



“THE ROLE OF MGNREGA IN THE POVERTY ERADICATION; AN EVALUATIVE STUDY IN ANDHRAPRADESH, INDIA.”

B.Ravi Naik

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Political Science & Public administration, S.K.university, Anantapuramu.

Abstract

India is a developing nation that faces numerous socio-economic problems. Nevertheless, the Government of India is working to mitigate specific problems through various strategies and processes. Furthermore, it has been recognized that poverty in India is the biggest issue that has a crucial effect on the nation's economic development. One of the techniques or policies implemented by the Government of India under the Ministry of Rural Development to alleviate poverty and unemployment is the “Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)”, formerly referred as the “National Rural Employment Guarantee Act’ (NREGA, 2005)”. This program focuses on employing any household engaged in unqualified manual work for one hundred days each financial year. In Andhra Pradesh, 13 districts were introduced in three stages under the MGNREGA Act from 2 February 2006 to 1 April 2008. It also ensures women's inclusion in job initiatives of 33 per cent. Besides, with 2235.46 Lakhs Individual days at present, 46.71 Lakhs employment was made available to households in Andhra Pradesh (FY 2020-2021). This article aims to explain the function of MGNREGA in reducing poverty. Besides that, the assets generated by the scheme have also been assessed. This paper's results indicate that the Act has defined the citizens' socio-economic circumstances in other states of India. On the opposite, the system in Andhra Pradesh, which indicates a substantial difference between the programme and its adoption by the administration, has not been adequately enforced.

Key Words: *Andhra Pradesh, Employment, Government, MGNREGA, Poverty, Strategy.*

Introduction

Economic growth has acquired considerable prominence over the past seven or eight decades and has experienced dramatic improvements. “The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)” is one of India's welfare initiative, which was launched by the government in 2005 (August) and entered into force on 7 September 2005. India, one of the nations with a huge population, particularly in rural areas, has assuredly become its bedrock. In the 2011 business year, the Census data Report revealed that 68.84% of India's citizens live and work in rural regions. However, illiteracy and poverty, which are greatly affected by unemployment, are the populace's key concerns. Other than that, the researcher has also noted that unproductive expenditures undoubtedly lead to a weaker economy ^[1].

India's real spirit is centred on rural economies and villages. India has ranked in the world's best ten emerging industrialized economies.^[2] In addition to such background, the government has taken many steps to reduce poverty and add value for rural prosperity since 1952. Similarly, MGNREGA is one such strategy that has been launched across the nation by the government. This strategy's main objective is to fix rural advancement by eliminating rural poverty and improving villages' livelihoods. This Act became one of the crucial instruments for the right solution and livelihood security for employment and income.

Objective of the study

The following are the objectives of the study

- The present analysis aims to examine the effect of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh, with regard to poverty reduction and its relevant implications.



- To attain an indepth understanding of the important role that MGNREGA has played in Andhra Pradesh in eradicating poverty and contributing to rural development.
- Identify the challenges concerning the effective root-level enactment of MGNREGA;
- To scrutinize and suggest a practical implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in developing rural areas in Andhra Pradesh and other states in India.

Methodology

The current investigation is focused on secondary data to achieve the overall study goal. For the study's effective accomplishment with in-depth comprehension and substantial data, the usage of pre-published papers, books, documents, newspapers, government and non-governmental documents, and related websites has been viewed. Besides, in this research, the inductive method usage was incorporated to examine the effect of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh on poverty eradication. It has helped in limiting the study's reach by utilizing study targets that establish the study's qualitative element ^[3]. On the other hand, the exploratory study design helped create an efficient concept focused on a quantitative collection of data obtained from secondary sources. Therefore, with the exploratory test design, the unrealistic ideas were removed in this study ^[4]. The usage of qualitative analyses has been made since the current study is focused on secondary data. Therefore, special consideration has been assigned to the data taken from the government MGNREGA website as opposed to the data reported in the Andhra Pradesh documents and other literature. To establish the qualitative context of the report, the MGNREGA website has identified secondary data covering 2016-2017 and 2020-2021 to measure the impact of MGNREGA on the poverty alleviation in Andhra Pradesh.

