



A STUDY ON THE PERFORMANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT IN MADURAI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

***Dr. E. Nandakumar, **Dr. F. Stalin, ***Dr. A. Micheal Raj,
****Dr.A.Sivapandi, *****Mr.P.Pandiyarajan, *****Prof.A.Velanganni Joseph,**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Arul Anandar College, Karumathur, Madurai.

**Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Arul Anandar College, Karmathur, Madurai.

***Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Arul Anandar College, Karmathur, Madurai.

**** Assistant Professor, Department of management Studies, Sourashtra College, (Autonomous), Madurai-04.

***** Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Sourashtra College, (Autonomous), Madurai-04.

***** Professor and Head, Department of Youth Welfare, Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai-21.

Abstract:

The MGNREGA implements schemes targeted at poverty reduction, provision of basic services, employment generation, and habitation development. In 2022-23, 54 per cent of the Department's expenditure is estimated to be on MGNREGS. It seeks to provide guaranteed 100 days of wage employment per year to every rural household whose adult member volunteers to do unskilled manual work. Demand for MGNREGA work has increased, uptake of employment has been poor, MGNREGS is a demand driven scheme. In 2021-22, 726 Lakhs households had demanded employment under the scheme. The number of employment provided has increased from 206 Lakhs in 2014-15 to 726 .04 Lakhs in 2021-22. The Person days generated during the year 2014-15 were 13330.82 Lakhs increased to 36354.64 Lakhs in 2021-22. Employment demanded by household in Madurai district increased from the year 2017-18 (237 lakhs) to 2021-22 (256 lakhs), the percentage of employment provided has been 93 percentage. During the time of pandemic and lockdown situation the employment provided increased from 189 lakhs in 2018-19 to 214 lakhs on the year 2019-20. The central and state governments need to provide much more in the form of financial and technical resources for effective implementation.

INTRODUCTION

In a rural agrarian labour surplus economy, sections of rural population depend on the wages they earn through unskilled, casual, manual labour. They are vulnerable to the possibility of sinking from transient to chronic poverty in the event of inadequate labour demand or in the face of unpredictable crises that may be general in nature, like natural disasters or personal, like ill-health, all of which adversely impact their employment opportunities. In a context of poverty and unemployment, welfare programmes have been important programme interventions in developed as well as developing countries for many years. Giving a statutory framework to wage employment programmes—Based on the experience of these programmes, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) were enacted to reinforce the commitment towards livelihood security in rural areas. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The objective of the Act is to create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor. The choice of works suggested in the Act addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on a sustainable basis.

ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER THE MGNREGA

According to data from the Government of India, MGNREGA has grown to cover 30.85% of India's rural population. Since its inception, MGNREGS has generated 3089.49 crore (308.949 million) person days as of August 2020, and created over 3.6 crore (36 million) geo-tagged assets as of 2019. In terms of socio-economic impacts, MGNREGA has made some very significant achievements:

- ❖ MGNREGA has widely been cited, including by the World Bank, as one of the largest social security schemes in the world.
- ❖ Though the scheme mandates that 33.3% of workers be women, trends over the last decade have regularly averaged at over 52% nationwide. Multiple studies have indicated that MGNREGS has had a positive impact by making more work accessible and available to rural women.
- ❖ MGNREGS has also helped reduce distress migration in areas where it is well implemented.
- ❖ According to the MGNREGA MIS, around 40% of the total households employed under MGNREGS each year belong to people of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The programme has had significant effects on consumption and poverty of SC/ST households in the lean agricultural seasons.
- ❖ There is also evidence to show that the MGNREGA has put upward pressure on agricultural wages which improves welfare for the poorest.
- ❖ Assets created under MGNREGA are useful to local communities. Where principles of Integrated Natural Resource Management have been properly applied, they have resulted in improved quality of agricultural and watershed management assets, both at the individual and community level, as well as in creating infrastructure that meets key local needs. (Participatory Research in India, 2021)

