



MGNREGA AND ITS ROLE IN EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACT:

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is a major flagship program initiated by the Government of India which enhances the employment opportunity at rural area. The main objective of this scheme is to provide livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days guarantee wage employment in one financial year to every household whose adult members seek employment for unskilled manual work. The present study is basically focused on employment provided, increase in job cards issued, and employment generation to various social groups of employment in Himachal Pradesh. To perform the objectives of the paper, secondary data has been used. The scope of the study covered the period from 2015-16 to 2021-22. The finding of the study reveals that MGNREGA plays an important role in employment generation, so that it is quite successful to provide employment to those who demanded for the employment under it.

KEYWORDS: MGNREGA, Employment Generations, Households. Person-days

INTRODUCTION:

Poverty alleviation and employment generation have always been the important issues from the beginning of the five year plans in India. In the beginning after independence, poverty and unemployment were not taken seriously by the government. Maharashtra was the first State to initiate the step and enacted an employment guarantee act in the 1970. The planning commission later approved the scheme and same was adopted on national scale. The relief measure undertaken by the Govt. of Maharashtra including employment, program aimed at creating productive assets such as tree plantation, conservation of soil, excavation of canals, and building artificial lentic water bodies. In later years, The Department of Rural Development implements major rural development programmes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (MGNREGS), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Deen Dayal Antodya Yojan –National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), Jawahar Rojgar Yozana (JRY), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Employment Assurance Scheme, food for Work Programme (FWP) in 2004. The main objective of these programmes is to bring about overall improvement in the quality of life of people in rural area through employment generation, reduction in poverty by enabling poor households, and provision of other basic amenities.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was notified by the Govt. of India in September 2005 and was made effective w.e.f 2nd February 2006. It was renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on 2nd October 2009.on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The MGNREGA Act 2005 covered 330 districts in India; where 200 were in phase 1 district and 130 in phase 11 districts and remaining 285 districts covered in third phase of the scheme. Himachal Pradesh covers a geographical area of 55673 square kilometer including 55,402.18 square rural area. The total population of Himachal Pradesh as per 2011 census 68,56 509 with population density being 123 per square kilometer. Out of which 89.7 per cent people live in the village of rural area. MGNREGS was launched in Himachal Pradesh on 2nd February 2006 in three phases. In first phase, the scheme was launched in two districts viz. Chamba and Sirmaur. In second phase, It was extended to two more districts i.e. Kangra district and Mandi district on 1st April 2007. In the third phase, the scheme has been covering all the remaining 8 districts of the state under the scheme with effect from 1st April 2008. The main objective of this scheme is to provide employment for the enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the state by providing 100 days of guarantee wage employment in every financial year to every household. The entitlement of 100 days per year can be shared within the household. The MGNREGA scheme is open to all rural households in the areas notified by the Government of India. According to the provisions of the Act, Job cards to every registered household are issued by the Gram Panchayat and wage employment to the applicant is to be provided within 15 days of receipt of application. If the applicant is not provided within given period (15 days) daily unemployment allowance should be paid.

As per the provision, employment should be within 5 kms radius and out of total person days created , 1/3rd of beneficiaries should be women. Transparency and accountability of the fund should be checked through social work.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Santosh Kumar, H. (2014) on his paper “**Role of MGNREGA in Rural Employment: A Review**” analyzed that MGNREGA is playing a pivotal role in rural employment generation and enhancing the rural livelihood. He also analyzed that The MGNREGA has reduced the traditional gender wage discrimination and has had a positive impact on the socio- economic status of the women. .

Bahauguna, Pandey and Sudan (2016), “A Study on socio impact of MGNREGA on Beneficiaries in Ruderprayag District of Uttarakhand” revealed through a study that MGNREGA scheme has done a great job in improving the economies of rural areas by raising their socio economic status. The quality of training programmes to the personnel employed in MGNREGA should be enhanced and rural mass should be made more aware about latest schemes and programmes.