Study Area

Andhra Pradesh is a state located in India's south-eastern coastal zone. ^[5] It is the seventh-largest State with an area of 162,975 km² [62,925 sq mi]^[6] and the tenth most populated State with a population of 49,386,799.^[7] It borders Telangana in the north-west, Chhattisgarh in the North, Odisha in the North-East, Tamil Nadu in the South, Karnataka in the West, and the Bay of Bengal in the east.^[8] After Gujarat, it has the longest continuous coastline in India, about 974 km (605 mi) long.^[9] On 1 October 1953, Andhra Pradesh was the first state to be established in India on a linguistic basis.^[10]

As of the 2011 Indian Census, the residual State population was 49,386,799 with a population density of 308/km² (800/sq mi). According to the 2014 Polavaram ordinance law, seven Khammam district mandals in Telangana state were merged with Andhra Pradesh to promote the Polavaram initiative, which added Andhra Pradesh to the population of 247,515. Thus, as per the 2011 census, the final population of Andhra Pradesh in 2014 was 49,634,314, with a density of 304.5/km² (789/sq mi).

Of 34,776,389 inhabitants, the overall rural population is 70.4 per cent of the total population and 29.6 per cent of the population lives in metropolitan areas, with 14,610,410 inhabitants. There are 5,222,384 children in the age range of 0-6 years, comprising 10.6 per cent of the overall population, of which 2,686,453 are boys, and 2,535,931 are girls. The district of Visakhapatnam has the most extensive urban populace of 47.5 per cent. The district of Srikakulam has the largest rural population, 83.8 per cent, among other state districts. The state's total population includes 17.1% of the Scheduled Caste and 5.3% of the Scheduled Tribal population. ^[11]

The sex ratio of 996 females per 1000 males is 24,738,068 males and 24,648,731 females. It is more significant than the national average of 926 per 1000. The State's literacy rate stands at 67.41 per cent.^[12]



The highest literacy rate is 74.6 per cent in the West Godavari district, and the lowest is 58.9 per cent in the Vizianagaram district.^[13]

In the Human Development Index, Andhra Pradesh ranks tenth among all Indian States ^[14] with a score of 0.650. In 2011, the National Council of Applied Economic Study district analysis announced that Krishna, West Godavari and Chittoor are the three rural AP districts with the maximum ascending Human Development Index ratings.

MGNREGA at a Glance:

MGNREGA ACT entered into force on 2nd February 2006, in 200 districts of the country initially. While many years have gone since the Act was enforced, the literature is very minimal with regards to its effect. India's backward areas suffer from a low equilibrium trap, and the MGNREGA Act has given an additional gain to get out of this trap.^[15] Moreover, the Ministry of Rural Development (2013) ^[16] emphasizes that MGNREGA-based assured jobs are shifting the geography of poverty. It is developing enormous infrastructure facilities that promote rural development by immediate income production, job generation and future growth sustainability initiatives.

MGNREGA's role in economic empowerment of women has been significant, contributing to greater freedom and self-esteem, leading to jobs at equal wages.^[17] Besides, this Act is expected to provide women with 33 per cent employment. Under this Act, for any household whose adult people volunteer to engage in unskilled manual labour, the Central Government must provide 100 days of assured wage jobs during each financial year. Besides, the plethora of jobs provided by the Act tackles the causes of hardship, including land degradation, crop failures and deforestation in rural regions, ensuring that the job generation mechanism is sustainably sustained. ^[18]

Features of MGNREGA;

The notable MGNREGA-based jobs scheme addresses two issues namely, rural employment and development objectives. The system notes that to conduct unskilled manual work, adult members of a rural family should adopt this scheme. It must, however, be signed by the district Gram Panchayat ^[19]. Besides, this mechanism has a structure focused on privileges that are demand-driven. MGNREGA substantially guarantees jobs for displaced adults in rural areas for a minimum of 100 days per year. This job scheme may be requested by any individual at the Gram Panchayat regardless of socio-economic class. Moreover, the Act assured that if the work is not offered within 15 days, the worker is qualified for joblessness compensation after validation of qualifications and issuance of job cards. After the enrollment of adult members with photos of registered families, the Village Panchayats' responsibility is to issue job cards. For five years, it would be valid. ^[20]

