was a considerable improvement. Before the implementation of MGNREGP, more than half of the respondents from this area were below poverty line. But the situation was improved in terms of employment, increase in income, savings, and willingness to buy essential goods and there was a considerable reduction in the level of poverty. Hence, we may conclude that MGNREGP have empowered the women respondents partially in the study area.

Santosh singh et.al. (2018)<sup>4</sup> they conducted a study on "women's Empowerment and MGNREGA: Exploratory Study in Pauri Garhwal District, Uttarakhand, India". They collected data from 150 MGNREGS beneficiaries from five gram panchayats (GPs) of Kaljikhil block in Garhwal District. They found that the involvement of women in MGNREGA led to empowerment of rural women in the realms of education, savings, and access to credit, social participation and cash income earned through income generating activities.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Having well designed rural employment generation to manual labour, MGNREGA opened new portals for women employment across the country. Women population and labour share are given due weightage in the Act to enhance the opportunities for employment and income levels. It is the sustained effort of the academics and activists for the introduction act to reduce poverty among marginalized sections of the society. There are number of provisions which are clearly meant for female work force in rural India. No restriction for number of women participation from a household and equal wage for both men and women is the innovation of MGNREGA. It arranges child care facilities at work sites for children of female workers. But the women workers have a low awareness about the provisions of MGNREGA. The accessibility is major challenge for women workers. Some field level studies have observed that there is delay in payment of wages in some parts of Anantapuramu, Kurnool, YSR Cuddappa and Chittoor districts. Women workers have been more prone to harassment at the worksites. There is an absolute poverty of worksite facilities at major number of work sites. All these drawbacks preventing the women to actively participate in the MGNREG programme. Hence, the study looks in to all these problems faced by women workers employed in MGNREGS in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.

### **Significance of the Study**

The proposed study assumes significance in the context of the improvement of programme implementation strategy in the back word region. The suggestions and findings of the study would be useful not only in identifying the bottlenecks in implementation of the programme but also in throwing light on the needed measures to ensure faster rate of attaining the goals. Since the study is an exploratory and empirical in nature, it would be helpful in filling the research gap in this area to considerable extent.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Though the general objective of the study is to look in to the specific impacts of MGNREGS on women, the specific objectives of the study are as follows.

1. To study the rural developmental programme in India
2. To analyse the impact of MGNREGS on socio and political development of rural women in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh.
3. To offer the suitable measures for upliftment of rural women in study area.



### Methodology

This study is exploratory in nature. The statistical data for the study have been mobilized both from the primary and the secondary sources. Primary data will be collected from the women beneficiaries of Anantapur, Kurnool, Chittoor and YSR Kadapa districts of Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh through a well designed interview schedule. Apart from canvassing the interview schedule, relevant field level data/information will also be collected through formal discussions with the implementing staff at field level. The secondary data will be collected from different reports published by Panchayat and Rural Development Department (Government of Andhra Pradesh), Ministry of Rural Development (Government of India), Registrar General - Census of India, Directorate of Economics and Statistics (Government of Andhra Pradesh), the information is also collected from MGNREGS implementing agency (DWMA) of Rayalaseema districts, reports submitted by vigilance teams, social audit teams, annual reports, books, journals and periodicals. The data thus collected, will be analyzed for specific interpretation by employing required statistical tools.

### Sampling

The provisions of MGNREGS have been extended to all sections of the poor irrespective of sex, social and political status of the rural families. For selecting the universe for the study, a multistage and purposive sampling technique will be adopted in selecting the Mandals and the groups. At the first stage, it is proposed to select Four districts in Rayalaseema Region. In the second stage, from each district one revenue division will be selected. In the third stage two mandals from each revenue division will be selected. In the fourth stage, from each mandal two village panchayats will be selected. In the fifth stage 30 women beneficiaries of MGNREGS will be selected from each village panchayat. Finally, altogether four revenue divisions, eight Mandals, 16 Village Panchayats, 480 women beneficiaries will be selected. Thus, the total universe for the study constitutes 480 respondents.