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To focus on the overview of performance of MGNREGA in India.
2. To evaluate the performance of MGNREGA in terms of employment provided to the households on demand.
3. To study made an attempt on the performance of MGNREGA in the Madurai District, Tamil Nadu.
4. To know the effectiveness of MGNREGA in alleviating rural unemployment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS

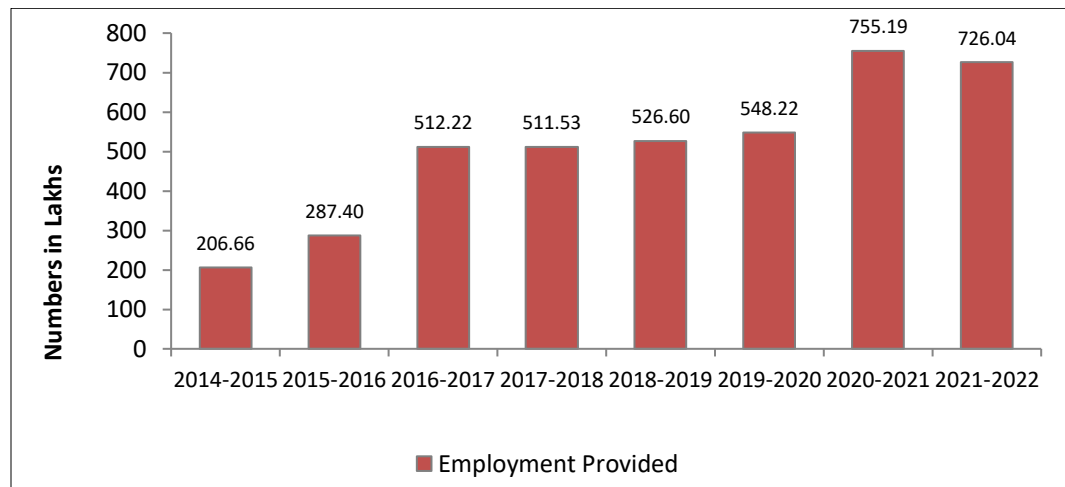
The statistical data for the study have been mobilized from the secondary sources. Secondary data collected from different reports published by Ministry of Rural Development, Reports from MGNREGA web portal, books, journals and periodicals. The main purpose of the study is to have a critical view of the MGNREGS schemes. Therefore, emphasize is laid more on the information supplied by the MGNREGS schemes supplemented by the secondary data. The data have been carefully scrutinized and edited in order to ensure accuracy, consistency, and completeness. Most of the analyses are based on the responses presented in the form of cumulative tables. The data tabulated are systematically processed and interpreted on the basis of the objectives formulated. Statistical tools such as percentage, averages are used for basic analysis.

AREA AND PERIOD OF THE STUDY

Madurai district of Tamil Nadu has been chosen as the area of study, there are 13 blocks viz., Madurai East, Madurai West, Thirupparankundram, Melur, Kottampatti, Vadipatti, Alanganallur, Usilampatti, Chellampatti, T.Kallupatti, Sedapatti, Thirumangalam, Kallikudi in this district. The period of study is taken based on secondary data availability from MGNREGA website, from the year 2017-2018 to 2022-2023.

DEMAND FOR WORK MGNREGA – INDIA

Demand for MGNREGA work has increased, however the uptake of employment has been poor. MGNREGS is a demand driven scheme. In 2021-22, 726.04 Lakhs households had demanded employment under the scheme. The number of employment provided has increased from 206 Lakhs in 2014-15 to 726.04 Lakhs in 2021-22. Demand for work also shot up significantly during the pandemic. According to the Ministry, 1.85 crore persons were offered work in May 2021, which was 52% higher than the work offered in May 2019 (Ministry of rural Development report, 2022). The Person days generated during the year 2014-15 were 13330.82 Lakhs increased to 36354.64 Lakhs in 2021-22.

