



An Analytical Study of MGNREGA Poverty Alleviate Programmes in Special Reference of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

The paper has looked at Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2015 MGNREGA analytically and has provided details about funding, employment generation, works undertaken, etc., in Uttar Pradesh. An overview of literature is also provided in this paper. The MGNREGA programme aims at enhancing livelihood security of the rural poor by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Act seeks to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. The choice of works suggested in the Act address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is on a sustainable basis.

The outlay for Scheme is Rs. 41,699 crore for the financial year 2015-16. The study has outlined some of the criticisms being levied against MGNREGA. To study the impact of MGNREGA in different villages of Uttar Pradesh, The aspects covered in the study include variation in wages in market and under MGNREGA, nature of works undertaken and economic impact on the beneficiaries of the Scheme.

Keywords: MGNREGA, IROF, NRT-GP

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1. INTRODUCTION

We all know that real India lives in villages, because about 74 percent of its population subsists in 6,38,365 villages (2011 census) which directly or indirectly depends on agriculture of the villages activities for earning, their livelihood. While about 50 percent of the villages have chronically poor socio-economic conditions. One of every three person in India is officially poor and two of three are under nourished or malnourished, economist Utsa Patnaik, who has done extensive research of India's agrarian crisis, estimates that half the rural population or about 350 million people, are below the average food energy intake of sub-saharan Africa. To mitigate this acute problem, concerted efforts have been continuously made since the advent of independence to improve the levels of living of such rural masses. The government of India has been running a large number of programmes and schemes with the main objective of enabling rural poor to improve the quality of their by facilitating them direct employment, self-employment, adequate earning, social security, housing, creating rural infrastructure and manage land resources. In the past all the public employment programmes in India targeted at poor are generally identified with poverty alleviation. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (hereafter NREGA) goes beyond the poverty alleviation and recognizes employment as legal right (**Chakraborty, 2007**). NREGA was launched by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India on September 7, 2005. NREGA is the largest ever public employment programme visualized in human history.

Shah et al. (2010) has rightly pointed out that even after 65 Years of the independence of India about 80 percent people suffer from malnutrition and the availability of per capita food grain has been reduced as compared to that during 1950s. The private sectors do not want to invest in rural areas because of unavailability of basic infrastructure and hence the return on investment is too low. At this juncture, the effective implementation of NREGA would (1) provide relief in the times of distress, drought and flood-proofing of Indian agriculture, (2) contribute of sustainable growth path, (3) become more effective instrument for reducing poverty, (4) lead to reduction in dependence on a state sponsored employment guarantee over time, (5) lead to the non-inflationary expenditure and (6) encourage the private investment in rural areas due to build up infrastructure. The NREGA, which promises the largest ever employment programme in human history, has the potential to provide a "big push" in India's regions of distress. Thus, NREGA has the potential to change the rural scenario if it could be implemented in right spirit. But there are many challenge in implementation of NREGA, there are so many problem such as:

- Payments to worker are being delayed as there is a late measurement of work. It also says only 19% of 850, on differently able people registered for the schemes have got work under NREGA.
- Another issue is that of fake muster rolls and bills being generated.
- The so called elite groups within the workers capture most of the job cards and worker found only 40 or 50 rupees in a day.
- Due to NREGA worker are moving away from their main activity agriculture, and are digging pits in the name of ponds under NREGA water from these pits evaporates very fast."

2. OVERVIEW OF LITERATURE

A sizable literature has been piled up exploring the NREGA's desirability impacts on targeted groups, achievements, loopholes in the Act and its implementation, improvements required to be brought about etc. which are as follows:

Shakuntla Yaiiava (1984) examined the employment and income generation under integration rural development programme. A case study of Mahendergarh district of Haryana, the study is mainly based on the primary data; study finds that the extent of poverty was very higher in the study area. Nearly 76.70% beneficiaries were below the poverty line. It highlights that mal practices and corrupt devices had been adopted in the identification of IROF beneficiaries. It also reveals the fact that the villagers who were economically powerful, serial or political basis were able to select themselves for IRDP assistance, depriving the really deserving beneficiaries for whom the programme is meant.