It has been well understood by Shah et al. (2018) ^[21] that no other contractor is authorized to provide the persons with jobs other than the Gram Panchayat. As 90% of job costs are created from the states' centre, the Act's incentive mechanism offers employment. Moreover, via the annual delivery study based on the findings of MGNREGA, which is submitted to the legislature by the State governments and to the Parliament by the Central Government, the public delivery mechanism is accountable. Panchayat and programme officer enforces MGNREGA at the village level and by Commissions and Local Job Guarantee Council at the district level. The programme focuses on water management, rural connectivity, drought prevention, flood mitigation, minor irrigation, land creation, and some other work in collaboration with the State Government and with the Central Government's approval.^[22]



MGNREGA in Indian Scenario

The emergence of MGNREGA from 2005-2009 is seen in Table-1. The Act provides for 100 days of jobs a year to rural people who can operate under the system dependent on unqualified manual work. Fifteen days before the assignment begins, they need to submit. Production of the Person Generated Days (In Cr.) after the beginning is: 3149.18 total spendings (Rs. In Cr.) is: 631959.14. Currently, as of 25/01/2021, 13841470 employees have participated at 1239456 workplaces (as per e-Must Roll)^[23]

Table-1; the Evolution of MGNREGA from 2005-2009

Starting Point (August 2005)	Stage-I	Stage-II	Stage-III	Stage-IV	Stage-V	Stage-VI (Present status)
“Commencement of NREGA (25th August, 2005)	From 2nd February, 2006, functioning initiated in 200 most backward districts.	130 more districts were brought under the scheme in April, 2007.	On 1st April, 2008, the scheme was implemented to the entire country	From October, 2008, initiation for paying wages through post office and banks begun	On February, 2009, MOU with postal department has been signed	With effect from 2nd October, 2009, NREGA has been renamed as MGNREGA”.

MGNREGA is the world’s largest ecological restoration initiative to create economic transition assets, forestation and water conservation systems.^[24] MGNREGA has created more than half a million water and soil management structures in the period 2006-2007 and agricultural assets that have helped generate jobs and alleviate poverty. In the region, the districts under the MGNREGA scheme produce 2000 to 4000 village assets annually. Furthermore, this development has been noticeable and is double what was generated earlier under the SGSY and EAS system. ^[25]

It has also been recognized that MGNREGA provides rural citizens with the ability to build economic assets that are valuable and competitive. Besides, the construction of productive community assets for unemployed youth and water sources, including tanks, rural roads and market sheds, have transformed rural people’s livelihoods and created light of hope for development among the ordinary people. The entire MGNREGA scenario in India is described in Table 2 below.

Table-2: the Total Picture of MGNREGA in India

MGNREGA in Indian Scenario	
“Total No. of Districts	708
Total No. of Blocks	7,092
Total No. of GPs	2,68,561
I Job Card	
Total No. of Job Cards issued [In Cr]	14.8



Total No. of Workers [In Cr]	28.68				
Total No. of Active Job Cards [In Cr]	9.23				
Total No. of Active Workers [In Cr]	14.35				
(i) SC worker against active workers [%]	18.94				
(ii)ST worker against active workers [%]	15.77				
II Progress	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019	FY 2017-2018	FY 2016-2017
Approved Labour Budget[In Cr]	336.04	277.63	256.56	231.31	220.9274
Persondays Generated so far[In Cr]	314.75	265.4	267.96	233.74	235.6458
% of Total LB	93.67	95.59	104.44	101.05	106.66
% as per Proportionate LB	101.29	0	0	0	0
SC person days % as of total person days	19.88	19.97	20.77	21.56	21.32
ST person days % as of total person days	17.83	18.41	17.42	17.49	17.62
Women Person days out of Total (%)	52.69	54.77	54.59	53.53	56.16
Average days of employment provided per Household	45.08	48.4	50.88	45.69	46
Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs.)	200.35	182.09	179.13	169.44	161.65
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	32,20,746	40,60,702	52,59,502	29,55,152	39,91,202
Total Households Worked[In Cr]	6.98	5.48	5.27	5.12	5.1224
Total Individuals Worked[In Cr]	10.2	7.89	7.77	7.59	7.6693
Differently abled persons worked	5,56,240	4,62,123	4,61,880	4,72,218	4,71,819
III Works					
Number of GPs with NIL exp	7,318	10,589	10,978	11,789	19,451
Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over)[In Lakhs]	194.71	190.43	197.06	185.56	162.54
Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	129.06	116.01	106.84	122.93	97.08
Number of Completed Works[In Lakhs]	65.65	74.42	90.22	62.63	65.46