Dheeraj , R.P. (2017) studied in his article “A critical analysis of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)”. This paper analysed whether MGNREGA scheme has been able to achieve the objective and look into the question whether this scheme has caused development of the rural poor. He concluded in his study that it is not possible for MGNREGA individually to develop the rural household completely. He suggested that the complete development can only happen when the central and state governments introduce policies and initiatives which will cause growth and development of the rural households.

Sharma, Karim Khanuja (2017), “MGNREGA: A tool for Generation of employment & Poverty Alleviation” explained that no doubt MGNREGA is the flagship program and produced benefits when it comes to the development of rural India. Still the programme has many parts which required development.

Pandey Roshni, (2017), in her paper “MGNREGA and Its Role in Rural Development” studied how MGNREGA is a beneficial and effective scheme for the development of rural India. The data has been collected from secondary sources like internet, articles, newspapers, magazines etc. She analyzed from the study that the role of the MGNREGA on overall poverty reduction and development of rural India is visible. But still there were significant shortages in verification of work by state officials. So that The ministry needs to take decisive steps to ensure implementation of the scheme.

Vettriselman, R., Anto Ruben M & Sam Annie, (2018), studied in their paper “Role of MGNREGA in Generation of Employment and Eradication of Rural Employment in Tamil Nadu” analysed the effectiveness of the MGNREGA in reducing poverty, by identifying the benefits and the challenges of its implementation. The study concluded that the poverty level has reduced through MGNREGA scheme by providing better employment opportunity in the rural area.

Mishra Anil, K and Singh M, (2018) studied in their article “MANREGA and Employment Generation In India”. The main objective was to overview the impact of MANREGA on job creation in rural India. To fulfill the objective of the paper, secondary data had been used. The finding of the study revealed that MANREGA play a significant role in employment generation in rural India. It not only provided a security of food, but also promote rural development.

Chahal, M. & Kumar, M. (2021) analyzed on “Impact of MGNREGA on Employment Generation in Haryana”. The main objective of the study was to examine the importance of MGNREGA for the generation of employment in rural Haryana. They used the secondary data comprises the information from 2016-17 to 2020-21. The finding of the study revealed that MGNREGA plays an important role in employment generation in Rural Haryana. It not only provides security for food but also support rural development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives

To assess the role of MGNREGA in employment generation in Himachal Pradesh.

To suggest the measures for the better implementations of MGNREGA scheme in Himachal Pradesh.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study is basically exploratory in nature and depends exclusively on secondary data. Secondary data are collected from various sources like research papers, internet, annual reports of Rural Development Department of H.P., Annual Economic Survey, articles published in journal, published documents and websites. The study covers a period of 2015-16 to 2021-22. The various indicators used in study are number of job cards issued, no. of household demanded and provided employment, persons days generated. The data has analyzed by using the statistical tool such as percentage is used to evaluate the study. The Table and graphical presentations have been also made for analyze the data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS:

The role of MGNREGA in employment generation in Himachal Pradesh has been analyzed on the basis of the following indicators.

1. Job Cards Issued, Employment demanded and employment provided under this scheme.
2. No. of Person days of work Generated in Himachal Pradesh.
3. Gender wise person days generated under MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh
4. Percentage of Households completed 100 days of employment.

1. JOB CARDS ISSUED, EMPLOYMENT DEMANDED AND EMPLOYMENT PROVIDED UNDER THIS SCHEME.

Table 1: Year-Wise job Cards Issued and Employment provided under MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh during 2015-16 to 2021-22 (In No.)