P.T, George (1985) examined the impact of IRDP on employment and income generation in Uttar Pradesh. He reported that IRDP has generated a fairly good impact on the total asset position of the beneficiaries, accounting for 20 to 30 percent of the value of their total assets. The beneficiaries derived an additional income of Rs. 1,446 through participation in IRDP and NREP programmes.

M.S. Chandakavate (1985) in "An evaluation study of the working of the IRDP in Sindgi Taluka of Bijapur district in Karnataka". (The study based on field survey). The results of the study show that the programme had hardly made a major dent upon the poverty and living conditions of the beneficiaries. Another shortcoming of the programme was less emphasis on the SC/ST families.

K. Uma Mahesari and Vijaya Khader (2002) examined the contribution of JRY programme for food security of preschool / children in landless labour families during lean season in drought prone areas of Andhra Pradesh study showed positive trend towards improvement in the food security situation as assessed by the food and nutrient intake in pre-school children of landless labour families with the additional income generated through Jawahar Rojgar Yojana scheme.

S.S.P. Sharma (2003: 147-SO) in his paper address the issues mainly concerned with the impact and the long-term effects of specific programmes of rural development i.e. programme of poverty alleviation and employment generation for the poor particularly in rural areas, he concludes that rural poverty in the country has been falling but at a slow rate.

S, Erappa (2005) in his study examine the role of financial institution like commercial banks (CBS) and Regional Banks (RRBs) in implementing IRDP in Karnataka, study is based on secondary and primary data. Study concludes that the living standards of the IRDP beneficiaries improved as would be seem from the social cycle activities like daughters marriage, construction of the house, spending money to purchase land, children attending school and purchase of consumer durables by the implementation of the agriculture debt-relief scheme ADRs.

MORD (2005) has reported that NREGA is unique in many fronts such as by enacting it with extraordinary guidelines. Government has to provide minimum 100 days of employment to every registered rural household each year at any cost, contractors have been banned that has reduced the corruption and use of machines, durable assets, rural connectivity, water conservation, drought and flood proofing etc. have been created, it has increased the curiosity and awareness of public programmes enhancing people's participation, emphasis and payment of statutory minimum wages and drinking water and medical aid etc.

CAG (2007), "The comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) found that in 70 % of villages checked, there were no proper records available on number of households. The jobs were allocated on verbal basis and no meetings were conducted to identify registered households under NREGA and on door to door survey were done to identify persons.

Ambasta et al. (2008). "Showed why NREAGA has raised expectations like no other rural development programme and suggested for hiring full time professional at Gram Panchayat level.

Afridi (2008), "In his case study conducted in Banswara district of Rajasthan found that the social audit process has been controlled by a few influential villagers in Gram Panchayat and Govt. officials.

Khere (2008) "Observed that farmer's organisation has been very effective in making NREGA performance better. Her study on the Jagrut Adivasi Dalit Sangathan with a membership of 3500 families in U.P. shows that level of NREGA employment is as high as 85 days per household per year and nearly half of all households have got 100 days of work. They also earn the minimum wage.

Dreze et al. (2008), "Highlighted the superiority of NREGA over other previous wages employment programme in India in terms of control over corruptive practices. The study revealed that there was no check on the embezzlement of NFFWP (National Farmers Family work Program) funds. This was borne out by the muster roll verification exercises.

Sharma (2009), "Reported that due to introduction of NREGA programme in Rajasthan there was deduction in migration, families got approximately 80 days or more employment, rural wages not increased but on the other hand discrimination was observed. **Kareemulla, (2010)**, "evaluated the scheme in five states, viz. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra with a specific focus on desirability, quality and durability of assets created and the effects on livelihood generation by NREGA beneficiaries. The study found that a wide variety of works were taken up under the scheme.