% of NRM Exp.(Public + Individual)	67.28	61.88	58.8	55.01	60.1
% of Category B Works	61.88	67.4	67.55	55.58	51.41
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	68.23	66.13	63.39	66.07	66
IV Financial Progress					
Total centre release (In Cr.)	88,979.27	71,020.35	62,125.07	55,659.93	47,411.72
Total Availability (In Cr.)	95,391.86	75,510.25	69,228.68	64,985.89	57,386.67
Total Exp[In Cr]	87,501.69	68,260.67	69,618.59	63,649.48	58,062.92
Percentage Utilization	91.73	90.4	100.56	97.94	101.18
Wages[In Cr]	63,430.09	48,846.93	47,172.55	43,128.49	40,750.72
Material and skilled Wages[In Cr]	21,263.79	16,187.86	19,465.87	18,100.68	14,428.24
Material (%)	25.11	24.89	29.21	29.56	26.15
Total Adm Expenditure[In Cr]	2,807.8	3,225.88	2,980.17	2,420.31	2,883.97
Admin Exp (%)	3.21	4.73	4.28	3.8	4.97
Average Cost Per Day Per Person (In Rs.)	278.91	236.09	247.19	223.71	221.23
% Total Exp through eFMS	99.31	99.56	99.01	95.86	92.33
% payments generated within 15 days	97.97	93.81	89.61	84.5	43.43.”

Source; “Official website of MGNREGA www.mgnrega.nic.in & http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/all_lv1_details_dashboard_new.aspx?Fin_Year=2020-2021&Digest=ueg%2fHtV54GGJ8ZQ6GUB2ew”

MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh Scenario:

Table 3 displays the Phase wise implementation of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh. In the first step of 2006-2007, MGNREGA covered four districts, and all the households had to enrol themselves in the scheme with Gram Panchayat for the sake of manual jobs. In the second step, six new districts were added under the plan, accompanied by the third phase, taking all 13 districts into the framework by 2008.

Table 3: Phase wise implementation of MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh

Phase-I (with effect from 2 nd February 2006)	Anantapuram, Chittoor, Kadapa, Vizianagaram
Phase-II (with effect from 1st April 2007)	Nellore, East Godavari, Srikakulam, Kurnool, Prakasam, Guntur.
Phase-III (with effect from 1st April 2008)	West Godavari, Krishna, Vishakhapatnam.

Source: Official Website of MGNREGA www.mgnrega.nic.in

About Table-4 explains the total picture of MNREGA in Andhrapradesh



Table-4: The Total Picture of MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh

ANDHRA PRADESH (As on 27-01-2021)					
Total No. of Districts	13				
Total No. of Blocks	661				
Total No. of GPs	12,914				
I.Job Card					
Total No. of Job Cards issued [In Lakhs]	94.18				
Total No. of Workers[In Lakhs]	189.29				
Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Lakhs]	55.11				
Total No. of Active Workers[In Lakhs]	95.37				
(i)SC worker against active workers[%]	19.47				
(ii)ST worker against active workers[%]	7.24				
II Progress	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019	FY 2017-2018	FY 2016-2017
Approved Labour Budget[In Lakhs]	2525	2025	2470.48	2000	1653.24
Person days Generated so far[In Lakhs]	2235.46	2002.06	2465.64	2120.24	2055.09
% of Total LB	88.53	98.87	99.8	106.01	124.31
% as per Proportionate LB	99.77				
SC person days % as of total person days	23.08	21.14	21.45	22.08	22.35
ST person days % as of total person days	11.07	11.37	10.15	10.48	11.07
Women Person days out of Total (%)	56.42	60.05	59.9	59.64	58.24
Average days of employment provided per Household	47.86	49.6	58.32	53.09	51.49
Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs.Lakhs)	229.4	203.15	198.83	152.49	144.98
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	4,11,153	5,81,773	8,67,428	5,94,146	5,80,074
Total Households Worked[In Lakhs]	46.71	40.37	42.28	39.94	39.91
Total Individuals Worked[In Lakhs]	77.7	65.01	69.11	65.12	65.85
Differently abled persons worked	85588	76786	80420	78041	
III Works					
Number of GPs with NIL exp	6	7	4	9	150
Total No. of Works Takenup (New+Spill Over)[In Lakhs]	14.73	15.7	21.05	18.84	22.28
Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	9.33	10.69	10.23	10.72	8.91
Number of Completed Works	5,40,009	5,00,314	10,81,909	8,11,463	13,36,881
% of NRM Expenditure(Public + Individual)	71.61	61.55	55.58	59.35	62.51
% of Category B Works	57.61	60.25	55.64	49.08	51.19
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	66.01	59.4	54.62	55.07	66.69
IV Financial Progress					
Total center Release	791802.35	731148.04	668453.62	512763	377637.65
Total Availability	791802.35	731148.04	740036.34	628071.49	427060.7
Percentage Utilization	103.76	75.61	112.23	102.47	107.72
Total Exp (Rs. in Lakhs.)	8,21,536.66	5,52,789.24	8,30,513.97	6,43,554.45	4,60,016.17
Wages (Rs. In Lakhs)	5,05,283.1	4,21,520.77	4,88,284.66	3,50,376.59	2,63,163.33
Material and skilled Wages (Rs. In Lakhs)	2,93,890.83	89,569.83	3,02,669.54	2,57,800.46	1,60,385.54
Material (%)	36.77	17.53	38.27	42.39	37.87



