

# Study on the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act with special reference to women beneficiaries in Madukkari block, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

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## ABSTRACT

*The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of India (MGNREGA) was passed to “provide for the enhancement of minimum wage security of the households in rural areas of the country, by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every year to every household whose women members to do unskilled manual work”. The MGNREGA ensures on demand one hundred days of employment in a year to a household at the minimum wage for rural households. The MGNREGA is based on twin principles of universality and self-selection. The Act places enforceable obligation on the State and gives power to rural women labourers. As a legal right to work, MGNREGA related with previous employment generation schemes in several aspects. This study examines the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on rural women in Coimbatore.*

**Key Words:** Women empowerment, Impact of MGNREGA, Socio economic development

## INTRODUCTION

Social and economic development is the main aim of rural development for rural people, especially to bring about sustained improvement in their living condition through an increase in their income and access to social goods. The status of women is intimately connected with their economic status, which in turn, depends upon rights, roles and opportunity for the participation in economic activities. The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a societal development stage. However, all development does not result in improving women economic activities. Pattern of women activities are affected by the prevailing social ideology and are also linked with the stage of economic development. Government implements different programmes to improve the social and economic development in rural India.

The introduction of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is one of the affirmative programme. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted in September 2005. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on 02.02.2006 and was initially implemented in six districts in Tamilnadu, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram from 02.02.2006 onwards and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme was

extended to the remaining twenty one districts of the state. Thus, the MGNREGA covers the entire country with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population.

The mandate of the Act is to provide 100 days of guaranteed wage employment on demand in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Besides having the potential of creating useful assets, strengthening democracy and decentralisation by affecting transparency and accountability this flagship programme of the Government endeavours to empowerment of the socially disadvantaged, especially women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, through the processes of a rights-based legislation. Thus, MGNREGA with twin objectives of rural employment and development has been perceived as a powerful instrument for inclusive growth in rural India because of its triple impact on social protection, livelihood security and democratic empowerment. It stipulates that employment generating works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities.

### **Statement of the problem**

This study focuses on the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act among rural women. Presently, the MGNREGA is being implemented in all rural districts of the country. MGNREGA has resulted into major financial inclusion where in bank accounts have been opened for the families getting employment. Ministry has advised all the state governments to ensure payment of wages fully through the accounts. The figures from the survey conducted in different states indicate an impressive participation of women in the employment generated through MGNREGA. The highest employment status among women worked in terms of person days can be seen in 2014-15, Kerala (87.03%) this is followed by Puducherry (85.49%), Tamilnadu (79.75%), Goa (76.05%) and Rajasthan (62.34%). Among the above data Tamilnadu selected as a sample area for this study. The present study has made an attempt to know the impact of MGNREGA among rural women.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To evaluate the income of women beneficiaries of MGNREGA.
2. To measure the satisfaction level of women beneficiaries through MGNREGA.
3. To know the impact of MGNREGA among rural women and
4. To recommend measures to ensure the socio economic development through women empowerment.

### **Location of the study**

**A) Selection of the district:** Coimbatore district of Tamilnadu will be purposively selected for the above investigation, on the basis of the highest employment status among women worked (89.73%) through MGNREGA programme. The researcher belongs to the same district, thus will help for in depth interaction in collecting the data.

**B) Selection of the block:** The present study will be conducted in Madukkari block of Coimbatore district, on the basis of the highest employment status among women worked (90.93%) through MGNREGA programme.

**C) Selection of panchayat:** There are 9 panchayats in this block out of which 2 panchayats that includes 6 which are villages selected for the above investigation.

### Universe of the study

Females of different ages and qualification will be selected for getting the primary data.

### Sampling Design

For the proposed study random sampling will be resorted to, females of different ages and qualification.

### Selection of Respondents

MGNREGA women beneficiaries in Madukkarai block is 6368 out of which 120 samples will be randomly selected from Myleripalayam and Valukkuparai for the present investigation.

