



IMPACT OF MGNREGA IN THE POVERTY ALLIVIATION OF RURAL POOR IN KANNIYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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Abstract

The Indian government organized and carried out the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act's implementation in 2005. The primary goals of this program are to end poverty and provide rural households with income through a hundred days of guaranteed work annually. In Kanyakumari District, this plan has given women, castes, tribes and rural residents social security through employment guarantees. According to the study, the number of households enrolled in the MGNRE scheme varied based on local program involvement and how the scheme's components compared to local market salaries. The MGNRE program provided underprivileged groups with some minimal work. For this program to achieve its objectives in the Kanyakumari region, significant earnings, employment possibilities, efficient use of funds, and a clearer understanding of the caregiving obligations of women will be necessary. Both primary and secondary data were used for this study.

Key words: Household, poverty, employment opportunities

1.1 Introduction

Indian government created the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was implemented in 2005, represents a groundbreaking effort by the Indian government to address rural poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment. It aims to reduce poverty and provide job stability. MGNREGA guarantees at least 100 days of wage , employment per financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. For this program to completely achieve its objectives, higher incomes, more employment opportunities, improved implementation.MGNREGP offers jobs to support their living and gave illiterate individuals a chance at life. This stops people from migrating by offering alternative sources of income.To examine MGNREGA's effects on the Kannyiakumari District,This scheme is to improving the standard of living of rural households. MGNREA gives priority to marginalized groups, such as women, people with disabilities, and SC/ST.Construction of useful assets to enhance rural areas' infrastructure, such as ponds, irrigation systems, and roadways.

1.1 Statement of the problem

India's impoverished have experienced a range of initiatives aimed at reducing poverty and creating jobs since the implementation of the first Five Year Plan. The two main diseases in India are unemployment and poverty. Ultimately, this has led to the failure of many poverty alleviation programs (e.g., IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, JRY, DWCRA, etc.) to provide significant benefits. The bulk of India's impoverished people live primarily off the money they receive from performing physical labor that is unskilled and irregular. Gainful work possibilities are therefore scarce in the country's rural areas. They frequently live at or around their subsistence levels, making them susceptible to moving from momentary to long-term poverty. Their job prospects are severely impacted by the unpredictability of crises, which can be either personal or general in nature (e.g., natural disasters, illness, or inadequate labor demand). Welfare programs have long been significant interventions in the setting of poverty and unemployment, both in developed and developing nations. These programs usually offer short-term employment to unskilled manual laborers on public works and infrastructure projects like road construction, reforestation, irrigation infrastructure, and soil conservation. Hence the present study is to attempt "Impact of MGNREGA in the poverty alleviation of rural poor"

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of rural poor households in Kanniyakumari District.
2. To find out the awareness about MGNREGA in Kanniyakumari District.
3. To analyse the impact of MGNREGA in the poverty alleviation of rural poor in Kanniyakumari District.

1.4 Review of Literature

- Kurinjimalar.R and Prasanna.N (2017) "Impact of MGNREGA on Poverty Alleviation in Rural India: A Case Study of Two Districts in Tamil Nadu" that SC and ST people have been interested to do MGNREGA works. MGNREGA fulfilled their basic needs like food consumption, medicine, children's education and small savings like SHGs.
- Maheswari. E and Siva Murugan.C (2019) "Economic Impact of MGNREGA in Tiurunelveli District" MGNREGA provides employment for their livelihood and the people who were illiterate were also given an opportunity. This prevents the migration of the people by providing other income generating activities. The employment offered to a family for hundred days only in one financial year is no way sufficient to sustain a family.

1.5 Hypothesis of the study

Ho1- There is no relationship between socio-economic characteristics and level of satisfaction

1.6 Methodology

The methodology of this research is based on a descriptive and analytical study.

1.6.1 Sources of Data

The sources of data for the present study are both primary and secondary. The primary data collected through the pre-tested interview schedule. The secondary sources of data are collected from various journals, articles, records and District Rural Development Agency.

1.6.2 Sample Design

In order to analyse the impact of MGNREGA in Kanniyakumari district, 720 sample workers under the scheme were randomly selected on the basis of proportionate stratified random sampling method from nine blocks of Kanniyakumari district.

Table 1
Sample Distribution of Kanniyakumari District

| Sl.No | Name of the Block | Total No. of Active Workers under MGNREGA | Sample size |
|--------------|-------------------|---|-------------|
| 1 | Agasteeswaram | 18,230 | 80 |
| 2 | Thovalai | 12,950 | 80 |
| 3 | Rajakamangalam | 10,940 | 80 |
| 4 | Kurunthencode | 15,450 | 80 |
| 5 | Thuckalay | 14,780 | 80 |
| 6 | Thiruvattar | 12,200 | 80 |
| 7 | Killiyur | 11,870 | 80 |
| 8 | Munchirai | 11,670 | 80 |
| 9 | Melpuram | 10,358 | 80 |
| Total | | 1,18,448 | 720 |

Source: Office of the DRDA, Kanniyakumari District,

1.6.3 Tools for Analysis

On the basis of data collected and analyse by using statistical techniques. Percentage Analysis, Chi-Square Test, Garrett Ranking technique and Weighted average technique were used to analyze the data.

