

**BANKING HABITS AMONG RURAL WOMEN-A STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MGNREG WORKERS IN KODUNGALLUR TALUK****SEFIYA K.M***Assistant Professor, P.G.Department of Commerce, MES Asmabi College, Thrissur, Kerala.***ABSTRACT**

*The Government has framed different programmes/schemes to uplift the women from poverty and vulnerability of life. One such women friendly programme is Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) which was enacted in 2005. The term Mahatma Gandhi was added on 2 October 2009 to the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, before that it was called as National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, which is landmark legislation in the history of India's social security legislation after independence. The Act was notified on September 7, 2005 and came into force on February 2, 2006. The objective of this Act is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Wages are payable only through bank accounts. Another unique feature of implementation of NREGS in Kerala is that there is total financial inclusion of each and every worker; that is, the wages are paid only into the individual bank accounts of workers, and no exception has been made till date. This study revealed that all employees are savings bank account holders. Their bank accounts are only used for withdrawing their remuneration. No innovative banking functions are used by them because of their lack of awareness and knowledge.*

**Key words:** *Innovative banking, MGNREG, Empowerment, Anti-Poverty Initiative.*

**INTRODUCTION**

A large segment of Indian womanhood still suffers deprivation and discriminatory attitudes. It is necessary to mobilize the vast women power, if the country has to progress in all spheres of development. Empowerment of women is a long and difficult process which is to be promoted with full public support and this could be successful only when those women living at the lower strata who have been suppressed by the male dominated society taking undue advantage of their lack of education and poverty, can rise up to claim their rightful place in their own society. Gender is the inevitable push factor for growth and development of a nation like India. In India, women constitute a major share of chronically poor population. The Act aims to achieve the objective of giving citizens right to work as enunciated in the article 41 of the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India. If an applicant is not provided employment within 15 days he / she shall be entitled to unemployment allowance. The NREG Scheme in Kerala was started on February 5, 2006 in two districts (Palakkad and Wayanad) and it started from April 1, 2007 in two more districts (Idukki and Kasargod) and the remaining ten districts, it started from April 1, 2008. Employment Guarantee Scheme would be a substantial boost in income and purchasing power of rural people especially among rural women. MGNREG programme worked as the nucleus of a concerted and convergent anti-poverty initiative. As the wages are paid into Bank accounts the habit of thrift which was already inculcated through the Kudumbasree experiment has further been strengthened through the programme. As the Bank deposits are increasing, the intra-household status of the women has also been improving commensurately as she controls substantial cash resources and withdrawal can be only on her decision. Innovative banking programmes in rural area are credit card system, ATM/debit card system, EFT, Kissan card, Internet banking, mobile banking, KIOSK deposit system etc.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Amarthyasen, (1975) considered employment is one, which gives income to the employed, yields output and gives a person recognition of being engaged in something worthwhile. Shah (2008), "MGNREGA places a ban on contractors and their machines. It mandates payment of statutory minimum wages and provides various legal entitlements to workers. It visualizes the involvement of local people in every decision-whether it be the selection of works and work-sites, the implementation of projects or their social audit." Sudha Narayan (2008), studied the

women participation and explained that the childcare and participation of women in MGNREG. Sunny (2008), studied about the all India female work force participation (estimated through Census and NSS data) and the determination of women work participation.

Palanichamy (2011), in his work “A Study on MGNREGP in Thuinjapuram block Thiruvannamalai district in TamilNadu” reported that there is a significant increase in the socio economic conditions of beneficiaries under the study area and MGNREGP has significantly improved the employment opportunities.

Sengupta (2009), observes that NREGS can thus become a very effective instrument in planned development, creating jobs and purchasing power for the millions of unskilled and semi-skilled people in rural areas. Indian policy makers now have an effective instrument for extending public works, but the government needs to show enough willpower to use that instrument effectively, not only as anti-poverty programme but also as a major instrument for development planning.

### OBJECTIVES

1. To know about the effectiveness of innovative banking functions among rural women workers.
2. To acquire knowledge about the challenges faced by rural women, while adopting innovative banking services.
3. To know about the level of awareness among women workers in banking services.

### METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the study. Primary data were collected from 55 MGNREG women workers belonging to Kodungallur Taluk. All respondents are Aadhar card holders and bank account holders. The study was focused on women specifically; the interview with women workers provided insights into the significance of banking habits of rural women and highlighted their level of participation of banking activities. Secondary data were collected from periodicals, journals and research thesis. Data analyses are explained below.

**Table-1 Age wise Classification**

Age	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 30	17	31
31-40	24	44
41-50	10	18
51-60	4	7
Above 60	0	0
Total	55	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the table it is clear that out of 55 respondents 24 respondents are belonging to the age group of 31-40, 17 are belonging to less than 30 years of old and 10 belongs to the age group of 41-50.