Year	Total Job Cards issued	Employment Demanded by Households	Employment provided to Households	Employment provided (Percent)
2015-16	1180185	466876	423449	90.69
2016-17	1192801	569620	528840	92.84
2017-18	1211178	550764	511366	92.84

2018-19	1244051	592370	553640	93.46
2019-20	1281217	580573	535410	92.22
2020-21	1362385	672729	636629	94.63
2021-22	1430025	580573	580512	99.98

SOURCE: MGNREGS PORTAL MIS REPORT, www.mnregaweb4.nic.in

Table 1 indicates that the no. of households with job cards from 2015-16 to 2021-22 shows the increasing trend which indicates the successful implementation of the scheme in Himachal Pradesh. On average over a period of seven years, 93 per cent of households who demanded work received it. This reflects approximately 40000 households who were not provided work except 2021-22, where approximately cent percent households provided employment in Himachal Pradesh. In Financial year 2015-16, of the 466876 households who has demanded employment, out of which 423449 or 90.69 per cent households had been provided work. Similarly in Financial year 2016-17, to 2021-22, approximately 93 per cent to 99 per cent households have received employment. .It was found that in every year it was above 90 percent which reveals that MGNREGA was quite successful in providing employment to the households who were willing to work under the scheme

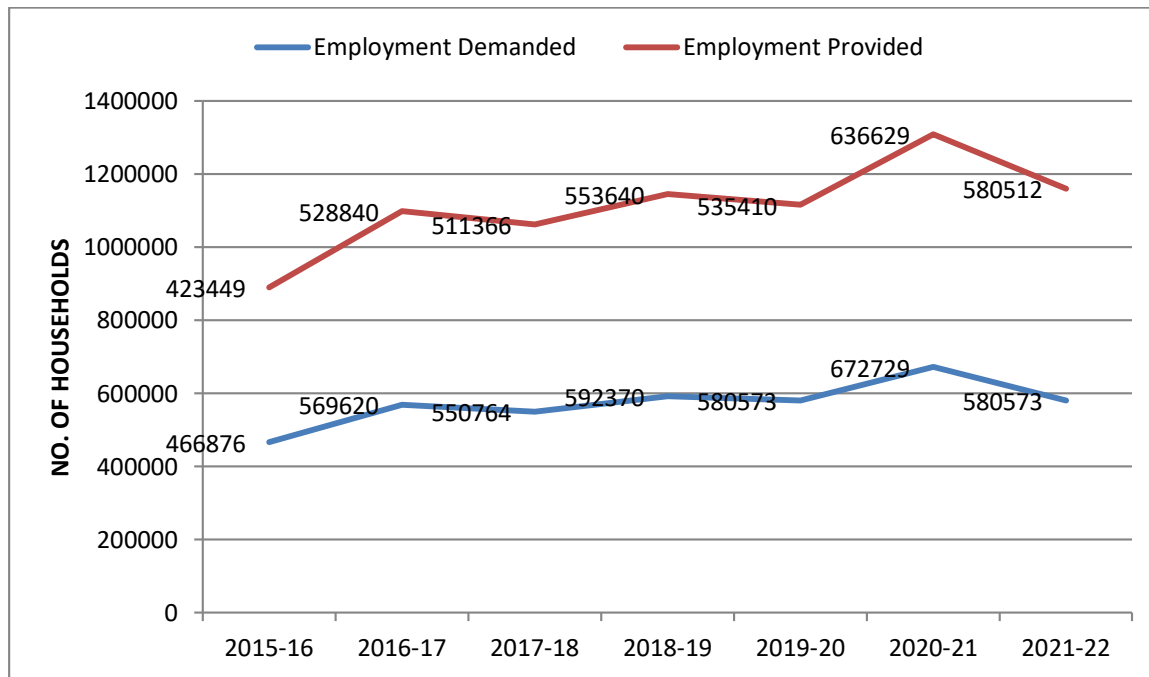


FIGURE NO 1: EMPLOYMENT DEMANDED BY AND PROVIDED TO HOUSEHOLDS

2. No. of Person days of work Generated in Himachal Pradesh.

Table-2: Caste-wise employment status under MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh (In Thousands)