Figure 1: Employment Provided on MGNREGS over the years (Lakhs)

Employment Provided over Demand in Tamil Nadu

The table 1 displays the data on employment demanded and employment provided and the percentage during the period 2017-18 to 2022-23 for the state of Tamil Nadu. Though the programme mentions in the mandate itself to guarantee employment based on demand, it was obvious from the given table that the employment demand was not met thoroughly though programme has provided employment to more than 95% of its demand. The largest difference in employment provided against its demand can be seen in the year 2018-19. The study was conducted half way through the period 2022-23, hence the number 79.34% can be expected to increase. The period 2019-20 to 2021-22 corresponds to Covid-19 lockdown. It could be seen that during 2020-21 (6829 lakhs) the demand for employment had increased by 16% than that of 2019-20 (5881 lakhs). The employment provided by MGNREGA had also increased by 17% during 2020-21 (6649 lakhs) than that of 2019-20 (5649 lakhs).

**Table 1: Cumulative Employment Demanded Vs Provided
in Tamil Nadu (2017-18 to 2022-23)**

Numbers in 1000

Year	ED Household	EP Household	Percentage of Employment Provided over Demand
2017-18	5856	5815	99.30
2018-19	5834	5592	95.85
2019-20	5881	5649	96.06
2020-21	6829	6649	97.36
2021-22	6989	6786	97.10
2022-23 (half)	4404	3494	79.34
Grand Total	35792	33985	94.95

Source: MIS Report (2022), NREGA, Government of India.

District-Wise Employment Provided against its Demand

In the Table 2, the districts in the state of Tamil Nadu was sorted based on their performance in providing employment against its demand. The average of Tiruvannamalai district have been provided highest employment to the household followed with Villupuram, Cuddalore, Tiruchirappalli, Pudukkottai and so on. Madurai is one among the top 10 districts based on the employment provided for the 2017-18 to 2022-23 indicating more demand for MGNREGA.

Table 2: Cumulative Employment Demanded (ED) Vs Provided (EP) in the Districts of Tamil Nadu (2017-18 to 2022-23)

Numbers in 1000

S.No	Districts	Employment Demand from Households	Employment Provided to Households	Percentage of EP against ED
1	Tiruvannamalai	2606	2509	96.28
2	Villupuram	2549	2375	93.17
3	Cuddalore	1996	1905	95.44
4	Tiruchirappalli	1562	1488	95.26
5	Pudukkottai	1448	1386	95.72
6	Tiruvallur	1382	1328	96.09
7	Dindigul	1388	1322	95.24
8	Salem	1380	1317	95.43
9	Thanjavur	1336	1285	96.18
10	Madurai	1335	1241	92.96
11	Vellore	1200	1163	96.92
12	Krishnagiri	1222	1152	94.27
13	Kanchipuram	1159	1126	97.15
14	Nagapattinam	1025	991	96.68
15	Virudhunagar	1042	986	94.63
16	Ramanathapuram	1003	961	95.81
17	Dharmapuri	927	884	95.36
18	Sivagangai	930	883	94.95
19	Tiruvarur	890	837	94.04
20	Tirunelveli	840	807	96.07
21	Namakkal	828	794	95.89
22	Thoothukkudi	821	789	96.10
23	Ariyalur	789	759	96.20
24	Tiruppur	727	675	92.85
25	Kallakurichi*	688	638	92.73
26	Karur	635	605	95.28
27	Erode	650	601	92.46
28	Chengalpattu*	526	495	94.11
29	Perambalur^	488	462	94.67
30	Coimbatore	436	399	91.51
31	Theni	420	386	91.90
32	Ranipet*	355	331	93.24
33	Tenkasi*	321	294	91.59
34	Tirupathur*	271	252	92.99
35	Mayiladuthurai	244	217	88.93
36	Kanniyakumari	210	200	95.24

37	The Nilgiris	163	142	87.12
	Grand Total	35792	33985	94.95

*Districts were formed in the year 2020-21

^Districts were formed in the year 2021-22

MGNREGA in Madurai

MNREGA provides an assurance with ensuring a minimum level of employment and stability to the incomes of the poor and give them an opportunity to develop their collective strength. Apart from providing livelihood to millions of household, these programmes have become a significant vehicle for strengthening grassroots level democratic processes. Employment generation programmes in India continue to be one of the major interventions aimed at alleviating rural poverty. It is inferred in the Table 3 employment demanded by household in Madurai district increased from the year 2017-18 (237 lakhs) to 2021-22 (256 lakhs), the percentage of employment provided has been 93 percentage. During the time of pandemic and lockdown situation the employment provided increased from 189 lakhs in 2018-19 to 214 lakhs on the year 2019-20.

