

EFFECTIVENESS OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) IN THENKURISSI PANCHAYATH

JINIMOL.P

SREE NARAYANA COLLEGE, ALATHUR

Abstract: Adequate employment generation is essential to generate income for the poor in the economy. In India, since 1980; government has introduced many employment generation programmes to eradicate poverty and unemployment. All these programmes were inadequate and piecemeal in their approach. Therefore, the programmes failed to make any major change on the problems of poverty and unemployment. With globalization and liberalization of the economy, it is always feared that the incidence of poverty and unemployment will increase substantially. In this context, the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) by UPA government is the most appropriate course of action. The act was passed in September 2005 and was implemented in 200 most backward districts of the country since February 2006 NREGA is renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Programme (MGNREGA) on 2nd October 2009. The act gives legal guarantee for at least 100 days of employment in a financial year to a rural household. The present study was focused on effectiveness of MGNREGS as perceived by its beneficiaries.

Keywords: National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, MGNREGA, Globalization

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was implemented in Palakkad on 5th February 2006. MGNREGS is to be implemented mainly by Gramapanchayath. Thenkurissipanchayath is one among them, which aims to ensure livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year for every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Women have benefited more as workers than men. By generating employment for women at fair wages, MGNREGS can play a substantial role in economically empowering women. There are various explanations for the varying participation of women workers under the MGNREGS. In ThenkurissiPanchayath, this scheme is implementing by ensuring the Kudumbashree, union of farmers, self-help groups, co-operation of different departments and participation of people under complete leadership of administrative tribunal. MGNREGS has a clear focus on the poorest of poor. It seeks to reach out to those in need of livelihood security. It gives employment, income, livelihood and a chance to live a life of self-respect and dignity. The government has referred to it as an “Act of the people, by the people and for the people.”

Statement of problem

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is one of the most important employment generation programme implemented to eradicate poverty and unemployment. The present study is to know whether this programme is benefited to poor livings that depend on this wage oriented programme. The study emphasis on the “Effectiveness of MGNREGS in Thenkurissi Panchayath, Palakkad.”

Objective of the study

- To know the effectiveness of MGNREGS as perceived by its beneficiaries.

Research Design

The study is descriptive and analytical in nature. Descriptive and analytical studies are more than just a collection of data; that involves measurements, classifications, analysis, comparison and interpretation. It tells about what exists at present by determining the nature and degree of existing conditions.

Sources of data

Both primary and secondary data were used for the study.

Secondary data

Secondary data were collected from Panchayath records, books, journals, websites and other publications.

Primary data

Primary data were collected directly from workers of MGNREGS by using interview schedule.

Population of the study

The population for the study comprises of 5115 workers of MGNREGS in Thenkurissi Panchayath.

Tools for analysis

The data has been analyzed using different tools like arithmetic mean and percentage analysis.

Review of literature

Jawed Akhtar et al (2011) in their article entitled "Towards Millennium Development Goals and the Role of MGNREGA" considers that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), is a landmark legislation. The authors further make it clear that the NREGA, with its Rights Based framework, is a paradigm shift from all other development programmes that were traditionally supply led. Centrally funded entirely through domestic resources, the implementation of this law is supported by a budget based on demand for employment.

Kumar Vijay.s (2011) in his article on "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: A Review" opines that despite decades of planned development and poverty eradication programmes at the national and state levels, poverty continues to persist in India. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household who volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Ahirrao Jitendra (2012) his essay on "A Brief Scanning of MGNREGA" discussed progress made under the MGNREGS programme during 2006-07 to 2011-12 at all India level. The study reveals that women got 40 per cent of total person days of employment generated through MGNREGS in study area. The Schedule Caste families have been provided with 30 per cent and the Scheduled Tribe families with 20 per cent person days of work. During the year 2009-10 the performance of the scheme in demand and supply was recorded 99.37 per cent achievement.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Gender		
Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	6	12
Female	44	88
Total	50	100

Source: Primary data

Out of the total sample workers, 88% are female i.e. 44 workers. That means female includes the majority of sample. The minority are male and their percentage is 12% i.e. 6 workers.

Table No. 2

Age		
Category	Number of persons	Percentage
Less than 30	4	8%
30-40	12	24%
40-50	14	28%
More than 50	20	40%
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary data

It is clear that out of the total sample, 40% includes under the age category of more than 50, which includes major portion of the sample. 28%, i.e. 14 workers include the age 40-50. 24% are from the range 30-40 and only 8% includes less than 30 years.