D.K. Ghosh (2009) in his study assesses the impact of TRYSEM scheme on the occupational status of the trained youth and income generation from the schemes in Birbhum district in the state of West Bengal. The sample of youth are drawn through two-tier sampling technique. TRYSEM scheme has a very limited success in terms of its avowed objectives.

Ethirajulu Naidu (2010) in his study aims at evaluating the working of the NREP in chittor district of Andhnra Pradesh study based on secondary data and discussions with the officials concerned. Study is concluding that no programme is adequate enough to alleviate rural poverty and unemployment hence, the NREP which provides short-term relief through employment.

Renu Tyagi (2012) examines the impact of regional rural banks of rural economy in Muradabad and Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. It is be concluded that regional rural bank has also been playing a major role to provide credit facilities to the people who are below the poverty line. It shows that more emphasis has not been given to the weaker section. This is due to wrong identification of beneficiaries as well as lack of awareness etc.

M.D. Narayana Naidu (2012) in his study discuss the impact of rural development efforts in the Royalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh stratified three-stage sampling design and using simple random sampling. Integrated rural development is the chief instrument to develop rural areas. It

requires a multipronged, multi-disciplinary and multi-directional approach to the problem of improving the socio-economic condition of the rural people to an optimum level.

These sociologists indicate that well designed anti-poverty programmes if implemented effectively along with the active involvement of the poor can reduce the magnitude of Rural Poverty in general as well as the variation in the extent of rural poverty. The nutritional status of the diet of rural poor also has slightly improved but these anti-poverty/rural development programmes have a very limited success in terms of its avowed objective because it enables to play more important and effective role under the present rural environment due to poor implementation caused by socio-economic political and administrative constraints. NRT-GP is a new scheme to provide a greater thrust to additional wage employment, infrastructure development in rural areas. No more work is done on that particular scheme. Thus, we want to know the impact of this ongoing programme of rural poor; therefore the present study has been planned.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

MGNREGA: The scheme was launched in Uttar Pradesh on 2nd February, 2006. The scheme has been launched in a phased manner. In first phase 22 Districts, in the second phase 17 districts and in third phase all remaining districts have been taken up under the scheme. There are total 75 districts now which come under MGNREGA programme. There are 821 numbers of Blocks in Uttar Pradesh state and total numbers of Gram Panchayats 58,048 in these blocks. A map is also shown which shows the location of all the districts in Uttar Pradesh.

List of Districts in Uttar Pradesh under MGNREGA Scheme.

S.No	Name of the District	S.No	Name of the District
1.	Agra	39.	Jaunpur
2.	Aligarh	40.	Jhansi
3.	Allahabad	41.	Kannauj
4.	Ambedkar Nagar	42.	Kanpur Dehat
5.	Amethi	43.	Kanpur Nagar
6.	Amroha	44.	Kashganj
7.	Auraiya	45.	Kaushambi
8.	Azamgarh	46.	Kheri
9.	Baghpat	47.	Kushi Nagar
10.	Bahraich	48.	Lalitpur
11.	Ballia	49.	Lucknow
12.	Balrampur	50.	Maharajganj
13.	Banda	51.	Mahoba
14.	Bareilly	52.	Mainpuri
15.	Barambaki	53.	Mathura
16.	Basti	54.	Mau
17.	Bijnor	55.	Meerut
18.	Budaun	56.	Mirzapur
19.	Bulandshahr	57.	Moradabad
20.	Chandauli	58.	Muzaffarnagar
21.	Chitrakoot	59.	Pilibhit
22.	Deoria	60.	Pratapgarh

23.	Etah	61.	Rae Bareli
24.	Etawah	62.	Rampur
25.	Faizabad	63.	Saharanpur
26.	Farrukhabad	64.	Sambhal
27.	Fatehpur	65.	Sant Kabeer Nagar
28.	Firozabad	66.	Sant Ravidas Nagar
29.	Gautam Buddha Nagar	67.	Shahjahanpur
30.	Ghaziabad	68.	Shamli
31.	Ghazipur	69.	Shravasti
32.	Gonda	70.	Siddharth Nagar
33.	Gorakhpur	71.	Sitapur
34.	Hamirpur	72.	Sonbhadra
35.	Hapur	73.	Sultanpur
36.	Hardoi	74.	Unnao
37.	Hathras	75.	Varanasi
38.	Jalaun		

Source: www.nrega.nic.in



Map-Districts of Uttar Pradesh under MGNREGA.