### Selection of Tools

Construction of research tool to achieve objectives of the research is an important step in any research. Keeping in mind the subject matter and the objective of the study, an interview schedule will be developed after going through relevant literature, conferring with the personals of the MGNREGA women beneficiaries.

### Collection of data

For data collection interview schedule through regional language will be used by the researcher. The researcher will conduct interview with the respondents to collect the data.

### Tools used

Simple statistical tools like averages, percentages etc. were used to find out the changes in these parameters, which were then tested for statistical significance using Ch-square.

### Significance of study

The assessment extensively focuses on examining whether MGNREGA has made successful inroads into the impact of rural women's in India. National Federation of Indian Women (NIFW) being an organisation working on women's issues believes that such a perspective of examining MGNREGA would be of extreme importance for equity based empowerment. Thus, this assessment study believes that such a perspective would enable MGNREGA in the rural districts to become more effective and responsive and even re-orient wherever needed especially in the case of women's empowerment in the long run.

### Analysis and interpretation

The survey results are organized as follows, in the first section, the demographic profile of the respondents is presented. The section presents the results of data analysis and concludes with socio economic and perception of the respondents.

**Table No.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Variables and Categories	N=120	%	Variables and Categories	N=120	%
<b>Name of Panchayat</b>			<b>Community</b>		
Myleripalayam	70	58.3	SC	70	58.3
Valukkuparai	50	41.7	MBC	33	27.5
<b>Name of Village</b>			BC	17	14.2
Elur	10	8.3	<b>Education qualification</b>		
Mampalli	34	28.3	illiterate	29	24.2
Myleripalayam	26	21.7	LP	57	47.5
Kannamanaikkanur	15	12.5	UP	31	25.8
Meenashipuram	6	5.0	HS	3	2.5
Valikkuparai	29	24.2	<b>Marital Status</b>		

Age			Single	2	1.7
Below 30	16	13.3	Married	118	98.3
31-40	28	23.3	<b>Family headed</b>		
41-50	46	38.3	Women headed	16	13.3
Above 50	30	25.0	Men headed	104	86.7

Source: Primary data

Table No.1 exhibit demographics traits associated with the respondents considered for the purpose of this study. It can be observed from table-1 that a majority (58.3%) of the respondents in the Myleripalayam panchayath and 41.7 % respondents in the Valukkuparai panchyath. From the above two panchyath samples taken from all the villages, Elur 10 (8.3%), Mampali 34(28.3%), Myleripalayam 26(21.7%), Kannamanaikkanur 15(12.5%), Meenashipuram 6(5%) and Valikkuparai 29(24.2%) respondents. Age group of the respondents from the above sample below 30 age 16(13.3%), 31-40 age 28(23.3%), 41-50 age 46(38.3%), and above 50 age 30(25%) respondents from this data conclude that majority of the women MGNREGA beneficiaries are higher age group. Majority 70(58.3%) of the women MGNREGA beneficiaries under the community of SC, this shows that more rural backward women got benefits through this scheme and also majority of the illiterates 29(24.2%) and low level education background (Lower Primary) 57(47.5%) women joined this scheme. Most of the respondents are married 118(98.3%) and most of the respondents family headed by men 104(86.7%).

**Table No. 2 Shows the level of Satisfaction**

Variables and Categories	N=120	%	Variables and Categories	N=120	%
<b>Satisfaction in working days</b>			<b>Satisfaction in wages</b>		
Highly Satisfied	13	10.8	Highly Satisfied	30	25.0
Satisfied	35	29.2	Satisfied	12	10.0
Neutral	4	3.3	Neutral	9	7.5
Dissatisfied	68	56.7	Dissatisfied	40	33.3
<b>Satisfaction in working condition</b>			Highly Dissatisfied	29	24.2
Highly Satisfied	8	6.6			
Satisfied	30	25.0			
Neutral	32	26.7			
Dissatisfied	17	14.2			
Highly Dissatisfied	33	27.5			

Source: Primary data

Table No.2 reveals that satisfaction level of women beneficiary in MGNREGA. Satisfaction level of number of working days provided under the MGNREGA, majority of 68(56.7%) dissatisfied about the working days. Majority of the respondents dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied 69(57.5%) about wage provided under MGNREGA. Satisfaction in working condition of MGNREGA, highly satisfied, satisfied and neutral 70 (58.3%) and remaining 50(41.7%) are dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied, its shows around 50% are satisfied by the working condition and remaining respondents are dissatisfied by the working conditions of MGNREGA. From the above table concluded that majority of the MGNREGA members dissatisfied the above said factors.