Year	No. of Persondays generated			
	SC	ST	Others	Total
2015-16	4788098 (26.94)	1497209(8.42)	11485570 (64.64)	17770877 (100)
2016-17	6563820(27.74)	1887758(7.98)	15205803(64.28)	236.60081(100)
2017-18	6126270(27.84)	1681413(7.64)	14198057(64.52)	220.05740 (100)
2018-19	7837408 (27.10)	2429309(12.23)	18253193 (60.67)	28519910 (100)
2019-20	7000719(26.00)	2582242(15.70)	16335825(58.30)	25918786(100)
2020-21	8758006(25.32)	3033249(13.09)	21827962(61.59)	33619217(100)
2021-22	9661338(25.68)	2708203(9.35)	24724391(64.97)	37093932(100)

Source: www.mnregaweb4.nic.in

The table no 2 reveals the year-wise total persondays employment generation under MGNREGS, SC, ST categories of beneficiaries as well as beneficiaries belonging to other social groups. Table indicates the total persondays generated under the scheme show the fluctuating trend during the study period of 2015-16 to 2021-22. The total 17770877 person days generated in the financial year 2015-16, out of which SC 4788098, ST 1497209 category and 11485570 belongs to other social group. During the study period, person days of employment provided to SC category is an average 26 percent which are the above of the percentage share of population of SC people in Himachal. Similarly Schedule Tribe people are also enjoying more share of employment in this scheme than the percentage share of their population in Himachal. In the case of both SCs and STs the participation rate was around 35 percent that exceeds their share in the total population i.e. 28.7%. It is revealed from the study that MGNREGA is succeeding as a self targeting programme, with high participation from marginalized groups including SC and STs. This trend is definitely a positive trend.

3. GENDER- WISE PERSON DAYS GENERATED UNDER MGNREGA IN HIMACHAL PRADESH.

Table 3: Gender wise person days generated under MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh

Year	Person days generated to men	Person days generated to women	Total Person days generated	Percentage of Women
2015-16	6548253	11222624	17770877	63.15
2016-17	9038272	14621809	23660081	61.80
2017-18	8454337	13551403	22005740	61.84
2018-19	10477648	18042262	28519910	63.26
2019-20	9295553	16623233	259.18786	62.75
2020-21	13093536	20525681	33619217	61.05
2021-22	13912676	23181256	37093932	62.49

Source: www.mnregaweb4.nic.in

MGNREGA is becoming a milestone in empowering women. According to the present study, the share of women in MGNREGA works in Himachal Pradesh is more than that of men. It is revealed from the table that women have accounted for approximately 62 per cent of the total person days generated during the study period of 2015-16 to 2021-22 which has above the mandatory 33% as required by the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005. According to the data, in the financial year 2021-22, A total of 37093932 person days created under the scheme, of which 23181256 were women person days constituting 62.49 percent of the women participation. It can be concluded that the women have done larger proportion of MGNREGA job compared to men. This phenomenon implies that there is no social barrier of women participation in MGNREGA. Therefore women participation in MGNREGA is increasing with passage of time and they are sharing financial burden with men in the family. This shows positive sign of women empowerment.