Source: www.mapsofindia.com

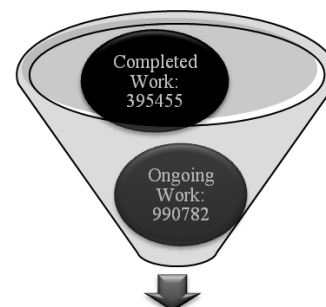
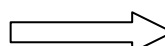
The financing of MGNREGA is done jointly by central and state governments. Central government provides 100% share in case of unskilled labour. In case of material component the funding is done by central and state governments in the ratio of 75:25 respectively.

There are 14 types of MNREGA works and these are categorised in four different categories. On the pilot basis three districts of UP with one block each Hardoi (Kachhauna), Unnao (Sikanderpur Karan) and Lakhimpur Kheri (Gola) had taken for mapping of all the works in Gram Panchayat.

S. No.	Type of Works	Work Status
1	Rural Communication	1. Complete 2. Progressive work / Suspended Work 3. Approved Work 4. The Proposed Work
2	Flood Control	
3	Water Conservation and Pondage	
4	Renovation of traditional water bodies	
5	Drought Proofing	
6	Irrigation Canals	
7	Irrigation Facilities for SC / ST / Indira Awas yojana / L.R. Category	
8	Land Development	
9	Other Work	
10	Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendra	
11	Coastal Areas	
12	Rural Drinking Water	
13	Fisheries	
14	Rural Sanitation	

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

According to NREGA Statistics the work status in Uttar Pradesh is shown in the funnel figure. Value per Persondays (in Lakh)



Total work: 1386237

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

MGNREGA is the flagship programme of the Government that directly touches the lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. It comes at a time when there is a severe rural livelihood distress. The act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days generated wage employment in financial year to every household whose adult-members volunteers to do unskilled manual work at a statutory minimum wage rate. Act is a legally enforceable right that facilitates rural households to get employment in public works within 15 days of applying for work. The Act is supposed to fulfill the short-terms need of

casual employment while creating sustainable livelihoods in long-term. Along with augmenting wage employment, the Act strengthens the natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty; recurrent drought and so encourage sustainable development. The act is also a significant vehicle for strengthening decentralization and deepening processes of democracy by giving a pivotal role to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in planning, monitoring and implementation. Unique features of the Act include, time bound employment guarantee, incentive disincentive structure to the State Governments for providing employment as go percent of the cost for employment provided as is born by centre or payment of unemployment allowances at their own cost and emphasis on labour intensive works prohibiting the use of the contractors and machinery (**Deaton and Dreze 2002**). The NREGA has recorded payment of unemployment allowance to large number of workers in chronically poorly administered areas. The Act also mandates 33 percent participation for women. The programme gains great connotation gives the concern of rising disparity in incomes and economic opportunities between rural and urban India during the last decade.

Thus, NREGA has the potential to change the rural scenario if it can be implemented in right spirit. A large number of studies on impacts of NREGA have pointed out the impressive effects of the scheme on different fronts in the rural areas of India. Not only the NREGA has helped in providing most needed employment to resource poor rural people, it has also induced the increase in wage rate in other rural farm and non-farm sectors. It has unleashed a silent revolution by forcing the Government and private employers to provide minimum wages to the poorest of the poor. It has tremendously improved the extent of curiosity, participation and awareness among rural people about various government programmes. It has increased the bargaining power of the poorest of the poor at every stage from demanding a job card to ensure legitimate wages for work. More importantly, it has reduced the extent of corruption in implementation of the scheme compared to that in previously implemented rural development programmes. It has considerably checked the extent of out migration in various parts of the country. However, it is necessary to evaluate periodically the performance of the scheme on the basis of different provisions of the Act and the extent of achievement of its development goals.