ANALYSIS OF EFFECTIVENESS OF MGNREGS AS PERCEIVED BY ITS BENEFICIARIES

Effectiveness of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme as perceived by its beneficiaries is studied under four factors. Those are:

- Economic aspects
- Social aspects
- Work related aspects
- Authority related aspects

These four factors are measured using three variables in each factor and the Likert scale (Strongly agree=5, Agree=4, Neutral=3, Disagree=2, Strongly disagree=1) is quantified using arithmetic mean.

Each factor is measured using four scales. Those are:

- 1-2 = More Ineffective
- 2-3 = Ineffective
- 3-4 = Effective
- 4-5 = More Effective

ECONOMICS ASPECTS

Table No. 3

Analysis of Effectiveness of Economic aspects

Variables	Mean	Rank	Rating
Employment opportunity	4.44	1	More Effective
Timely wages	3.6	2	Effective
Decrease in indebtedness	3.3	3	Effective

Source: Primary data

Economic aspects are measured using three variables i.e. Employment opportunity for unskilled people, Timely wages and Decrease in indebtedness. The result is exhibited in Table no. 5. It is clear from the table that the variable, Employment opportunity for unskilled people through the scheme (4.44) is more effective than other variables. It gets 1st rank. And the other two variables i.e. Timely wages (3.6) and Decrease in indebtedness (3.3) are effective, but not more effective. The variable Timely wages gets 2nd rank and Decrease in indebtedness gets 3rd rank.

SOCIAL ASPECTS

Table No. 4

Analysis of Effectiveness of Social aspects

Variables	Mean	Rank	Rating
Satisfaction level	3.9	1	Effective
Standard of living	2.36	3	Ineffective
Employment security	3.62	2	Effective

Source: Primary data

Social aspects are studied under three variables i.e. Satisfaction level of workers, Standard of living and Employment security. The result exhibited in the table no. 6. From the table it is clear that satisfaction level of workers (3.9) is effective, but not more effective. It gets 1st rank in the analysis. Employment security (3.62) gets 2nd rank. It is also effective. Standard of living (2.36) comes under 3rd position. Standard of living of workers of MGNREGS is not effective, it is ineffective.

WORK RELATED ASPECTS

TABLE NO. 5

Analysis of Effectiveness of Work related aspects

Variables	Mean	Rank	Rating
employment days	1.12	3	More ineffective
Resting time	4.6	1	More effective
Toilet facilities	1.16	2	More ineffective

Source: Primary data

Effectiveness of work related aspects are studied under three variables i.e. Implementation of 100 employment days, Resting time provided by the scheme and Toilet facilities providing at workplace. Result is exhibited in the table no. 7. From the table it is clear

that resting time providing by the scheme (4.6) is more effective. It gets 1st position in the table. The variable Implementation of 100 days of employment (1.12) is more ineffective. It is in 2nd position. Toilet facilities provided at workplace (1.16) is also more ineffective. It gets 3rd rank in the table.

AUTHORITY RELATED ASPECTS

Table No.6
Analysis of Effectiveness of Authority related aspects

Variables	Mean	Rank	Rating
Inspection of works	4.43	1	More effective
Grievance redress system	4.36	2	More effective
Compensation for accidents	3.68	3	Effective

Source: Primary data

Effectiveness of authority related aspects are studied under three variables i.e. Inspection and supervision of works by authority, Grievance redressal system and compensation for accidents. The result is exhibited the table no. 8. From this table it is clear that inspection and supervision of works by the authority (4.43) is more effective. It is in 1st position. Grievance redressal system (4.36) is also more effective. It gets 2nd rank. Compensation for accidents at work (3.68) is effective, but not more effective. It is in last rank.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF MGNREGS

Table No.7
Analysis of effectiveness of MGNREGS as perceived by its beneficiaries

Factors	Mean	Rank	Rating
Economic aspects	3.78	2	Effective
Social aspects	3.29	3	Effective
Work related aspects	2.29	4	Ineffective
Authority related aspects	4.16	1	More effective

Source: Primary data

Effectiveness of MGNREGS as perceived by its beneficiaries is studied under four factors, namely Economic factors, Social factors, Work related aspects and Authority related aspects. Each factor is analyzed using three variables under each factor. From the above table and graph it is clear that Authority related aspects (4.16) is highly effective than other three variables. It gets 1st rank in the table. Economic aspects (3.78) are effective, but it is not more effective. It comes under 2nd position. Social aspects that affect the effectiveness of MGNREGS (3.29) are effective and not more effective. Its rank is 3rd. Work related aspects (2.29) are the weakest among all other factors. It is ineffective in nature. And it gets last position i.e. 4th.

