

# Periodic Research

## Analysis of MGNREGA in Aland Taluka of Gulbarga District: A Sample Survey

### Abstract

Right to Employment is enshrined in Indian Constitution and as such, Government is promoting employment among people through various popular schemes. Mahatma National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed to assure at least 100 days of employment with wages to the rural people in a year. There are different issues regarding types of works, job card, meetings, etc in the Act. It is essential to know whether the beneficiaries of MGNREGA are aware about these provisions of the Act and all the works are going on as per the provisions of the Act. Hence, the present study is made by interviewing 450 NREGA beneficiaries living in villages of Aland taluka of Kalaburagi district. It is found that the scheme is executed successfully except few lacunas such as irregularity of wage payment. It is suggested to correct such lacunas.

**Keywords:** MGNREGA, Rural, Employment, Labour, Poverty, Panchayat Introduction



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Poverty is a result of a low levels of assets coupled with low return on these assets and unemployment or under-employment. The poor have very few assets or no assets to draw on beyond their own labour. In addition to being deprived of critical material assets such as land, they also lack education, skills, and good health. The constitution of India referred the "Right to work" under directive principles of State policy. Article 43 of the constitution of India requires, over all, the elected Government of the State to secure for all its citizens work, a living wage, conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life. It has been stressed under article 41 of the Indian Constitution that the state shall, within the limits of it, economic capacity and development make effective provision of securing the right to work.

A majority of the poor in rural areas of the country depend mainly on the wages they earn through unskilled, casual, manual labour. They are often on threshold levels of subsistence, and are vulnerable to the possibility of sinking from transient to chronic poverty. Inadequate labour demand or unpredictable crisis that may be general in nature, like natural disaster or personal like ill-health, all adversely impact their employment opportunities. In a context of poverty & unemployment, workfare programmes have been important interventions in developed as well as developing countries for many years. These programmes typically provide unskilled manual workers with short-term employment on public works such as, irrigation infrastructure, reforestation, soil conservation and road construction.

To assure employment to every person, the Indian Parliament passed the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in August 2005, which provides for a minimum of 100 days of guaranteed employment to every rural household. The Act came into force in 200 of the country's poorest districts and has later been expanded to another 130 districts. Presently, it has been extended to cover the whole country.

The Idea that governments have a responsibility to initiate public action to ameliorate the poverty and vulnerability of individual citizens is an old one. Yet it is only in the last decade that social protection has emerged as an important component of development planning in Asian countries. In the past, the more commonly used terms have been social security and social assistance, or social welfare and social insurance. These terms include the concept of protection, but in different ways. Perhaps the most specific and clearly defined of these terms is social security.

The Government of Kerala has set up several contributory welfare funds for different groups of workers, but these have been assessed as having lower coverage. As it is often difficult to get all the contributions, tax-based schemes may be better. Welfare Funds have been used mostly to cover healthcare, education and housing, so are not available for

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conventional social security benefits such as maternity invalidity and occupational injury. However, they have been an important way of reaching out to unorganized workers (Subrahmanya 2000; 67)

Understand gendered roles is a key factor. In a context where the large majority of women are dependent on agriculture and where household access to water and fuel relies heavily on common property, local resources are clearly a major source of well-being – nor risk. Given the dismal lack of gender sensitivity in public policy in general, it is not surprising that public works in particular have not been explicitly concerned with women. Rural employment schemes have, on occasion, even displace women – for example afforestation on agricultural lands under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (Krishnaraj 2003). Reducing the distance between work site and home, providing crèche facilities, paying a ratio of food and cash (given that women should have greater control over the use of grain) and equal wages are core programme features that have a marked impact on women's participation in public works (Grown 2006).

The objective of the NREGA is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas 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. As stated by Ghormade (2011), NREGA, the Union government's flagship anti-poverty programme that promises 100 days of employment every year to the rural poor, is partly credited with driving the Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) to victory in the April-May general election. Although this act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people living in rural India, whether or not they are below poverty line. Hence, it is essential to know whether the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) formed under MGNREGA has become successful in providing employment to rural people in backward region like Kalaburagi district and hence, the present study is made to assess the same.

## Objectives of the Study

The present study is made:

1. To look into the social background of beneficiaries of NREGA in Aland taluka of Kalaburagi district and
2. To assess the awareness of NREGA beneficiaries on different provisions of the self-employment under NREGA.

## Methodology and Limitations

The author searched for relevant theoretical information sources from books and research journals including statistical reports. Based on theoretical background, interview schedule was designed. Totally 450 beneficiaries from NREGA living in total 20 villages under Aland taluka of Kalaburagi district were interviewed to collect the primary data. The collected primary data is analyzed and discussed as under.

The present study adopted simple random sampling method of these workers and finally covered about 450 beneficiaries from NREGA to study the different aspects. The different aspects such as socio-

economic aspects, educational, religious and political aspects of these selected area are assessed by interview method and observation.