Poverty: Poverty in India is widespread in which the nation to have a third of the world poor. According to 2010 data from the United Nations Development Programme, an estimated 29.8% of India lives below the country's national poverty line. Defining the poverty line is itself a subjective matter and many feel it should be raised further. Indian journalist **Ravi. S. Jha** suggests measuring poverty by segregating India's poor in different groups, those living object poverty, those who are vulnerable to poverty and those who are lifted out of poverty through government welfare programmes.

According to **Gillin and Gillin-** 'Poverty is that condition in which a person either because of inadequate income or unwise expenditure, does not maintain a scale of living high enough to provide for his physical and mental efficiency and to enable him and his natural dependents to function usually according to the standard of society of Which he is a member.'

4. NEED OF THE STUDY

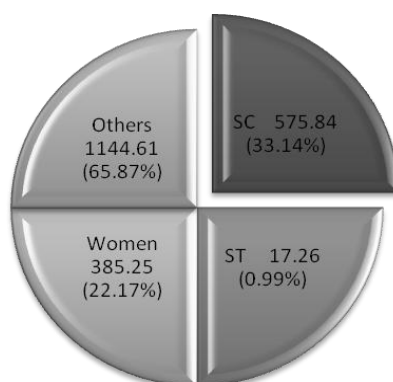
Why do we, then need one more study like the present one? We need this study firstly, because we would like to know whether the modification made in these programme over the years have

made any difference to the performance of the programme. Secondly, we would also like to study the long-term and collective whether the money poured into the villages over the past years under the programmes has made any impact on poverty.

Various estimates and reports on poverty shows that U.P has the highest number of people below the poverty line nearly 40% population in the State live below the official poverty line and over 80% of the poor in rural areas U.P. alone accounts for 18.9% of the poor in India, and an estimated 9% of the poor worldwide. Not only does the State have large absolute burden of income poverty, it ran as low among Indian States in other indicators of deprivation.

Poverty Alleviation programmes are specifically designed to promote development benefits to the door steps of the common rural people. The report may be helpful for the concerned department of the State pro-people policy change. Categories of programmes selected for study are:

- (a) Wage employment scheme
- (b) Credit cum subsidy based self employment programme
- (c) Housing programme
- (d) Pension schemes for the old, widows and disabled.



Persondays (In Lakh)

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

According to NREGA statistics, in Uttar Pradesh, the number of families provided employment under MGNREGA scheme so far is 49.70188 lakhs. The total number of persondays (in lakh) is 1737.71. [www.nrega.nic.in]

Women participation is 385.25 persondays (in lakh), which is 22.17 % of the total

The table shows the Fund Transfer Order (FTO) of MGNREGA in the state of **Uttar Pradesh**.

Total No. of Districts	75
Total No. of Blocks	821
Total No. of GPs	58,048
I Job Card	
Total No. of JobCards[In Lakhs]	159.72