**Table-2 Educational Qualification**

Qualification	No of respondents	Percentages
Lower Primary	17	31
Upper Primary	23	42
SSLC	9	16
Pre-degree/Plus Two	6	11
Illiterate	0	0
Total	55	100

*Source: Primary data*

From the study it is clear that 42 percentages of respondents have upper primary educational qualification, 31 percentages have Lower primary level qualification and 9 percentages have SSLC. No illiterate persons are there in the group.

**Table-3 Annual Income of Respondents**

Annual Income(Rs. in lakh)	No of respondents	Percentage
Below one	26	47
1-3	23	42
3-5	6	11
Total	55	100

Source: Primary data

From the table, the annual income of 26 respondents have the amount of below one lakh rupees, 23 respondents have the level of income is 1-3 lakhs and 6 respondents have 3-5 lakhs rupees.

**Table-4 Opinion about Where Banking Services are Needed for Growth**

Opinion	No of respondents	percentage
Helpful for growth	30	54
Not helpful for growth	25	46

Source: Primary data

Table 4 cleared that 30 respondents have an opinion about the banking habits are needed for economic growth and 25 have no idea about it.

**Table-5 Duration of Bank Accounts for Women Workers**

Duration(years)	No of respondents	percentage
Less than 5	30	55
6-10	19	35
11-15	5	9
16-20	1	1
More than 20	0	0
Total	55	100

Source: Primary data

From the study it is clear those 30 respondents have an account in the bank for less than five years,19 respondents have an account holder in a bank for more than five years and 5 respondents have an account in a bank for 11-15years.

**Table-6 Problems Faced By MGNREG Women Workers among Availing Banking Services**

Lack of awareness	Mean	37.60
	SD	40.85
Lack of availability	Mean	39.80
	SD	38.75
Poor proximity to bank	Mean	41
	SD	47.92
Lack of co-operation from bank	Mean	41.80
	SD	55.17
No proper guidance	Mean	40.40
	SD	42.91
No trained staff	Mean	31.40
	SD	14.69

Source: Primary data

From the table it is concluded that the respondents have lack of co-operation from bank to use innovative functions. The other reasons are poor proximity to bank, no proper guidance and no trained persons in their group. Because of these reasons the women workers are not aware about the innovative functions provided by the bank.

**Table-7 Level of Awareness on Banking Services**

Withdrawing wages	Mean	28.40
	SD	18.24
Granting loans	Mean	28.00
	SD	17.36
Agency functions	Mean	11.00
	SD	24.00
ATM services	Mean	16.60
	SD	12.07
Online services	Mean	11.00
	SD	24.00
Safe lockers	Mean	11.00
	SD	24.00

Source: Primary data

From the study it is revealed that the respondents are only aware about for withdrawing their remunerations and the banking services are used mainly for that purpose. They are aware that the bank provides various services like granting loans, provides ATM services, online services, agency services and safe locker facilities etc. But they only use banking services to withdraw their remunerations, avail loans and advances.

**Table-8 Educational Qualification and Knowledge about ATM Operation**

Education	Very well known	Fairly known	Known	Somewhat known	Unknown	Total
LP	0	0	0	0	17	17
UP	0	0	0	4	19	23
SSLC	0	0	2	6	1	9
Plus two /Pre degree	0	1	3	2	0	6
Illiterate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	1	5	12	37	55

Source; Primary data

The table revealed that out of 55 respondents, 17 women have lower primary education and no one is aware about the ATM operations of the bank. Out of 23 respondents, 19 workers are not aware about ATM services and only 4 members are some what aware about the services. Out of 9 respondents, who have SSLC qualification, 2 of them know about the services.

### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The study revealed that 37 members are unknown about the ATM services provided by the bank.
2. 6 out of 55 workers, know about the operation of ATM services.
3. Lack of co-operation from bank, poor proximity to bank, no proper guidance, no trained staff etc are the problems faced by the MGNREG women workers.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The states should adhere to a fixed (14 or 15 day) schedule for payment of wages, appointment of business correspondents where the banking outreach is negligible or absent and rolling out of e-based innovative systems viz., (a) Electronic Muster Management System (e-MMS) (b) Electronic Fund Management System (e-FMS). While e-MMS will ensure complete transparency in the implementation of MGNREGA by capturing real time transactions from the worksite and uploading these to the Ministry's Website on a day to day basis, e-FMS will bring in a real time transaction based e-Governance solution by addressing the problem of delays in payment of wages and real time capturing of the MGNREGA transactions (e-Muster Rolls and e- Measurement).

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