

IMPACT OF MGNREGA ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LIFE IN RURAL SOCIETY OF TELANGANA - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MEDCHAL DISTRICT

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Abstract

The way to enlightenment and meditation is the Noble Eightfold Path, the fourth of the Four Noble Truths; the most important section of this Path is meditation. In the Abhidhammas, Buddhist writers have made a detailed analysis of meditation into its constituent parts. Genuine Buddhist meditation is called insight meditation, or vipassana. This investigation of Buddhist theory and philosophy in the light of personal experience is called the development of wisdom or prajna (Pali : panna); it is the fourth and last fundamental Buddhist meditation. There is the positive emotion of Buddhist compassion-an all-embracing love without desire which ultimately leads to nibble

Keywords

Enlightenment, Meditation, Eightfoldpath, Four, Nobletruths, Vipassand, Nibban Dhatuoauatthana,, Pnlightened, Person.

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Introduction

Socio-economic Life:

Socioeconomic status is the position of an individual or group on the socioeconomic scale, which is determined by a combination of social and economic factors such as income, amount and kind of education, type and prestige of occupation, place of residence, and in some societies or parts of society ethnic origin or religious background. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities in access to resources, as well as issues related to privilege, power and control.

Employment is a social issue and the main source of livelihood in India. Lack of access to employment leads to challenges to the basic needs of individuals and families. Unemployment lowers self-esteem and can direct towards social instability. Therefore, it is important to work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for all men and women. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Silver Bullet” for eradicating rural poverty and unemployment, by way of generating demand for a productive labor force in villages.

History of MGNREGA

MGNREGA has come after almost 56 years of experience with other rural employment programs, which include both Centrally sponsored Schemes and those launched by State Govt. These comprise the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) 1980-89; Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) 1983-89; Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) 1989- 1990; Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) 1993-99; Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) 1992-2002; Sampoorna Grameen Rojgar Yojana. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was notified on 7 September, 2005. NREGA, is one of the flagship schemes of the Government of India that touches the lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. The Act aims at enhancing the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Act came into force on 2 February 2006 in the Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh and was implemented in a phased manner. In Phase One, it was introduced in the 200 most backward districts of the Country. It was implemented in an additional 130 districts in phase two during 2007-2008. As per the initial target, NREGA was to be expanded countrywide in five years. However, in order to bring the whole nation under its safety net, and keep in view the demand, the scheme was extended to the remaining 247 rural districts of India from 1 April 2008 in Phase III.

Phase-wise Extension of the Scheme in India

Phase	Year	Districts
I	Feb 2006	200
II	Apr 2007	130
III	Apr 2008	247

Source: Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

1. Review of Literature

The article entitled ‘Employment Guarantee: Progress so Far’ by **Mathur, L¹ (2007)** revealed that “MGNREGA brought significant changes in the lives of the rural backward landless people. It has reduced migration in various states such as Andhra Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Orissa and Rajasthan and also increased the women participation rate in the states of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh”.

A study conducted by **the Ministry of Rural Development Annual Report² (2008-09)** which revealed that, “NREGA is a flagship programme of the Central Government that is directly related lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. It enhances the livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Scheme was introduced in 200 districts in the financial year 2006-07 and an additional 130 districts in FY 2007-08, and since 2008-09, extended to all over the country”.

Shobha & Vinitha³ (2011) in their studies ‘Inclusion of Female Labour Force in MGNREGA’ evaluated about the female labor force in MGNREGA. The introduction of MGNREGS heralded a new chapter in the history of expanding livelihood options for the rural women. The program has improved the economic condition among the women households which is a good indication for developing states. Now, they have started repaying their earlier debt from MGNREGA earnings and making their lives tension-free. Therefore, it will lead to the bargaining power and decision-making power of rural women.

Prasad, K.V.S⁴ (2012) in his study ‘Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA): An Overview’ pointed out that, the government has been adopted several initiatives to solve the problem of rural poverty such as NREP, RLEGP, JRY, EAS, JGSY, SGRY and NFFWP etc., but all the programs could not bring effective result in livelihoods. In this context, MGNREGA was enacted in 2005 which is the biggest poverty alleviation program. It has increased the work participation rate among the marginalized sections. In the financial year 2011-12, about 40 percent of SC/ST workers and 49 percent of female

workers were registered. The program also curbs the migration to the other cities or towns. Now, the rural people can gather their two-time meals. MGNREGA is not only providing livelihood security but also engaging them in other non-agricultural work that will develop the rural infrastructure like water conservation, land development and irrigation. Thus, it has led to sustainable development.

