



EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

It is first time in the history of India a programme like MGNREGA launched as an act to provide 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to the rural household willing to do unskilled manual work on demand. This act is also sensitive for the weaker section of the society such as SC, ST and Women. On the basis of secondary data for last five years the present study has undertaken to evaluate the performance of MGNREGA in a socio-economically backward state Odisha in term of providing of job on demand, completion of 100 days of work and average number of days of employment per household. The study found that more than 50% of employment has been provided to the SC and ST beneficiaries along with minimum 1/3rd of job for the women in all the years. However providing of 100 days of employment as per the act is not encouraging in Odisha. So this study emphasized on the proper implementation of the scheme starting from grass root level to the top level of authority for the development of the rural sector.

INTRODUCTION

India lives in villages and hence rural development has been the core of planning process of the country since independence. A large numbers of poverty eradication and welfare programmes have been implemented from time to time through various plans for the upliftment of rural poor but in term of absolute number, poverty still continues to grow. Undoubtly, it can be realized that unemployment, underemployment and disguise employment are the basic causes of poverty which not only depresses the standard of living of people but also lead to grave social, economical and political consequences. In order to address these issues the central government notified the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 7th September, 2005 which renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act during the year 2009. It is first time in the history of India a programme came to an act which provide legal guarantee of 100 days of work to the rural people volunteers to do unskilled

manual work. This programme is considered to be unique than the other programmes in the sense that it is a demand based rather than the allocation based. The objective of MGNREGA is to provide a social safety net to the rural people as an alternatives source of employment. One of the key provisions of this act is that the Gram Panchayat will provide work within 15 days of application otherwise unemployment allowance will be paid to the jobseeker. The wages are generally paid weekly, however unemployment allowance will be paid if payment will not be made within 15 days of work. This scheme is designed to generate productive assets, employment to rural women, reduction of rural- urban migration and fostering social equity among others. A huge budget out lay of Rs.48000 crores have been allocated by the central government to MGNREGA during the current financial year 2017-18.

MGNREGA in Odisha

Odisha is one of the poorest states of the country. A large section of people of the state lives in villages which is highly backward. The poverty rate of Odisha estimated by Planning

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Commission of India till the end of the year 2004-05 remains 39.90% as against all India average of 21.80%. Therefore, the government of India implemented the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 19 districts of Odisha during the 1st phase. Now the scheme is operating in all the 30 districts of the state covering 314 blocks and 6801 Gram Panchayats. Till the end of the year 2016-17, a total number of 66.60 lakhs household issued job card including 12.24 lakhs SC and 18.47 lakhs ST. Thus, this is the high time to evaluate the performance of world's largest poverty eradication programme MGNREGA in a socio-economic backward state Odisha and hence this study possesses a greater significance in this regards.

Literature review

Prasad (2012) in his research paper "Performance of MGNREGA: An over view" opined that India's MGNREGA is the only Act which gives its rural people such a right and that too in the era of liberalization, Privatization and Globalizations (LPG).It serves as an effective safety net for the unemployed especially during famine and draught. He also stated that the act has confined the rural poor to their areas and stopped migration to the cities.

Bebarta (2013) in his paper entitled "Impact of MGNREGA in the lives of tribal people: A study of Ryagada Block in Gjapati District" found that the majority of labourers are unaware of the basic entitlements of the scheme which deprives them from claiming their shares.

Snenbagaraj and Arockiasamy, (2013) in their field study "Impact of MGNREGA on local development: A study of Ottapidaram block in Thoothukudi district, Tamil Nadu" concluded that MGNREGA has positive impact on increasing the quantum and level of employment but the earning of the household is very less due to the limited number of day of providing employment under the scheme.

Bigi (2014) in her book "NREGA and quality of life of Beneficiaries". Suggested that every possible measure should be taken to have an enhancement in number of work days and regular payment. Only continuity in job clubbed with regular payment throughout the year to every individual who is ready to work only can guarantee any positive impact on the overall quality of life of beneficiaries of this scheme.

Bhat et al. (2015) in their research article "Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Jammu and Kashmir" highlighted that there is a huge gap between the job card and the actual number of days of employment provided to the household.

Objectives of the study

- To evaluate the performance of MGNREGA in term of employment provided to the households on demand.
- To examine how far the person days of employment generated for the weaker section of the society as per the provision of the Act.
- To assess the financial performance of MGNREGA for the creation of wage employment opportunity in rural Odisha.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data for the period of last five years assessed from the website of the MGNREGA uploaded by the ministry of Rural Development, Government of Odisha, the operational guidelines of Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, 2005 for the implementation of the MGNREGA, books, journals etc. The statistical tools like percentage and average are used for the analysis and interpretation of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Employment on demand

During the year 2012-13 as much as 15.99 lakhs household consisting of 90.54% provided employment as against the demand of 17.66 lakhs under MGNREGA in Odisha. Though the demand and employment remarkably increased in the next year, the allocation of job in term of percentage is just equal to the previous year (90.53%). It can also be noted that in the year 2016-17, the lowest 86.45% of household provided job as against the highest demand of 23.55 lakhs during the last five years. The data relating to the entitlement of providing 100 days of employment showed a very poor performance under study. As the highest 1.97 lakhs household comprising of 9.86% completed 100 days of work during the year 2015-16. The situation worsen in the next year 2016-17 which comes to lowest 0.08% only.

