

Impact of MGNREGA on Employment Generation in District Bathinda of State Punjab

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Abstract

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) enacted by legislation of India on 25 Aug. 2005. It was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on Oct. 2, 2009 on the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. In this scheme, each rural household gets 100 days in every financial year of guaranteed employment in unskilled works which are permissible under MGNREGA. The major objective of this scheme is to provide livelihood security for rural households. It also facilitates the construction as well as maintenance of rural infrastructure. This paper is an attempt to overview the impact of MGNREGA on employment generation in Rural area of District Bathinda, Punjab. Financial progress and Employment generated if examined in this paper. For the objective of this paper secondary data is used. The findings of study revealed that MGNREGA plays an important role in employment generation and rural asset creation. MGNREGA not only provides security for food but also supports rural development.

Introduction

The concept of employment and wages is as old as human beings in the world. Work is essential for happy living and it ultimately results in satisfaction of basic needs. With the two third Population of India living in Rural areas, development initiatives in rural areas have immense importance for India. The Government of India created a historic act, by enacting National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), the largest employment generation program in the world ensuring the right to work. This act gives legal guarantees of at least 100 days employment every financial year. This Act is applicable in Districts notified by the Government of India. Implementation of Act calls for the formulation of Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme by the State Governments. NREGA is implemented in all districts of States in India with effect from April 1, 2008.

Permissible Works under MGNREGA

- 1) Drought Proofing Activities e.g. Plantation and afforestation.
- 2) Water Conservation e.g. Recharge pits, Soakage pits, Renovation of Traditional Water bodies, Creation of New Water bodies.
- 3) Land Development e.g. Construction of Park, Construction of Playfield, Levelling and Shaping of Land
- 4) Irrigation Works e.g. Construction of Water courses, repair and maintenance of water courses, Distributaries, minor canal etc.
- 5) Anganwadi and Other infrastructure e.g Construction of Anganwadi building , Construction of Boundary walls for Government Schools

There are 260 activities which can be performed under MGNREGA and may be downloaded from nrega.nic.in.

District Profile of Bathinda

Bathinda is a city in Punjab, India. The city is the Administrative headquarters of Bathinda District. It is located in northwestern India in Malwa region 227 km. There are 313 Gram Panchayats in District Bathinda. District is divided in 9 Blocks namely Bathinda, Goniana, Bhagta Bhaika, Phul, Rampura, Maur, Nathana, Talwandi Sabo and Sangat.

MGNREGA in Bathinda, Punjab

The MGNREGA Act was implemented in only one district of Punjab namely, Hoshiarpur with effect from the financial year 2006-07. This Act was implemented in all the districts on April 1, 2008.

Table 1. Current Status of MGNREGA in Bathinda

Total No. of Job Card issued	99904
Total No. of Workers	167816
Total No. of Active Job Cards	68633
Total No. of Active Worker	94546
Active Schedule Caste (SC) worker	75055 (79% of Total active workers)

Active Women Worker	60342 (64% of Total active workers)
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*as on date 01/03/2023 *source - nrega.nic.in

Table 1 shows the Category wise Job Cards in district Bathinda. There are 79 % of SC workers out of total active job cards. and 64% women workers out of total active workers. In district Bathinda MGNREGA has an effective impact on Poverty eradication in rural areas as well as women empowerment.

Progress of Employment Generation in Bathinda

The mandate of the MGNREGA is to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult member is willing to do unskilled manual work. The work shall be provided within a five kilometers area from the village.

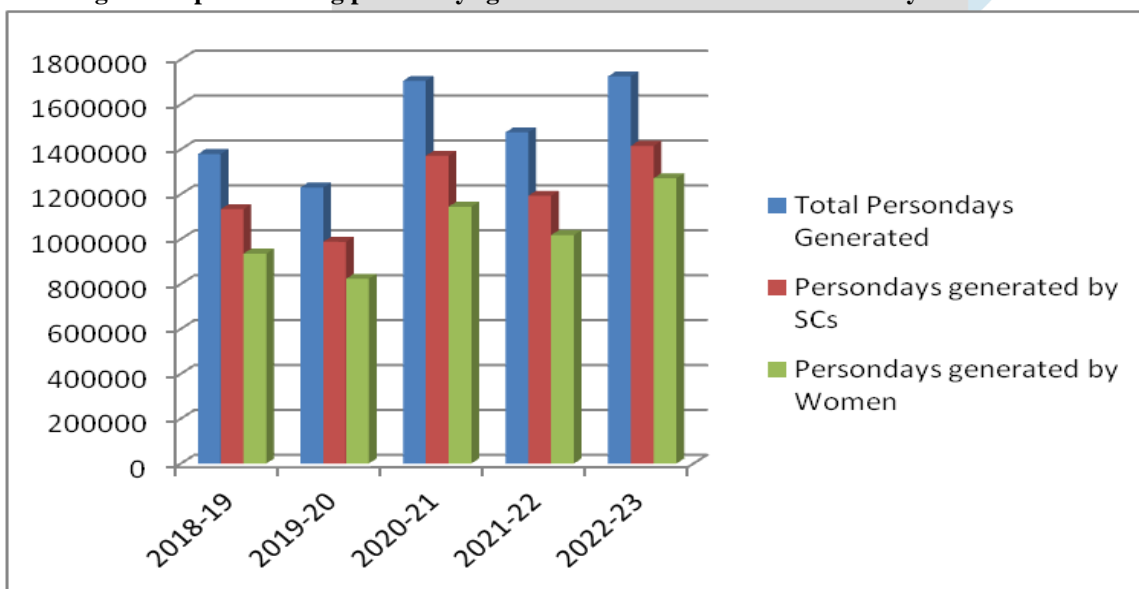
Table 2 Persondays Progress in MGNREGA in last five Financial Years in Bathinda District

Financial Year	Total Persondays Generated	Persondays generated by SCs	Persondays generated by Women	%age persondays generated by SCs	%age persondays generated by Women
2018-19	1378952	1133245	935174	82%	68%
2019-20	1229786	987688	823065	80%	67%
2020-21	1704790	1370910	1144114	80%	67%
2021-22	1475309	1192932	1017839	81%	68%
2022-23	1724711	1414884	1270990	82%	73%

*as on date 01/03/2023 *source - nrega.nic.in

Table 2 is showing persondays generated in MGNREGA in the last five years. Persondays are increasing year by year. Thus MGNREGA is providing more employment year by year.

Fig. 1. Graph indicating persondays generated in MGNREGA in last five years



MGNREGA job card holders can also work in various line departments other than gram panchayats like Railway, Forest Department, Water Supply and Sanitation. Line Departments provide unskilled work to Job card holders. Gram Panchayats and Line Departments play an important role in providing unskilled work to MGNREGA job card holders.

MGNREGA is envisaged to enhance the livelihood security of households in the rural areas of India. It has created confidence and expectation among rural poor, especially women who are engaged in environment cleaning, rural connectivity/road connectivity and Forestation. The strengths of MGNREGA enabled the poor to address their problems of poverty, education and

the need to improve facilities in health. The greater Participation of women in MGNREGA indicates wide acceptance of the local people toward the scheme.

Conclusion

MGNREGA is Flagship program and produced benefits in development of rural India. Data showed that MGNREGA is very much successful in a gripping rural economy. MGNREGA stopped huge amounts of laborer migration. Fixed wage allotment under MGNREGA leads to change in the wage structure in private sector works done by the rural people.

Equal participation by rural poor females assures equality in the workplace. In District Bathinda 64% MGNREGA workers are Women and 73% persondays generated by them out of total persondays. 82% workers are from Scheduled Caste out of total workers.

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