Salin & Leelavathi⁵ (2014) talk about the women's participation in their article 'MGNREGA and Women Participation in Andhra Pradesh: Performance and Challenges'. "Rural people especially women like MGNREGA jobs for assorted reasons. Firstly, it is locally accessible. The scheme provides that work is to be provided within five km of the residence of an employee. Hence, involvement in the work has been possible. Secondly, there is less probability of exploitation. There is a minimum statutory wage, and thus wage earned in MGNREGA work is much more than the other private works, more so in backward areas".

Desai et al.⁶ (2015) study on NREGA 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-A Catalyst for Rural Transformation'. The study report compared data from 26000 rural households in 2004-05 and 2011-12. The study concluded that, "NREGA is more likely to attract the poor and illiterate people than the non-poor and literate population. MGNREGA has also removed indebtedness and poverty. In the post-MGNREGA period, since 2011-12, only 27 percent of respondents have borrowed money from moneylenders but the percentage of respondents was so high in the FY 2004-05, i.e., 48 percent. In addition, it also

helps to reduce child labour which will improve the education system. Since 2004-05, about 6 percent of children in the age group of 11-14 years were engaged in wage work among NREGA respondents but this rank dropped to 4 percent in 2011-12. Moreover, NREGA will improve the financial condition of rural women because it is the only transparent wage employment scheme where men and women as well as young and the old have been paid equal status".

2. Research GAP

The literature survey revealed that the MGNREGA program is the nation's largest and the most effective employment program ever launched in India to alter rural livelihoods and the MGNREGA program is constantly in operation.

There appears to be no major research work done so far especially in the Telangana region on the impact of the MGNREGA program on the health, education, job satisfaction etc. The beneficiary families. It is necessary to discuss both implementation and the impact of MGNREGS on selected villages of Medchal district, Telangana for the present study.

3. Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are:

1. To understand the impact of MGNREGA on rural life in the study area.
2. To examine the extent of empowerment acquired by rural women
3. To examine the workers' awareness of MGNREGA
4. To identify the important problems associated with the implementation of the scheme.
5. To examine the respondent's views about the nature of work and work environment under MGNREGA.

4. Research Methodology

The present study adopts an analytical and descriptive research design on the impact of MGNREGA on the socio-economic life in the Kareemguda and Dayara Panchayats of Keesara mandal in Medchal district, Telangana state. The researcher has chosen 52 respondents through a convenient sampling method.

Sources of Data

I. Secondary Data

The secondary data was collected from government publications, official records, and policy documents, published reports of similar projects, journals and literature from the social science discipline.

II. Primary Data

A convenient sampling technique was applied to collect the primary data from the stakeholders of MGNREGA using questionnaire surveys. Informal interviews were also taken from selected households. Visited MGNREGS worksites to have first-hand experience on the MGNREGS works at the community level.

Data Analysis

For the quantitative analysis, statistical tools like averages, percentages etc. are used and diagrams like Pie-chart, Bar-Diagram etc. are used to present the analysis in graphical/ photo pictorial forms. The qualitative data obtained from informal interviews were also analyzed.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Socioeconomic background of the sample respondents

Table 1: Distribution of sample respondents: Gender wise

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	27	52%
Female	25	48%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

The researcher took 52 % male and 48 % female respondents during the data collection. But researcher observed that female beneficiaries were more in number than male beneficiaries at the work site

Table 2: Distribution of sample respondents: Caste wise

Caste	No. of Respondents	Percentage
SC	06	11.54%
ST	46	88.46%
BC	0	0
Others	0	0
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

In the field survey the researcher found that 88.46%respondents are Scheduled Tribe (STs), and 11.4% of respondents are Scheduled Caste (SCs).