**Table No. 3 shows the economic states of MGNREGA Members**

Variables and Categories	N=120	%	Variables and Categories	N=120	%
<b>Residency details</b>			<b>No. of Family members</b>		
Own house	109	90.8	1-2	37	30.8

Rental house	11	9.2	3-4	62	51.6
<b>Type of house</b>			5 & above	21	17.5
Kutchra	20	16.7	<b>No. of earned members</b>		
Semi-pucca	60	50.0	0-1	18	15
Pucca	29	24.2	2-3	100	83.3
Rental House	11	9.2	4 and above	2	1.7
<b>Own land</b>					
Less than 10 cent	68	56.7			
10 to 20 cent	2	1.7			
No land	50	41.7			

Source: Primary data

Table no.3 shows that socio economic status of MGNREGA members. 8.2% (11) are living in rental house and 90.8% (109) respondents have own house, in which 50% (60) have semi-pucca house, 24.2% (29) have pucca house and 16.7% (20) having Kutchra house. Majority (56.8%) of the respondents have land less than 10 cent. 51.6 % of the respondents have 3-4 members in their family, 30.8% of the respondents have 1-2 members in their family and 17.5 % of the respondents have 5 and above members in their family. 83.3% respondents have 2-3 earning members in their family, 15% respondents only one earning members in their family and only 1.7% respondents have 4 and above earning members in their family.

**Table No. 4 Shows the impact of MGNREGA of Members**

Variables and Categories	N=120	%	Variables and Categories	N=120	%
<b>No. of days worked</b>			<b>Increasing the level of income</b>		
51 to 75 Days	45	37.5	Yes	2	1.7
76 to 100 Days	61	50.8	No	118	98.3
Above 100 Days	14	11.7	<b>State your monthly income</b>		
<b>Reason for joining the MGNREGS</b>			Below Rs.3000	83	69.2
working environment	1	.8	Rs.3001 to 5000	37	30.8
Fixed wages	100	83.3	<b>Have sufficient income from the NREGA scheme</b>		
Govt. work	19	15.8	Yes	2	1.7
<b>Have regular saving habit</b>			No	118	98.3
Yes	86	71.7			
No	34	28.3			

Source: Primary data

Table no.4 shows that impact of MGNREGA of members. Majority of (50.8%) Members worked 76-100 days under this scheme for a year, 37.5% of the members worked 50-75days under this scheme and 11.7% members worked above 100 days under this scheme for a year. Most of the (83.3%) members joined for the reason of fixed wage got through this scheme. 98.3% member said income level not increase after joined in this scheme. Majority (69.2%) of MGNREGA members earn below Rs.3000 per month income and remaining 30.8% MGNREGA members earn Rs.3001 to 5000 per month income. Most (98.3%) of the MGNREGA members do not have sufficient income from this scheme. 71.7% respondents have regular saving habits and 28.3% respondents have do not have regular saving habit.

**Table No.5 shows the age and MGNREGA members have sufficient income**

		Do you have sufficient income from the NREGA scheme		Total
		Yes	No	
Age interval	Below 30	0	16	16
	31-40	1	27	28
	41-50	1	45	46
	Above 51	0	30	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Chi-Square Test</b>				
		Significant Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square		.689	3	Ns

Source: Primary data

**Hypothesis:**

There is no significant relationship between Age and MGNREGA members have sufficient income.