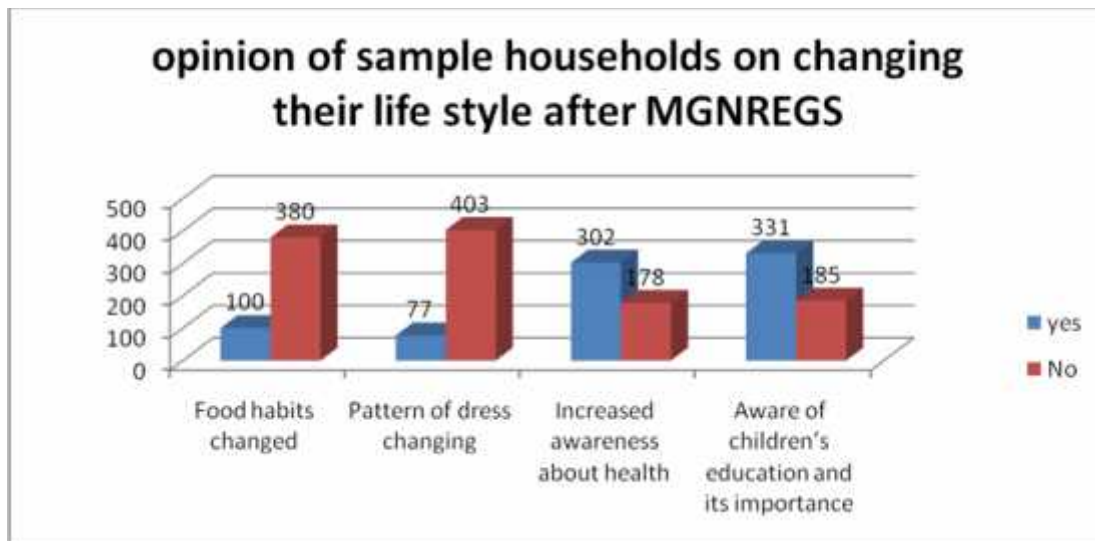
### Field Analysis

#### Social Development

**Table-1; Impact of MGNREGS on Changing Behavior of Household in Rayalaseema Region**

S.No	Aspects	Opinion	
		Yes	No
1	Food habits changed	100 (21.00)	380 (79.00)
2	Pattern of dress changing	77 (16.00)	403 (84.00)
3	Increased awareness about health	302 (63.00)	178 (37.00)
4	Aware of children's education and its importance	331 (69.00)	185 (31.00)

Source: Field Survey





The details of impact of MGNREGS on awareness of different activities in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh is presented in table 1. It shows that 21 per cent of the sample households have stated that change of food habits after the MGNREGS, 16 per cent of the MGNREGS workers change their dressing pattern, 63 per cent of the MGNREGS workers have aware about the diseases and health care, 69 per cent of the workers aware of children’s education and its importance because of their participation in MGNREGS programmes. It can be concluded that the workers are concentrating on health and their children education.

**Table-2 ; Impact of MGNREGS on Different Activities of Sample Households**

S.No	Particulars	Opinion	
		Yes	No
1	Fulfill all desires of children’s	115(24.00)	365(76.00)
2	Increased social status	67(14.00)	413(86.00)
3	Village conditions are improved	192(40.00)	288(60.00)

Source: Field Survey

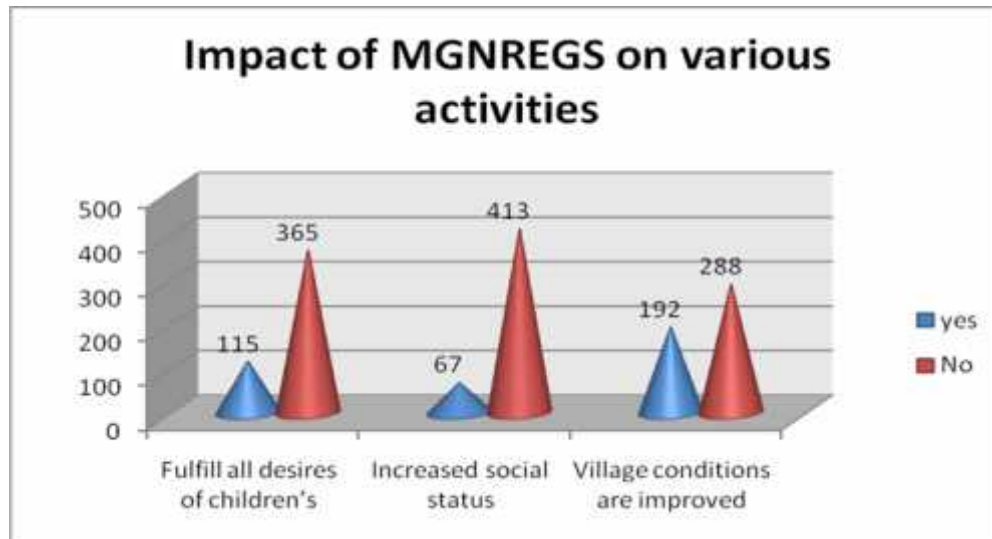


Table 2 shows that the details of sample respondents and their opinion on the development of society through the MGNREGS programme in the selected study area. Table indicates that 115 sample households stated that they serving all desires of their children through MGNREGS and the remaining are not agree the said statement. In the matter of MGNREGS helped for raising social status of sample respondents, 14 per cent have positively responded and the remaining have negative response about that statement. 40 per cent of the sample households stated their positive opinion on development of villages through MGNREGS rest of 60 per cent are not agree that statement. It is clearly stated that majority of the sample households have not positive opinion said that all the statement.