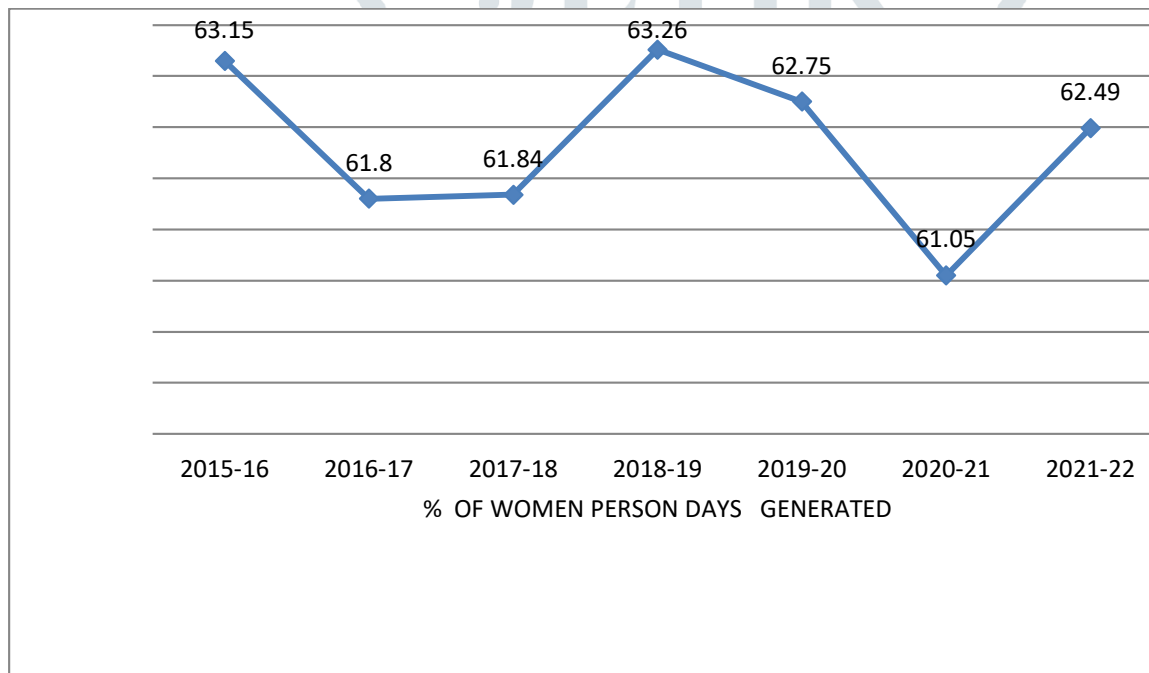


FIGURE NO 2 : PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN PERSON-DAYS GENERATED

4. PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS COMPLETED 100 DAYS OF EMPLOYMENT.

Table-4: No. of Households completed 100 days of Employment under MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh

Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
No. of Households completed 100 days of Employment	20390	11123	14094	70321	61192	89168	80475
Average day of employment per household	41.97	44.74	43.03	51.51	48.40	52.81	52.48

Source: www.mgnrega.nic.in

During the study period 2015-16 to 2021-22, the number of households completed 100 days of work showed a fluctuating trend, but in the financial year 2018-19, it has increased around 5 times from the previous year and again slightly decreased and increased the number of households. It is evident from the Table that around 80475 families in Himachal have completed 100 days of work under MGNREGA in the financial year 2021-22. Data available on the MNREGA portal shows that out of 636629 households that have availed work under this scheme in 2020-21, over 89168 households completed 100 days of employment. It was happened due to migration of the workers from the urban to the rural areas as a result of COVID-19. Above table further shows that, if we compare average days of employment provided per households in Himachal Pradesh under MGNREGA is 41.97 average days during the year 2015-16, and 52.48 average days of employment provided per household is culminated at 2021-22.