Table 3: Cumulative Employment Demanded Vs Provided in Madurai District (2017-18 to 2022-23)

Numbers in 1000

Year	ED Household	EP Household	Percentage of Employment Provided
2017-18	237	235	99.15612
2018-19	205	189	92.19512
2019-20	226	214	94.69027
2020-21	253	245	96.83794
2021-22	256	246	96.09375
2022-23	159	111	69.81132
Grand Total	1335	1241	92.9588

Employment Demanded and Provided Block-Wise in Madurai District

The block-wise details in Madurai district employment demanded and provided revealed in the Table 4. The block Melur and Sedapatti have been demanded more employment of 1.4 lakhs when compared to all other blocks, this block shows that rural areas cover more employment than urban areas. In Madurai district the employment demanded is higher than employment provided.

**Table 4: Cumulative Employment Demanded Vs Provided in Blocks
in Madurai District (2017-18 to 2022-23)**

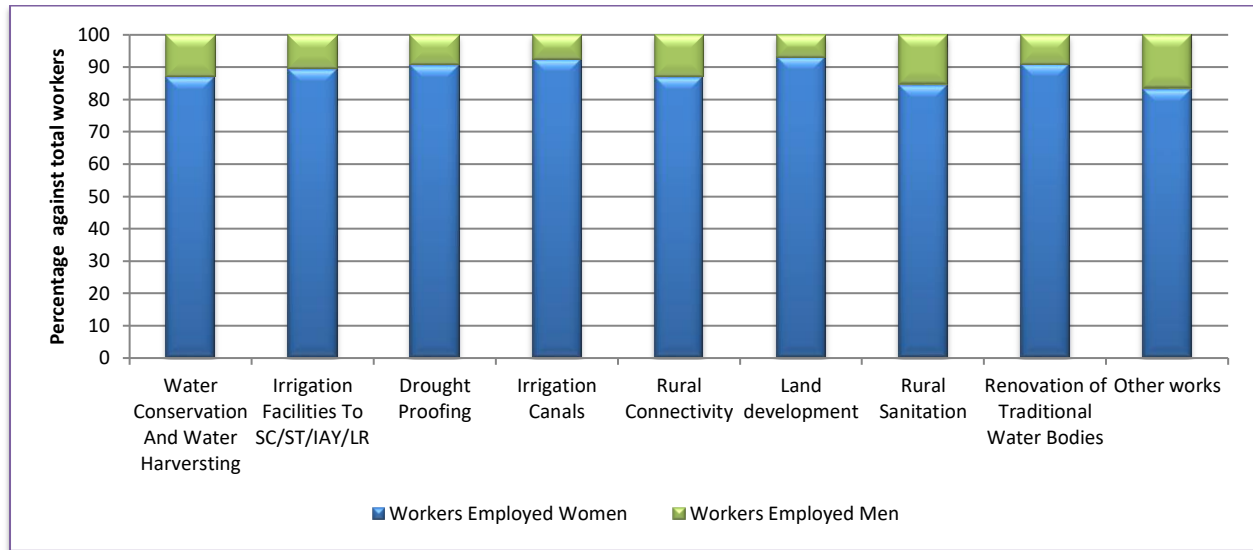
Numbers in 1000

Blocks	Employment Demanded Household	Employment Provided Household	Percentageof Employment Provided against Demanded
Melur	140	130	92.86
Sedapatti	140	130	92.86
Kottampatti	124	116	93.55
Thirumangalam	118	108	91.53
Chellampatti	109	100	91.74
Kallikudi	100	92	92.00
T.Kallupatty	97	93	95.88
Thirupparankundram	96	90	93.75
Usilampatti	92	86	93.48
Madurai East	91	85	93.41
Alanganallur	81	74	91.36
Vadipatti	81	76	93.83
Madurai West	67	63	94.03
Total	1335	1241	92.96