**Table -3: Impact of MGNREGS on children’s education of sample households**

S.No	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage to total
1	No drop-out of children’s	48	10.00
2	Choosing the higher education	77	16.00
3	No change	355	74.00
	<b>Total</b>	480	100.00

Source: Field survey

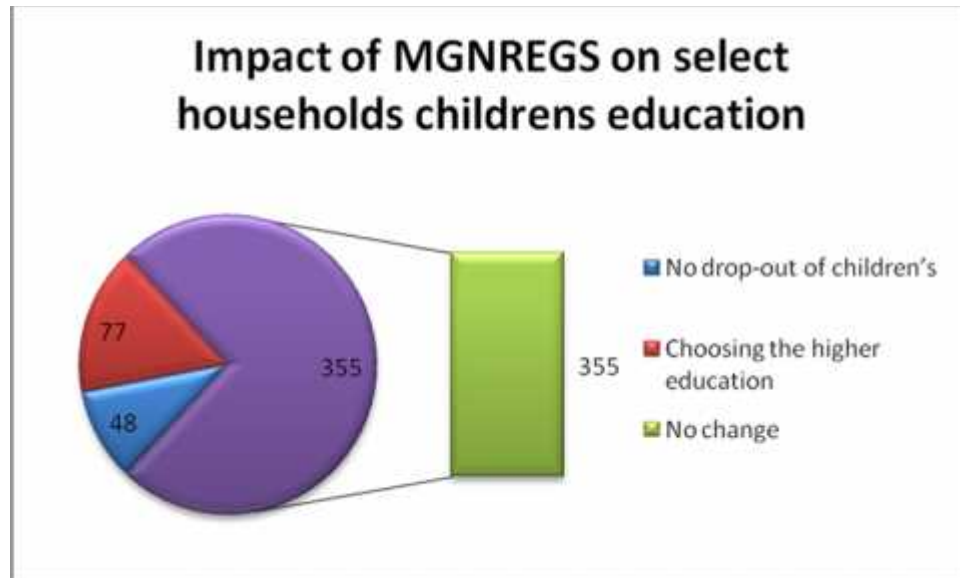


Table 3 depicts that the impact of MGNREG on sample household children education in the study area. It is found that out of 480, 355 sample households told that there is no change our childrens education after working under the MGNREGS programme in the study area followed 77 respondents are stated that change in decision for opting higher education of our children's because of the big amount is received at a time after completion of work, 48 sample households are said that there is no drop-out of children's respectively in the study area.

### Political Development

**Table- 4: Awareness/ opinion on social and political activates of MGNREGS women in Rayalaseema Region**

S.No	Issue and mode of participation	Before Mgnregs	After Mgnregs
1	Membership of social organization	34 (07.00)	96 (20.00)
2	Attending meeting of social organization	29 (06.00)	48 (10.00)
3	Position held in political parties, nominated / elected in local institutions	24 (05.00)	38 (08.00)
4	Not involved	393 (82.00)	298 (62.00)
	<b>Total</b>	480 (100)	480 (100)

Source: Field Survey

As presented in table 5.14 a small number of female respondents have reported involvement of being the members of social organization. But, such a proportion of female members have increased (from 7 per cent to 20 per cent) after taken the MGNREGS activity in the study area.

The percentage of women involved in attending meeting of social organizations before MGNREGS works have increased (from 6 per cent to 10 per cent) after MGNREGS activity. The percentage of women households executive positions in the local level committees of political parties before taken the MGNREGS works activity has increased (from 5 per cent to 8 per cent) after taken the MGNREGS works activity. It implies that there is a small increase in the status of women holding executive positions in the local level committees of political parties after taken the MGNREGS work activity.



### Conclusions

The present study shows that if the MGNREGS is undertaken on a scale and implemented well, it can reduce poverty at the bottom level as well as it can empower the poor rural women in the short run. The multiplier analysis has demonstrated the positive impact of MGNREGS on incomes, education and economic upliftment in the study area. From the above analysis it is concluded that the performance of MGNREGA is not full satisfactory. The scheme could not ensure the 100 days job guarantee to the majority of the job card holders. Even we observed that the scheme fails in respect of providing employment avenues to the unemployed in a large scale. In fact the tune and essence of the Act could shine in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Though MGNREGA has positive impact on political awareness and social dimensions in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The gained benefits of women as community can be understood by increased presence in the gram-sabha, increasing number of women in speaking out in the meetings, increasing capacity of interaction etc. This unique feature little bit found in study areas too. But the poor implementation across the nation (such as lack of child care facility, worksite facility and illegal presence of contractors) accrued the gender sensitiveness of this Act. Certain initiatives and changes should be taken to remove these barriers. The valuable gains should not be derailed for poor implementation.

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