Table 3: Distribution of sample respondents: Age group-wise

Age Group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-35	18	34.61
36-55	30	57.69%
56 and above	04	7.69%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

In the field survey the researcher found that the majority of the respondents (57.69 percent) belonged to the group of 36-55 years. 34.61%respondents were 18-35 years and 7.7 percent respondents were Greater than 55 years.

Table 4: Distribution of sample respondents: Education level wise

Literacy level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	39	75%
Up to Primary	07	13.46%
Upto secondary	04	7.69%
Above secondary	02	3.84%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

Out of the total 52 respondents, 75% respondents were illiterate, 13.46% respondents were up to the primary level, 7.69 percent respondents were up to the secondary and 3.84 percent respondents were above the secondary level. It shows that the sample covers almost all the groups as far as the education is concerned.

Table 5: Distribution of sample respondents: Based on monthly household income

Monthly Income	Before joining MGNREGA		After joining MGNREGA	
	No. of respondents	Percentage	No. of respondents	Percentage
2000-3000	14	26.92%	06	11.53%
3001-4000	25	48.07%	27	51.92%
4001-5000	10	19.23%	13	25%
5000 above	3	5.76%	6	11.53%
Total			52	100%

Source: Primary data

In the field survey the researcher found that the monthly income of all the beneficiaries was more than the monthly income before joining the MGNREGA job. From the field investigation it has been found that MGNREGA is functioning to strengthen the economic conditions of the rural households by providing employment opportunity.

Table 6: Gender-wise Respondents' view on Income increased due to MGNREGA

Gender	Income Increased due to MGNREGA			TOTAL
	To great extent	To someextent	Not at all	
Male	7 (13.46%)	18 (34.61%)	2 (3.84%)	27 (51.92%)
Female	12 (23%)	10 (19.23%)	3 (5.76%)	25 (48.07%)
Total	19 (36.53%)	28 (53.84%)	5 (9.61%)	52 (100%)

Source: Primary data

Majority (34.61%) of male respondents said that due to MGNREGA the income of households increased to some extent. The majority of female respondents (23%) say that the income due to MGNREGA increased to a great extent.

Table 7: Respondents' view on the Impact of MGNREGA on the Increase in literacy

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No improvement	17	32.69
Slight improvement	28	53.84%
Good improvement	7	13.46%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

More than half the percentage of respondents (53.84%) said that the percentage of literacy slightly improved due to MGNREGA.

Table 8: Respondents view on the Impact of MGNREGA on the quality of food you eat

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No improvement	7	13.46%
Slight improvement	32	61.53%
Good improvement	13	25%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

The majority of the respondents (61.53%) said that the expenditure they spend on food they eat was slightly improved due to MGNREGA.

Table 9: Respondents view on the MGNREGA helped to reduce indebtedness

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No improvement	3	5.76%
Slight improvement	17	32.69%
Good improvement	32	61.53%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

The majority of the respondents (61.53 percent) said that there was a good improvement in reducing indebtedness. They said MGNREGA helped them to spend their wages on repaying small debts and to keep themselves away from the clutches of local moneylenders.

5.76 percent of respondents were unable to reduce indebtedness with the help of MGNREGA.

Table 10: Respondents view on the Impact of MGNREGA on decline in dropouts of school-going children

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
No impact	4	7.69%
Slight impact	20	38.46%
Good impact	28	53.84%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

53.84 percent of the total respondents said that there was a great impact of MGNREGA on decline in dropouts of school-going children of MGNREGA workers. They said, with the help of MGNREGA they can spend some amount of their income on their children's education.

Table 11: Respondents view on the Impact of MGNREGA on Migration of workers

Category	Before Joining MGNREGA		After Joining MGNREGA	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Migrated	16	30.76%	9	17.3%
Not Migrating	36	69.23%	43	82.69%
Total	52	100%	52	100%

Source: Primary data

The above table indicates that there was a good impact of MGNREGA on declining the percentage of workers migrating to cities. The majority of the respondents said that the MGNREGA prevented seasonal or distressed migration toward cities by giving work opportunities at native places. However, 17.3 percent of the responded workers are still migrating, and are of the view that 100 days of employment in a year is not sufficient to meet the basic needs of their family.