## Analysis and Discussion

### Age of the Respondents

Age of the respondents determines the knowledge and experience in different kinds of works. Further, it also shows the strength of persons, as aged respondents can't work for more time and young workers are able to work for difficult work and for long time. Hence, information collected on the age of the respondents is presented in the following table.

**Table No. 1. Age of the Respondents**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 25 Years	107	23.8
26 to 40 Years	186	41.3
41 to 50 Years	93	20.6
51 and Above	64	14.2
Total	450	100

It is noted from the above table that, 186 (41.3%) are of the age group between 26 to 40 years followed by, 107 (23.8%) are between the age group of 18 to 25 years, 93 (20.6%) are between 41 to 50 years and the remaining 64 (14.2%) are of above 50 years of age respectively. It is highlighted from the collected data that to a greater extent, middle aged people have gained employment through NREGA. From the age of the respondents, it is clear that majority of the young and middle aged people are employed through MGNREGA.

### Caste/ Community

Religion plays an important role in the Indian society and for the research purpose also reveals the caste wise distribution of the respondents is classified as Forward Caste, Backward Caste and Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes. Since caste or class plays important role in the Indian Society the same also plays an important role in the present study where caste class still exists in our society and in particular Gulbarga District. Hence, information on the caste of the respondents is collected and presented in the following table. Hence, information on the caste of the respondents is collected and presented in the following table.

**Table No. 2. Caste/ Community**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Scheduled Caste	143	31.7
Scheduled Tribe	75	16.7
Other Backward Caste	141	31.3
Others [Forward Caste]	91	20.2
Total	450	100

The caste-wise distribution of the respondents revealed that 143 (31.7%) of the respondents are belonged to the Scheduled Caste, followed by 141 (31.3%) are from Other Backward Castes, 91 (20.2%) are from Other Forward Castes and the remaining 75 (16.7%) are from the Scheduled Tribe respectively. A great majority of the respondents are from Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Castes working under MGNREGA.

### Average Monthly Income [Including NREGA]

NREGA is providing employment to the rural households along with minimum income. As such, it is providing economic security to the families of the

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rural people. Hence, to assess the economic status of the respondents, the information was collected from the respondents on their average monthly income including NREGA and shown as under.

**Table No. 3. Average Monthly Income [Including NREGA]**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Up to Rs. 5000	228	50.6
Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000	188	41.7
Rs. 10001 to Rs. 25000	34	7.5
Above Rs. 25000	--	--
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100</b>

It is observed from the above table that 228 (50.6%) respondents have average monthly income up to Rs. 5000 followed by, 188 (41.7%) have average monthly income between Rs. 5001 to Rs. 10000 and the remaining 34 (7.5%) have average monthly income between Rs. 10001 to Rs. 25000 respectively. The monthly income of almost all the respondents is below Rs. 10000.

### Source of Awareness about MGNREGA

Many of the people are not aware about the welfare schemes and programmes from the governments. There are sources of information and awareness such as radio, television, panchayat members, panchayat officials, relatives, etc are playing significant role in giving awareness to the people on government. Hence, information on the sources of awareness of the respondents about MGNREGA was collected and tabulated as under.

**Table No. 5. Source of Awareness about MGNREGA**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Neighbours/ Relatives	215	47.8
Panchayat Office/ Members	186	41.3
Radio/ TV/ Mass Media	38	8.4
Any Other	11	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100</b>

On the source of awareness about MGNREGA, it is revealed that 215 (47.8%) of all the respondents got awareness by their neighbours and relatives, 186 (41.3%) have got awareness by panchayat offices and members, 38 (8.4%) have got awareness through radio, television and such other mass media and only 11 (2.4%) have got the awareness through other sources. Panchayats and Villagers are playing a significant role in spreading awareness about the MGNREGA and even though the government is popularizing its schemes, its impact is low.

### Reasons for Joining Work under MGNREGA

There are many reasons for joining to work under MGNREGA and they include poverty, seasonal employment, illiteracy, etc. As such, information was collected from the respondents on the reasons for joining work under MGNREGA and presented in the following table.

**Table No. 6. Reasons for Joining Work under MGNREGA**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Guaranteed Employment under Govt Scheme	113	25.1
Equality of Wages Offered	60	13.3
Unskilled Work	180	40.0
To get rid of Unemployment of Family	79	17.5
Any Other	18	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100</b>

On the reasons to join for work under MGNREGA, 180 (40.0%) have joined the same as it is unskilled work, followed by 113 (25.1%) have joined as there is guaranteed employment under government scheme, 79 (17.5%) have joined the same to get rid of unemployment of their families, 60 (13.3%) have joined the same as there is equality of wages are offered and the remaining 18 (4.0%) have joined the work under MGNREGA due to other reasons respectively. Unskilled work is a significant feature of the scheme and guaranteed employment with government assistance is another significant feature, which were attracted the villagers to join the scheme.

