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# **Economic analysis of impact and benefits of mgnrega in soolaivaikal panchayat, Thoothukudi District**

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**Abstract**--Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people. It is a historical step taken to provide guaranteed employment to the rural people. Providing employment to the rural person is the main objective of this Act. It provides different types of employment programmes like NREP, RLEGP, EAS, JGSY, JRY, MGNREGP etc. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage per day. The Act guarantees that if work is not provided within a 15-days period than the applicant is eligible for unemployment allowance. Work to be done is decided by the Gram panchayat. In this study area majority of the rural people are suffering more about the unemployment problem. So, this study analyses the MGNREGA scheme and how this scheme helps in employment to thousand of unemployed rural people and poverty alleviation. This study examines the implementation of MGNREGA and improvement in living condition of the people.

**Keywords**---MGNREGA, Employment, Workers, Gram panchayat, wage.

## **1.1 Introduction**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) 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 the poverty line. Around one-third of the stipulated work force is women. MGNREGA is a historical step taken to provide guaranteed employment to the rural people. Providing employment to the rural person is the main objective of the Act. Although we had wage employment programs like NREP, RLEGP, EAS, JGSY, JRY etc.

The Act passed in the parliament. MGNREGA which is implemented under the banner of NREGA scheme has been launched in 200 most backward districts of the country with the objective of providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to the unskilled persons to each rural household. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of Rs. 256 per day.

### **1.2 MGNREGA: The programs**

This program can also serve other objectives such as generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity, among others. The uniqueness of this Act is that it carries emphasis on equality of wages for men and women, elimination of work contracting intermediaries, payment of wages only through bank and post office accounts to prevent corruption, creating transparency in workers muster roll etc. Any individual, irrespective of his socio-economic status can ask for employment with the Gram Panchayat.

The Act guarantees that if work is not provided within a 15-days period than the applicant is eligible for unemployment allowance. Work to be done is decided by the Gram Panchayat. Emphasis is given to unskilled manual labour focusing on building roads and other public village infrastructural facilities, water conservation, afforestation, land development and drought proofing. All Adults in a household are eligible to work. If the work site is not within 5 kilometers from the applicant's residence then the applicant is eligible for an additional 10% of the wage. When MGNREGA was introduced in parliament it stated that it would cover 200 district within six month of its enactment, and that it could be extended to cover all of rural India. The Act is applicable to areas notified by the central Government.

### **1.3 Wage employment programs**

Wage employment programs have been important elements of public policy in India to provide unskilled workers with short term employment on public work. Anti- poverty strategies comprise to a wide of poverty alleviation and employment generation programs, many of which have been in operation for several years & have been strengthened to generate more employment, create productive assets, impart technical and entrepreneurial skills and raise the income level of the poor. In spite of all these programs introduced in India to remove the socio economic handicaps, it is widely held that they had limited success in achieving their objectives. In the last two decades the problems of poverty, unemployment and rural distress are believed to be on rise.

#### **1.4 Statement of problem**

The rural development programme in earlier in India, many schemes were implemented like the major scheme for income and employment generate programme are CDP, SFAP, MFAP, IRDP, NREP, RLEGP, TRSEM, JRY, NFFWP, SGSY ( for women empowerment generate scheme in rural and urban through the SHGs), NREGP and others. The programme were implemented in rural level for alleviating the poverty through the employment generating activities which can be provide the wage to the workers.

In India have adequate (surplus labour) employee in rural areas. The many programmes are implemented in rural areas for create the capital formation and generate the employment, and then standard of living of house hold also developed. Here the researcher study about many programmes, but enrich the point out here about the NREGP. The NREGP provide the employment opportunity in every rural house hold 100 days per year. This can get wage rate and raise their standard of living in the country. The wage rate also high and the income distributed through the employment.

In this study area majority of the rural people are suffering more about the unemployment problem. So, this study analyse the MGNREGA scheme and how this scheme helps in employment to thousand of unemployed rural people and poverty alleviation. This study examines the implementation of MGNREGA, and improvement in living condition of the people. But in Soolaivaikal panchayat in Thoothukudi district the standard of living and the income of the workers are very poor. So the researcher takes a study on the performance of MGNREGA with special reference to Soolaivaikal panchayat, Thoothukudi District.

#### **1.5 Scope of the study**

The study deals the economic analysis of MGNREGA workers in soolaivaikal panchayat. It helps the government authorities to understand the socio-economic character of the MGNREGA workers in the study area and to take necessary steps to solve their problems to a certain extent. From the study of social and economic problems the government body will find it easy to support the area with necessary funds and schemes. This study will also help the government officials in the study area take necessary steps to rectify the defects and also to adopt precautionary measures to have a peaceful relation with the MGNREGA workers in future.