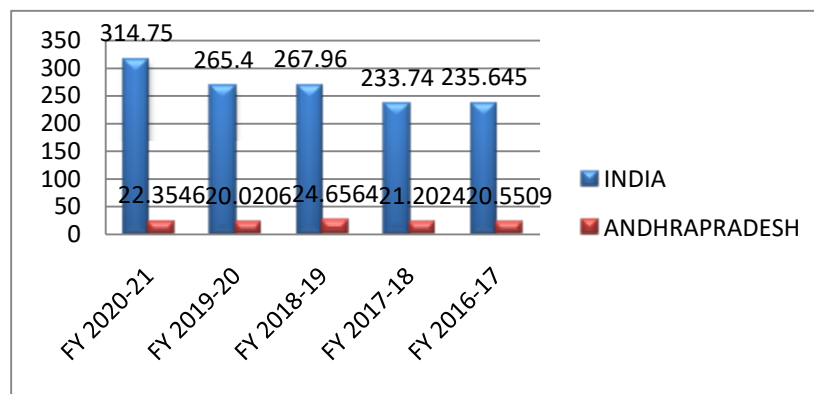
Total Adm Expenditure (Rs. in Lakhs.)	22,362.73	41,698.64	39,559.77	35,377.41	
Admin Exp (%)	2.72	7.54	4.76	5.5	7.93
Average Cost Per Day Per Person (InRs.)	361.43	296.79	365.29	253.64	240.58
% of Total Expenditure through EFMS	100	100	100	100	100
% payments generated within 15 days	99.45	96.03	93.63	86.27	78.2.”

Source: “Official website of MGNREGA www.mgnrega.nic.in”.

Results and Discussion

Figure 1 indicates that there has been a substantial rise in the number of households in India and AP seeking jobs under the scheme.

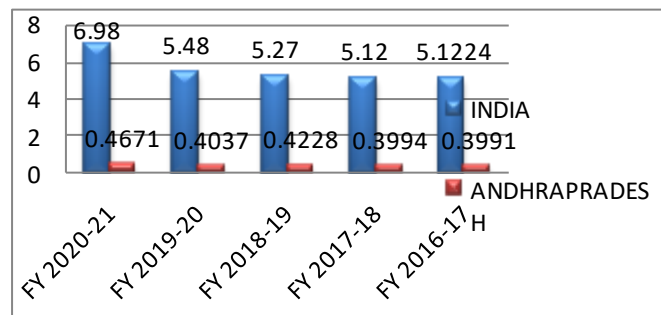
Fig-1: MGNREGA Person days Generated so far (in Crore)



Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in

From the above figure-1 presents the number of wages that was generated under the MGNREGA, in the financial year, 2016-17. 235.645 crores and 20.5509crores in India and Andhra Pradesh was generated respectively. In the FY 2020-2021, 314.75 Cr. And 22.3546 Cr. was generated in India and Andhra Pradesh respectively. Therefore, we can infer from the above figure that a substantial rise was witnessed in the number of households in India and AP which were supplied with jobs individual days from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

Fig-2: MGNREGA Total Households worked so far (in Crore)