Table 1. Employment generated under MGNREGS (in lakhs)

Year	Household demanded employment	Household provided employment	% of household provided employment
2012-13	17.66	15.99	90.54
2013-14	18.90	17.11	90.53
2014-15	16.94	14.69	86.72
2015-16	22.28	19.98	89.68
2016-17	23.55	20.36	86.45

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table 2. Household completed 100 days of work (in lakhs)

Year	Household completed 100 days	% of household completed 100 days
2012-13	0.75	4.69
2013-14	1.57	9.18
2014-15	0.82	5.58
2015-16	1.97	9.86
2016-17	0.35	0.08

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table 3. Person days generated under MGNREGA (in lakhs)

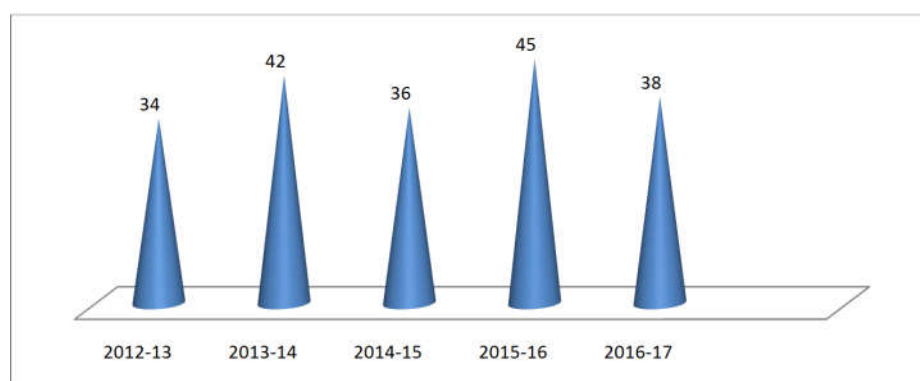
Year	SC	ST	Others	Total
2012-13	95.90	205.19	244.07	545.46
2013-14	116.42	290.51	304.90	711.83
2014-15	84.72	222.50	228.18	535.40
2015-16	142.33	373.28	378.87	894.48
2016-17	124.87	293.61	357.28	775.76

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

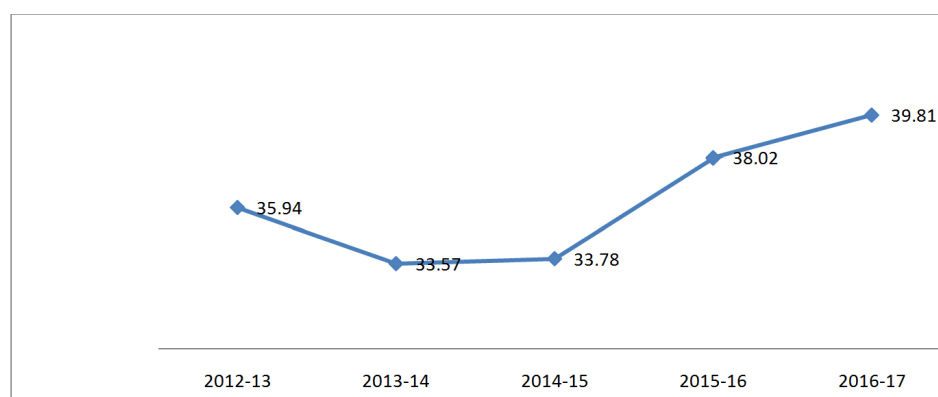
Table 4. Financial performance under MGNREGA (Rs in crores)

Year	Fund available	Expenditure incurred	% of expenditure incurred
2012-13	1321.63	1177.47	89.09
2013-14	1322.78	1289.43	97.48
2014-15	1074.04	1068.52	99.48
2015-16	2070.96	2051.98	99.08
2016-17	2066.75	2136.18	103.36

Source: www.nrega.nic.in



Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Figure 1. Average number of days per household**Figure 2. % of women employment**

It is also evident from the data that an average number of days of employment is as low as 34 days in the year 2012-13 and highest 45 days per household in the year 2015-16. So, in term of average number of days of employment per household is also not satisfactory under MGNREGA in the state of Odisha

Category-wise person days of employment

The person days of employment among SC and ST during the year 2012-13 found to be 95.90 lakhs and 205.19 lakhs respectively. It has remarkably increased during the next financial year counting to 116.42 lakhs among SC and 290.51 lakhs among the ST workers out of the total person days of 711.83 lakhs under the scheme. It can also be noted that highest 894.48 lakhs of mandays of employment generated

during the year 2015-16 comprising 142.33 lakhs among SC and 373.28 lakhs among ST beneficiaries. As regards the employment of women the minimum 1/3rd of total employment has been provided in all the years under the study as per the act. The lowest 33.57% in the year 2013-14 and highest 39.81% of total man days created among the women worker during the year 2016-17.

Financial Performance

As regards the financial performance under MGNREGA an amount of Rs.1177.47 crores consisting of 89.09% has been spent against the allocation of fund of Rs1321.63 crores during the year 2012-13. It has found to be increased to 97.48% in the year 2013-14 and 99.48% during 2014-15 but again decreased

to 99.08% in the subsequent year. It is also important to note that an amount of Rs.2136.18 crores representing 103.36% have spent during 2016-17 which shows that the expenditure is more than the allocated fund under the scheme. In an average the financial performance of MGNREGA in the state is considered to be satisfactory.

Conclusion

MGNREGA is committed to provide wage employment on demand and supplement the earning of the rural poor. But the study found that only about 90% of household provided job on demand and the rest deprived of their right of getting employment in Odisha. Providing of 100 days of guaranteed employment is also revealed far from the reality as the highest 9.86% of housed hold only completed the required number of days of employment during the year 2015-16. Though the financial performance under the scheme is found satisfactory, the employment in term of average number of days per house hold is less than the half of entitlement of number of days of employment in all the years under study. So the pro-active role right from the Gram Panchayat to the state level is the need of the hour to achieve the objectives of the right based programme MGNREGA towards the development of rural poor.

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