Total No. of Workers[In Lakhs]	234.64			
(i)SC worker % as of total Workers	33.74			
(ii)ST worker % as of total Workers	1.26			
Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Lakhs]	69.35			
Total No. of Active Workers[In Lakhs]	88.03			
(i)SC worker % as of total Workers	35.29			
(ii)ST worker % as of total Workers	0.98			
II Progress	FY 2015-2016	FY 2014-2015	FY 2013-2014	FY 2012-2013
Approved Labour Budget[In Lakhs]	1631.61	2017.52	1983	3365.52
Persondays Generated so far[In Lakhs]	1211.13	1312.37	1753.71	1411.77
% of Total LB	74.23	65.05	88.44	41.95
% as per Proportionate LB [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	80.36			
SC persondays % as of total persondays	34.99	34.68	35.07	33.83
ST persondays % as of total persondays	1.08	0.83	1.03	1.03
Women Persondays out of Total (%) [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	29.19	24.77	22.17	19.7
Average days of employment provided per Household [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	31.04	33.52	35.11	28.54
(i) Average PersonDays for SC HouseHolds	30.41	32.77	34.96	28.35
(ii) Average PersonDays for ST HouseHolds	33.1	30.85	35.79	29.05
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	82,751	1,10,025	1,60,622	70,543
% payments generated within 15 days [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	22.37	18.33	73.6	85.36
Total Households Worked[In Lakhs]	39.02	39.16	49.95	49.47
Total Individuals Worked[In Lakhs]	48.6	47.18	61.49	60.77
% of Men Worked	70.14	73.68	75.49	77.55
% of Women Worked	29.86	26.32	24.51	22.45
% of SC Worked	36.42	36.16	35.84	34.77
% of ST Worked	1.05	0.94	1.06	1.1
% of Disabled Persons Worked	0.2	0.19	0.19	0.18

III Works				
Number of GPs with NIL exp	8,727	10,039	437	708
Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over)[In Lakhs]	13.51	12.07	14	8.67
Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	11.24	8.78	8.22	4.67
Number of Completed Works	2,27,186	3,29,126	5,77,813	3,99,647
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	55.85	31.57	29.29	37.89
IV Financial Progress				
Wages(Rs. In Lakhs)	2,03,318.61	1,96,623.84	2,22,757.7	1,69,191.6
Material and skilled Wages(Rs. In Lakhs)	52,022.45	99,117.47	1,02,755.7	76,994.72
Total Adm Expenditure (Rs. in Lakhs.)	7,787.18	18,503.06	20,554.21	20,343.26
Total Exp(Rs. in Lakhs.)	2,63,128.24	3,14,244.37	3,46,067.61	2,66,529.58
Liability (Wages) (Rs. in Lakhs.)	16,513.45	4,119.81	6,315.64	5,445.44
Material(%) [Click here for Average Performance of levels above]	20.37	33.51	31.57	31.27
Admin Exp(%)	2.96	5.89	5.94	7.63
% of Wage Expenditure through EFMS	100	99.8	16.16	0
% of Material Expenditure through EFMS	100	99.97	3.03	0
% of Admin Expenditure through EFMS	99.12	71.89	20.49	0
% of Total Expenditure through EFMS	99.97	98.23	12.52	0
Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs.)	160.85	155.54	141.61	124.25
Average Cost Per Day Per Person (In Rs.)	205.62	236.08	213.52	195.74

(Source: www.nrega.nic.in)

5. CONCLUSION

It is a scheme which provides legal guarantee for jobs or employment to the economic development of our country. There is an increase in the number of people who are willing to do manual work for a minimum wage which has resulted in an increase in employment. MGNREGA has improved the purchasing power of the rural community, encouraging them to do work. Women have also come out and are now consist of more than one-third of the predetermined force. The study shows that the migration from rural areas to urban areas particularly from eastern region of the country i.e. Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar to cities which has emerged as a burning problem in cosmopolitan cities of our country. This study will certainly suggest solving the problem of employment and as such in the eradication of acute poverty from economically most backward regions of the country.

To conclude, we think MGNREGA is a better scheme but cannot be a long-term solution to the unemployment problem of rural India. A comprehensive and a more sustainable solution that creates large-scale self-employment opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors in the rural areas, stimulates demand and last but not the least, increases rural productivity still need to be found. And lastly people should change their way of thinking and try to support this improvement. Just putting into practice such programs is not sufficient but they should be sustaining with commitment to help people as a communal and humanly cause. It will offer a viaduct to India towards becoming a Super Power.

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