Gender Based Worker Employed

As a rural wage employment programme, MGNREGA recognized the relevance of incorporating gender equity and empowerment in its design. Various provisions under the Act and its Guidelines, aim to ensure that women have equitable and easy access to work, decent working conditions, equal payment of wages and representation on decision-making bodies. Figure 2 depicts that women has more employed than men in all the work category. The evidence suggests that women are participating in the Scheme more actively than any other works. Research also indicates that MGNREGA is an important work opportunity for women who would have otherwise remained unemployed or underemployed. Overall the average women workforce percentage was at 88.14% indicating the importance of MGNREGA for women and the contribution of men workforce was as less as 11.86%. The study also found the different work carried by MGNREGA, in this major work carried in land development, irrigation, renovation of traditional water bodies, water conservation and harvesting and so on. Still the study depicts that there is no work found in coastal areas, fisheries, flood control and rural drinking water. There were other works listed in MGNREGA but not carried out in the study district. Such works are Bharat Nirman Rajeev Gandhi Sewa Kendra, Coastal Areas, Fisheries, Flood Control and Rural Drinking Water.

Figure 2: Gender based Worker Employed during (2019-20 to 2020-21)
in Per cent



DISCUSSION

MGNREGA is a major new intervention that has the potential to transform rural economic and social relations at many levels. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. MGNREGS is not about charity – It is about giving the people their due—respect and dignified livelihood. However, this potential is still incipient and requires to be substantially supported in many different ways, since the very orientation of MGNREGA and the presentation of involvement in public works as a right is a concept in rural India and one that will take time to permeate, especially at the local levels. The huge potential of the MGNREGA was evident particularly in the enthusiastic response of local people, in particular the landless and marginal farmers, in the survey areas. This is a major strength of the current situation, which must be harnessed in future attempts to make the actual implementation of the MGNREGA more closely in accordance with the Guidelines. Along with more local level change, the central and state governments need to provide much more in the form of financial and technical resources for effective implementation. Such resources are required to ensure wider and more complete dissemination about the Act and all its features; to provide more assistance in the selection of works; to ensure prompt and correct payment of wages; to assist in the administrative work involved, including accounting; and to allow for genuine public monitoring and social audit of the entire process.

REFERENCES:

1. Arnab Basu, Nancy Chau and Ravi Kanbur, The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act of India, 2005, Entry for the Oxford Companion to Economics in India.
2. Government of India (2010), “Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005: Report to the People”, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, New Delhi

3. KalaraniRengasamy and Sasi Kumar (2011), “State Level Performance of MGNREGA in India: A Comparative Study”, International Multidisciplinary Research Journal, Vol 1, Issue.10, pp 36-40.
4. Kishor Ch. Sahu (2017), “Evaluation of Performance of MGNREGA with Special Reference to Odisha”, International Journal of Development Research, Vol. 07, Issue, 10, pp.16358-16361.
5. Shenbagaraj, P. and Arockiasamy, S (2013), “The impact of MGNREGA on Local Development: A study of Ottapidaram Blocks in Thoothukudi District, Tamilnadu”, International Journal of Development Research, Vol. 3, Issue, 04, pp.007-011, April.
6. Harish N (2020), “ A Study on the Performance of MGNREGA in Karnataka”, International Journal of Management, SHANLAX, Vol.7, Issue.3, pp.13-27.
7. Thangamayanet.al., (2019), “Performance of Mgnrega in Madurai District with SpecialReference to Tamilnadu”, Indian Journal of Public Health Research & Development . May2019, Vol. 10 Issue 5, pp.89-93.
8. Sanjay Kanti Das (2013), “Brief Scanning on Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Assam, India”, American Journal of Rural Development, 2013, Vol. 1, No. 3, 49-61.
9. <http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/MISreport4.aspx>
10. https://mnregaweb2.nic.in/netnrega/homestciti.aspx?state_code=29&state_name=TAMIL%20NADU
11. <http://tamilnadudistrict.blogspot.com/2011/08/madurai-district.html>