Major findings of the study

- Out of total active workers of MGNREGS in ThenkurissiPanchayath, 93% includes female workers and only 7% are male.
- MGNREGS provides employment opportunity for all unskilled people.
- Scheme provides income generation opportunity to aged people also, 40% of sample includes more than 50 years.
- Workers did not getting 100 employment days in a year.
- Absence of infrastructural facilities at worksite, mainly toilet facility is one of the major problems faced by workers.
- Scheme provides enough resting time to workers.
- Under the scheme, Authority related aspects like inspection of works, grievance redressal system etc. are more effective in nature.

Suggestions

- The study suggests that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to be continued. It is a valuable opportunity for the rural poor, particularly women to earn a living in a dignified manner.

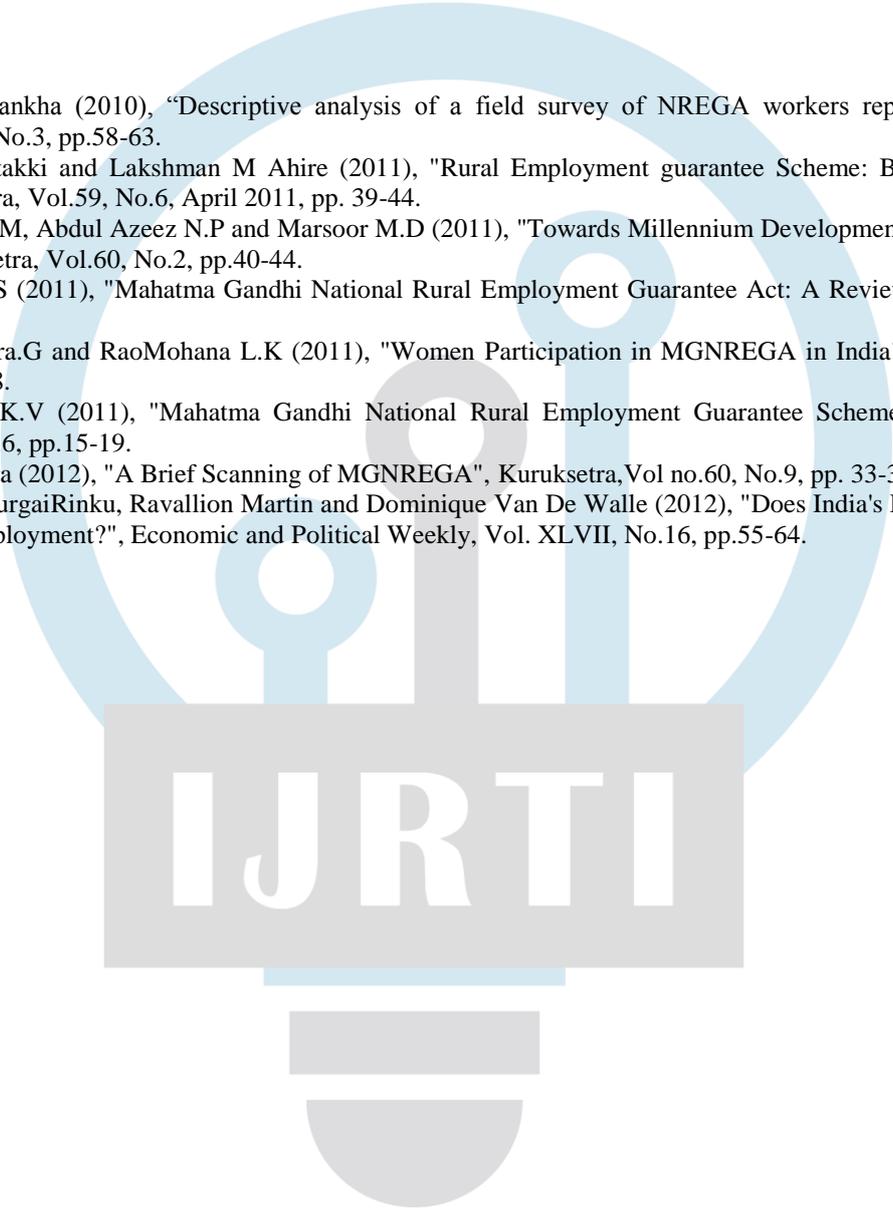
- Provision may also be made for workers to register applications for work through mobile phones in addition to MGNREGS website.
- It is also suggests that the work under MGNREGS be expanded in ThenkurissiPanchayath to ensure at least 100 employment days for the workers.
- The study suggests improving the basic amenities in the work place, mainly toilet facility.

Conclusion

The study revealed that there are number of factors like Economic aspects, Social aspects, Work related aspects and Authority related aspects that may affect the effectiveness of MGNREGS. Up to a certain extent, implementation of MGNREGS was effective in ThenkurissiPanchayath. MGNREGS not only contributed economic development, but also enhanced individual development of workers, mainly female workers.

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