### Awareness on Number of Working Days and Work Timings

The number of working are limited to 100 days as fixed by the government and work timings are also fixed. It is highlighted that even though many of the respondents are working under MGNREGA, many of them are not aware about the number of working days and work timings. In this respect, the collected information is tabulated as under.

**Table No. 7. Awareness on Number of Working Days and Work Timings**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	228	50.7
No	157	34.9
No One Given Awareness	65	14.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>100</b>

It is observed from the above table that 228 (50.7%) of the total respondents are aware about the number of working days in a year and work timings, whereas 157 (34.9%) are not aware about the same and the remaining 65 (14.4%) have blamed that no one was given them awareness on the same respectively. Nearly half of the respondents are not aware about the number of working days and work timings and hence, it is essentially needed to increase awareness of the workers under MGNREGA about all these aspects.

### Frequency of Meetings of NREGA in Villages:

Regarding the activities of NREGA, regular meetings should be convened by panchayat officials and members with the beneficiaries of NREGA. Hence, information on the frequency of meetings of NREGA in villages was collected and tabulated as under.

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**Table No. 8. Frequency of Meetings of NREGA in Villages**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Weekly/ Fort-nightly	--	--
Quarterly/ Bi-annually	232	51.5
Annually	154	34.2
Occasionally	49	10.9
Never	15	3.3
Total	450	100

Above table revealed that on the frequency of meetings of MGNREGA in villages, 232 (51.5%) of all the respondents remarked that there will be quarterly or bi-annual meetings, 154 (34.2%) have expressed that there will be annual meetings, 49 (10.9%) have stated that there will be occasional meetings of MGNREGA and the remaining 15 (3.3%) have stated that there are no meetings of MGNREGA in the villages. It is satisfactory to note that there are frequent meetings of villagers under MGNREGA.

### Participation in MGNREGA Meetings

It is observed that a few of the workers do not attend the meetings of MGNREGA due to their other works. Hence, information was collected from the respondents on the regularity in participation of meetings and tabulated as under.

**Table No. 9. Participation in MGNREGA Meetings**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Always	47	10.4
Frequently	211	46.9
Rarely	134	29.8
Never	58	12.9
Total	450	100

Above table made it clear that of all the respondents, only 47 (10.4%) are always attending the meetings, 211 (46.9%) are frequently participating in the meetings, 134 (29.8%) are rarely participating in the meetings and the remaining 58 (12.9%) are never participated in the MGNREGA meetings. Nearly half of the respondents are not participating in the MGNREGA meetings and hence, it is suggested them to attend to the meetings regularly, so as to know about the work procedures under the scheme.

### Awareness on Approved Works under MGNREGA

In the meetings, generally the works are approved and are notified by the panchayats through notifications. But, many of the villagers are illiterates and a few are also busy in other works, hence, it may not be possible for the respondents to get awareness on the approved works under MGNREGA. In this respect, information on the sources to get awareness on the approved works are collected from the respondents and tabulated as under.

**Table No. 10. Awareness on Approved Works under MGNREGA**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Public Notice from Panchayats	272	60.4
Panchayat Officials/ Members	57	12.7
Other Villagers/ Workers	121	26.9
Any Other	--	--
Total	450	100

On the awareness on approved works under MGNREGA as expressed by all the respondents

covered under the study, 272 (60.4%) are getting awareness through public notice from panchayats, 57 (12.7%) are getting awareness by panchayat officials and panchayat members and the remaining 121 (26.9%) are getting awareness from other villagers and workers. To a greater extent, panchayat offices are playing a significant role in notifying the workers and villagers regarding approved works under MGNREGA.

### Effectiveness and Usefulness of MGNREGA in Rural Development and Employment in Village

On the effectiveness and usefulness of MGNREGA in rural development and employment in the villages, the information was collected from the respondents and the collected information is presented in the following table.

**Table No. 11. Effectiveness and Usefulness of MGNREGA in Rural Development and Employment in Village**

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Fully Effective and Useful	291	64.6
Effective and Useful to a Greater extent	107	23.8
Not Effective & Not Useful	52	11.5
Total	450	100

On the effectiveness and usefulness of MGNREGA in rural development and employment in the village, as expressed by all the respondents covered under the study, 291 (64.6%) have stated that MGNREGA fully effective and fully useful, 107 (23.8%) have expressed that the MGNREGA is effective and useful to a greater extent and the remaining 52 (11.5%) have expressed that MGNREGA is not effective and not useful respectively.

### Conclusion

Due to globalization, there is decrease in employment opportunities for the rural people in rural areas. In this respect, the NREGA has become useful for development of villages by increasing land development, drinking water, forests, road infrastructure and also by assuring work for the unemployed people in rural areas. The panchayats are also playing significant role in implementing these schemes for the welfare of poor. The wages paid by the government under this scheme is also comparatively higher, so that the poor may run their families comfortably. There is also regularity in payment of wages, so that the poor can get money income regularly. Hence, NREGS is playing significant role to solve the problem of unemployment and under-employment in villages.

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