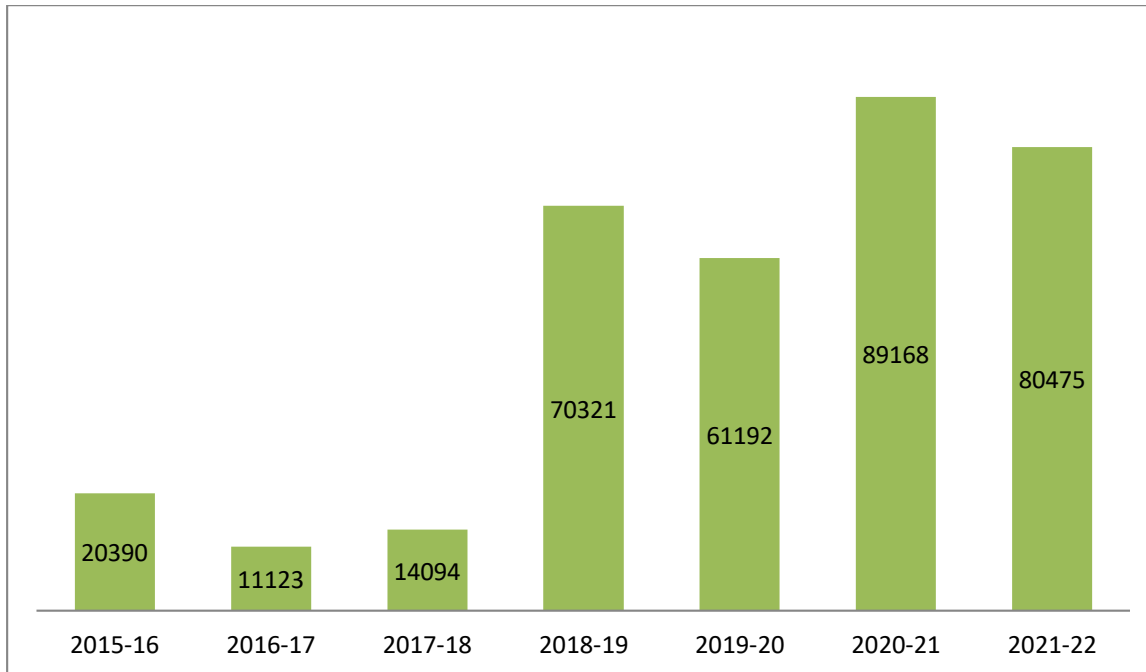


FIGURE NO 3: No. of Households completed 100 Days of employment

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

- There is a continuous growth in total job cards issued to the rural people who are all registered for employment from the scheme.
- It is found from the study that MGNREGA over the years has generated employment opportunities to the rural people who otherwise did not get the employment during the lean season.
- Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes counted for 35 percent of the total pesondays generated which exceeds their share in the total population i.e. 28.7%. It is revealed from the study that MGNREGA is succeeding as a self targeting program with high participation from marginalized groups including SC and STs. This trend is definitely a positive trend.
- The number of households with job cards shown increasing trend which shows that the areas of persons who are interesting to get employment under the scheme is getting wider. It reveals from the study that the employment provided under MGNREGA was far below in comparison with job cards issued.
- Over the years from 2015-16 the majority of the households who have demanded employment get employment which shows that scheme is quite successful to provide the employment to those who are willing to work under the scheme.
- The another indicator to judge the performance of the scheme is no. of person days generated which shows a fluctuating trend there are so many reason for these fluctuations trend it may be political, social or other reasons for these fluctuations.
- It can be concluded that the women have done larger proportion of MGNREGA job compared to men. This phenomenon implies that there is no social barrier of women participation in MGNREGA. This shows positive sign of women empowerment.
- Another indicator is 100 days of employment to the rural people which is heart and soul of the scheme but in Himachal Pradesh only limited no of households get employment for 100 days. Average day per household is just 52.28.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

Since Independence MGNREGA is the major rural employment generation scheme in India. This scheme not only secures 100 days job, but also provides minimum earnings for every adult of every household at a similar time. This scheme has enabled the rural household to increase their purchasing power, lead a quality and healthy life with all the basic facilities and provide education to their children and several other benefits. The study results reports that the scheme was highly influenced in the rural areas due to create the employment opportunities to rural people and decrease the poverty level in the rural areas especially for the disadvantage groups. MGNREGA plays an important role in enhancing the development of rural economy. MGNREGA scheme had changed the wage structure, accessibility of work at nearest work place and also stopped huge amount of migration in rural area. It is quite successful to provide employment to those who demanded for the employment. It will definitely cope up with poverty and unemployment crisis in Himachal Pradesh.

Finally, there are few suggestions for the better implementations of MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh. Employment provided to the workers should cover the whole year because it will provide the job security to them. The registration and maintenance of job cards must be improved for the rural people to minimize the chances of the people to become victim of exploitations. Payment to the workers should be made in time. Training should be provided to the Gram Panchayats so they can implement the scheme in an

efficient way. Wage should be paid equal to men and women. The scheme has much potential, if implemented properly. Then it will definitely cope up with poverty and unemployment crisis in Himachal Pradesh.

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