Objective 2: To Examine the Extent of Empowerment Acquired by Rural Women

Table 12: Distribution of Sample Respondents: Women's Contribution in Family Decisions

Category	Before Joining MGNREGA		After Joining MGNREGA	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	11	16	18	9
Female	8	17	19	6
Total	19 (36.5%)	33 (63.46%)	37 (71.1%)	15(28.84%)

Source: Primary data

The researcher found that the MGNREGA helped women to participate in or to make family decisions. According to the respondents, the percentage of women making family decisions increased from 36.5 percent to 71.1 percent. Women respondents said that MGNREGA gave economic independence to women. 28.84 percent of the women are still unable to make family decisions.

Table 13: Distribution of sample respondents: Impact on Women by Equal wages to men and women under MGNREGA

Wages	No. of Respondents	Percentage
High Impact	31	59.6%
Medium Impact	14	26.92%
Low impact	04	7.69%
No impact	03	5.76%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

Majority of the respondents (59.6 percent) said that there was high impact on women

Table 14: Distribution of sample respondents: Awareness of minimum wages

Wages	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Rs.100/day	04	7.69%
Rs.150/day	11	21.15%
Rs.170/day	04	7.69%
Don't know	33	63.46%
Total	52	100%

Source: Primary data

In the field survey the researcher found that the majority of the respondents (63.46 percent) have no idea about the wages. The other respondents are guessing the wages approximately. Almost all the respondents have a big confusion about how the wages are calculated.

Impact of MGNREGA on Rural Life

- ☐ The monthly household income of the beneficiaries increased slightly
- ☐ 53.84% of the respondents said that the percentage of literacy slightly improved due to MGNREGA.
- ☐ The majority of the respondents (61.53%) said that the expenditure they spend on food they eat was slightly improved due to MGNREGA.
- ☐ 61.53% of the respondents said that there was a good improvement in reducing indebtedness.
- ☐ 53.84% of the total respondents said that there was a great impact of MGNREGA on decline in dropouts of school-going children of MGNREGA workers.
- ☐ The percentage of migration of the respondents declined from 30.76% to 17.3% after joining MGNREGA. This 17.3 % of the respondents workers are still migrating, and are of the view that 100 days of employment in a year is not sufficient to meet the basic needs of their family.

Women Empowerment

- ☐ According to the respondents, the percentage of women making family decisions increased from 36.5 % to 71.1 %
- ☐ 59.6 % of the respondents said that there was high impact on women by Equal wages to men and women

Awareness about MGNREGA

- ☐ 63.46% of the respondents have no idea about the wages and about the time span of getting employment from the date of submission of the application

- ☐ 67.3% of the respondents have no idea about the provision of maximum distance between house and workplace
- ☐ The majority of the respondents i.e., 80.76% have no idea about the provision of unemployment allowance
- ☐ 78.84% of the respondents are aware of the provision of equal wages for men and women
- ☐ 42.3% of the respondents are unaware of the provision of compensation due to delay in payment of wages and 34.61% of the respondents said there is nothing like compensation under MGNREGA
- ☐ 61.53% of the respondents are unaware of the provision of facilities at the worksite.

Conclusion

MGNREGA is the biggest poverty alleviation program in the world which was started with the objective of “Enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year, to the rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work”.

The present study gives us the information about the impact of the MGNREGA scheme on the socio-economic life of the common mass in the selected study area.

The scheme could not ensure the 100-day job guarantee to the majority of the job card holders. The researcher observed that the scheme fails with respect to providing worksite facilities, unemployment allowance, In-time payments, compensation for delay in payments etc. Apart from these, the workers are not yet aware of the objectives, features and the process of MGNREGA. So, the MGNREGA program has not achieved its goal completely in the selected study area. Therefore, the government should take steps to implement the scheme according to the Act and should provide adequate information about the scheme to the workers through local bodies.

The tune and essence of the Act could not shine in the country unless until it is implemented effectively and accordingly.

Suggestions

- ☐ It could be better to connect agricultural/farming activities to MGNREGS
Connect Fisheries related works to MGNREGA will yield better
- ☐ It is suggested to extend 100 days job guarantee to 360 days

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