**Result:**

Table-5 states that at the 5% level of significance, the chi-square value (.689) is not significant. Therefore, Age and MGNREGA members have sufficient income are independent. Hence the hypothesis accepted.

**Table No.6 shows the Occupation and Regular Saving Habit**

Particular		Do you have regular saving habit		Total
		Yes	No	
Occupation	NREGS	82	33	115
	Agriculture & Allied	1	1	2
	Daily labour	3	0	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>86</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Chi-Square Test</b>				
		Significant Value	df	Sig.
Chi-Square		1.656	2	Ns

Source: Primary data

**Hypothesis:**

There is no significant relationship between Occupation and regular saving habit MGNREGA members.

**Result:**

Table-6 states that at the 5% level of significance, the chi-square value (1.656) is not significant. Therefore, Occupation and regular saving habit of MGNREGA members are independent. Hence the hypothesis accepted.

**Table No.7 shows that No. of earned members and sufficient income from the NREGA scheme**

		Do you have sufficient income from the NREGA scheme		Total
		Yes	No	
No. of earned members	0	0	1	1

	1	0	17	17
	2	2	80	82
	3	0	18	18
	4	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>		2	118	120
<b>Chi-Square Test</b>				
		Significant Value	Df	Sig.
Chi-Square		.943	4	Ns

Source: Primary data

### Hypothesis:

There is no significant relationship between No. of earned members and sufficient income of MGNREGA members.

### Result:

Table-7 states that at the 5% level of significance, the chi-square value (.943) is not significant. Therefore, No. of earned members and sufficient income of MGNREGA members are independent. Hence the hypothesis accepted.

### RECENT POSITION of MGNREGA

Union Cabinet has approved 150 days employment per household under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the drought hit areas of the country. Decision in this regard was taken by Union Cabinet Meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. Additional 50 days of unskilled manual work under the MGNREGA scheme will benefit people in drought-hit areas which are facing monsoon deficit affecting kharif crops and rural income. The revised MGNREGA wages for 2016 announced recently have left various state governments in a quandary as they apprehend the new rates would not be able to attract labourers because they are still below the existing minimum wages fixed by the states. Remuneration under MGNREGA has raised to Rs 203 in Tamil Nadu from Rs 183.

### Findings

1. Most of the respondents are married (98.3%).
2. Most of the respondents family headed by men (86.7%).
3. 90.8% (109) respondents have own house.
4. 83.3% respondents have 2-3 earning members in their family.
5. Most of the (83.3 %) members joined for the reason of fixed wage got through this scheme.
6. 98.3 % member said income level not increase after joined in this scheme.
7. Majority (69.2%) of MGNREGA members earn below Rs.3000 per month income.
8. Most (98.3%) of the MGNREGA members do not have sufficient income from this scheme.
9. 71.7 % respondents have regular saving habits.
10. There is no significant relationship between age group and MGNREGA members have sufficient income.
11. There is no significant relationship between occupation and regular saving habit of MGNREGA members.
12. There is no significant relationship between No. of earned members and sufficient income of MGNREGA members.

### Suggestion

Respondents are not satisfied with the number of working days provided through MGNREGA. So Government try to increasing the number of working days of the scheme. Government try to increase

the wage provided under MGNREGA because respondents dissatisfied with the present wage. Present income level of the MGNREGA beneficiary is not increased after joined in this scheme. Government try to increase the income level for the MGNREGA beneficiaries. Need to improve the working condition of the Scheme.

### Conclusion

The study has revealed that the socio-economic condition of the women regularly working under the MGNREGA scheme in the rural area. They are the really needy people. This study concludes that the scheme does not improve the expected level of socio economic conditions of rural women. Through increasing the number of working days and wages, rural women improve the income level. Though the socio-economic conditions have improved gradually, but to fasten the rate of improvement some developmental initiative can be integrated with the scheme mainly targeting those women who are working regularly under the scheme for long periods. A multiple scheme and multiagency approach could also be a fruitful idea for the development of socio economic conditions of rural women.

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