1.7 Data Analysis

1.7.1 Socio Economic Characteristics and Level of Satisfaction

MGNREGA has significantly improved rural residents' socioeconomic circumstances by fostering social equity, lowering poverty, and advancing infrastructure development.

Table 2
Result of chi-Square Analysis

| Variable | Calculated Value | Degrees of freedom | Asymptotic | Accepted/ Rejected |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Age | 161.85 | 8 | 31.4 | Accepted |
| Gender | 4.929 | 4 | 0.605 | Accepted |
| Education | 1.026 | 8 | 0.312 | Accepted |
| Income | 14.730 | 12 | 0.514 | Accepted |
| Marital Status | 21.659 | 12 | 0.914 | Accepted |

Source: Computed Data

Level of Significance @5%

From the above table 2 observed that the calculated value is more than the table value of age, gender, Education, Income and marital status. So, the Null hypothesis is accepted. There is a relationship between socio- economic characteristics and level of satisfaction of rural poor in kanniyakumari District.

1.7.2 Sources of Awareness about MGNREGA

Creating awareness about MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) involves informing and educating the public, especially rural communities, about the scheme, their rights, and how they can benefit from it.

Table 3
Sources of Awareness about MGNREGA

| Sl.No. | Awareness | Garrett Mean Score | Rank |
|--------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------|
| 1 | Government Initiatives | 70.05 | III |
| 2 | Gram Panchayats and local authorities | 73.06 | II |
| 3 | Official websites and portals | 52.19 | IX |
| 4 | Door to Door Campaign | 64.20 | VI |
| 5 | Community leaders and NGOs | 66.13 | V |
| 6 | Word of Mouth | 78.21 | I |
| 7 | Social Media | 59.37 | VIII |
| 8 | Community Meetings | 68.43 | IV |
| 9 | Educational Institutions | 60.50 | VII |

Source: Computed Data

The sources of information about MGNREGA are as follows, according to Table 2 above: Word of mouth, which ranks first with a mean score of 78.21; Gram Panchayats, which ranks second with a mean score of 73.06; local authorities; Government Initiatives, which ranks third with a mean score of 70.05; Community Meetings, which ranks fourth with a mean score of 68.43; Community leaders and NGOs, which ranks fifth with a mean score of 66.13; Door to Door Campaign, which ranks sixth with a mean score of 64.20; Educational Institutions, which ranks seventh with a mean score of 60.50; Social Media, which ranks eighth with a mean score of 59.37; and Community Meetings, which ranks ninth with a mean score of 52.19.

1.7.3 Impact of MGNREGA

MGNREGA gives rural people a crucial source of income that helps them satisfy their basic needs, particularly during the off-agricultural seasons. MGNREGA has significantly lowered the rate of poverty in rural regions by providing stable jobs and income.

Impact of MGNREGA**Table 4**

| Sl.No. | Factors | Weighted Score Total | Rank |
|--------|------------------------------|----------------------|------|
| 1 | Employment Generation | 4.6 | I |
| 2 | Economic Growth | 3.12 | V |
| 3 | Empowerment of women | 4.03 | IV |
| 4 | Skill Development | 3.15 | X |
| 5 | Social Inclusion | 3.8 | VI |
| 6 | Reduced Stress | 3.61 | VII |
| 7 | Environmental Sustainability | 3.42 | VIII |
| 8 | Financial Inclusion | 4.11 | III |
| 9 | Political Awareness | 3.24 | IX |
| 10 | Reduced Poverty | 4.14 | II |

Source: Computed Data

The impact of MGNREGA is shown in Table 4 above, where Employment Generation is ranked first with a mean score of 4.6, Reduced Poverty is ranked second with a mean score of 4.14, Financial Inclusion is ranked third with a mean score of 4.11, Women's Empowerment is ranked fourth with a mean score of 4.03, Economic Growth is ranked fifth with a mean score of 3.98, Social Inclusion is ranked sixth with a mean score of 3.8, Reduced Stress is ranked seventh with a mean score of 3.61, Environmental Sustainability is ranked eighth with a mean score of 3.42, Political Awareness is ranked eighth with a mean score of 3.24, and Skill Development is ninth rank with the mean score of 3.12.

1.8 Suggestions

- Use real-time tracking systems for monitoring wage disbursement and addressing delays promptly.
- Implement robust digital payment systems to ensure timely and transparent disbursement of wages directly into workers' bank accounts.
- Providing training to local leaders and volunteers to help them understand and disseminate information about MGNREGA

1.9 Conclusion

MGNREGA is a transformative program that aims to improve rural livelihoods through guaranteed employment and infrastructure development. By promoting awareness and addressing its challenges, the scheme can further its impact in uplifting rural communities of kanniyakumari District

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