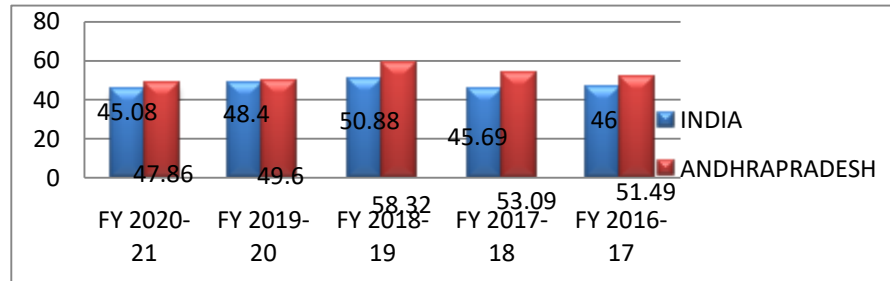
Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in

From the above figure-2, we can infer that the total number of households which were given work under the scheme slightly increased in India from the FY 2016-17 (5.12 Cr.) to FY 2020-21 (6.98 Cr.). In Andhra



Pradesh also, a slight increase with regarding to the assignment of work under the scheme was witnessed from the FY 2016-17 (39.91 Lakh.) to FY 2020-21 (46.71 Lakh.).

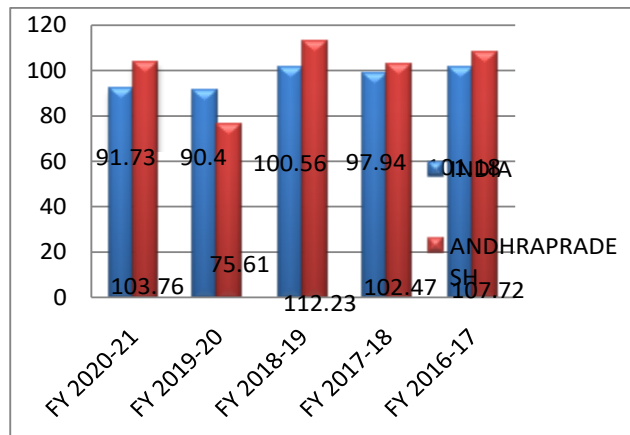
Fig-3: MGNREGA Average days of employment provided per Household



Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in

From the above Figure-3, we can infer that the average days of employment offered per household in India in FY 2016-17 (46) to FY 2020-21 (45.08) as well as in Andhra Pradesh FY 2016-17 (51.49) to FY 2020-21 (47.85) decreased due to Covid-19 in FY 2020-2021.

Fig-4: MGNREGA Percentage Utilization of allotted budget



Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in

From the above figure-4, we can infer that the MGNREGA percentage in the utilization of allocated budget in India for FY 2016-17 was 101.18% and in the FY 2020-21 was 91.73%. In Andhra Pradesh for FY 2016-17, it was 107.72% and for FY 2020-21 it was 103.76%. Due to Covid-19 reversal of allocation has happened.

Suggestions

The main reason established behind the slow growth in Andhra Pradesh is weak enforcement and improper operation approaches due to poor organizational cooperation between the Central and State Government. The job and development disparities in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh and other States are immense. They need to be mitigated in order to eliminate poverty in Andhra Pradesh and other states as well. Here are several suggestions...

- The need for MGNREGA to be effectively enforced by cooperation between the local and central government is stressed with the help of ongoing monitoring and evaluation for establishing a large number of assets;



- The Government should establish the standard of jobs and also ensure more job prospects to improve the economy;
- In order to create asset stabilization in rural areas, successful preparation and execution is strongly necessary;
- Daily awareness drives for the system's effective operation must be carried out by incorporating the Panchayat and Block agencies.

Conclusion

Through this research study it was recognized that rural areas' growth was too restricted. Implementation of the Act is the limitation. Furthermore, a discrepancy in the preparation, execution, tracking and assessment of the various MGNREGA operations has also been established. With regard to the State of Andhra Pradesh, it has been noted that the demand-based jobs generated by the Government in Andhra Pradesh are low. Other than that, the scheme has helped to augment the income of the rural citizens by producing durable properties. However, the scheme's resources have provided job opportunities to boost Andhra Pradesh's rural citizens' livelihoods and food protection. Therefore, while Andhra Pradesh's growth in livelihoods and jobs through this program is meagre when compared to other States in the country, the assets being generated for the State will undoubtedly positively affect the economy, provided jobs opportunities can be created. The impact is the reduction of poverty in Andhra Pradesh.

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