#### **1.6 Objectives of the study**

- ❖ To know the MGNREGA scheme beneficiaries in soolaivaikal panchayat of Thoothukudi district.
- ❖ To examine the income and expenditure pattern of the MGNREGA workers.
- ❖ To study the saving and debt conditions of the MGNREGA workers.
- ❖ To analyse the problems of the MGNREGA workers.
- ❖ To give suggestion for the betterment of the policy.

### 1.7 Tools of Analysis

The Garrett Ranking Technique (Garrett E. Henry, 1969) was adopted to identify the most influencing factor. The formula for calculating Garrett Ranking Technique was

$$\text{Present Position} = \frac{100(R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where,  $R_{ij}$  – Rank given for the  $i^{\text{th}}$  reason by  $j^{\text{th}}$  respondents,  $N_j$  – Number of factors ranked by  $j^{\text{th}}$  respondents.

### 1.8 Importance of the study

This study will help us to understand an economic analysis on MGNREGA scheme workers. A study on the nature of employment, wage structure, income and consumption pattern, savings and indebtedness will not only help us to know their position in the society but also the causes for their poverty.

### 1.9 Review of Literature

Ashok Kumar, (2016) in his study reveals that MGNREGA scheme provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household who are willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. The law was initially called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. MGNREGA is being implemented in Karnataka since 2006. Now it covers all the 30 districts of the state. The objective is to ensure livelihood and food security by providing unskilled work to people through creation of sustainable assets. The study has mainly concentrated on to study the performance and progress of MGNREGA in the study area. To study the job cared issued and employment generation in Mysuru district, to assess the financial inclusion of MGNREGA in Mysuru district and to analyse the constraints and to suggest remedial measure to improve the MGNREGA workers in Mysuru district. It is recommended that if executed properly with accountability and obligation to the laws, MGNREGA can efficiently contributes towards the inclusive economic growth.

Kumar Amaresh et al., (2016) in their study reveal that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is an Indian job guarantee scheme, enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to legal guarantee for one hubdred days of employment in every financial year to adult member of any rural household who are willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of a hundred per day. The choice of works suggested addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion etc. effectively implemented, the employment generated under the Act will also build upthe long-term livelihood asset base of rural India.

### 1.10 Village Panchayat (or) Gram Panchayat and its function

Village panchayat refers to the lowest tier of panchayat raj systems. Unusually, it consists of one or more revenue villages recognized as the local administrative unit. It has a separate administrative body called panchayat council constituted by members directly elected to the council. There is a panchayat president, Vice president and members. Villages are federated into panchayat unions at the block level. In other words, the Gram panchayat is the foundation of the panchayat system. A Gram panchayat can be set up in a village with a population of more than five hundred.

The act guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. Every state under this has to formulate a State Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS), which should conform to the minimum features specified under the Act. According to the Act, rural households have a right to register themselves with the local Gram Panchayat (GPs), and seek employment. Work is to be provided within 15 days from the date of demand, failing which the State Government will have to pay unemployment allowance at the stipulated rates. The primary purpose of the act is augmenting wage employment by setting up a strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing a fall-back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate.

### 1.11 Age –wise Classification

Age is an important factor which determines the efficiency of an individual. The respondents which were selected for the present study are in different age groups. The following table shows the age wise classification of the respondents in the study area.

Table: 1 - Age-wise Classification

Age (in year)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
20 – 30	17	13.60
31 – 40	32	25.60
41 – 50	23	18.40
51 – 60	30	24.00
Above 60	23	18.40
Total	125	100.00

Source: Field survey

The table 1 shows that 25.60 per cent of the respondents belong to 31 – 40 age group. Only 13.60 per cent of the respondents come under the age group of below 30 years. It reveals that all age groups of the workers are included.

### 1.12 Sex- wise Classification

Sex-ratio is an important factor influencing the socio-economic conditions of the family. In those days, female children are considered as a burden and male children are considered as wealth. But this situation has changed now since female population begins to earn and contribute their mighty share in the income of the

family. Availability of female workforce is one of the reasons for the emergence of MGNREGA scheme in the rural areas.

Table: 2- Sex – wise Classification

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	18	14.40
Female	97	77.60
Total	125	100.00

Source: Field survey

The above table 2 shows 77.60 per cent of the respondents in the study area are female workers. Only 14.40 per cent of the respondents are male workers. It reveals that majority of the women workers are willing to participate in this MGNREGA programmes.

### 1.13 Family Status

Joint family system is one of the traditional family systems, rapid industrialization and modernization lead to a change in this system. Nuclear family is the out come of industrialization as well as modernization. Soolaiivaikal panchayat, the study area is a rural, but the nuclear family system is available here.

Table: 3 - Family status

Family Status	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Joint Family	32	25.60
Nuclear Family	93	74.40
Total	125	100.00

Source: Field survey

From the table 3 shows that nearly 74.4 per cent of the respondents are in nuclear family setup only 25.6 per cent prefer the joint family system.

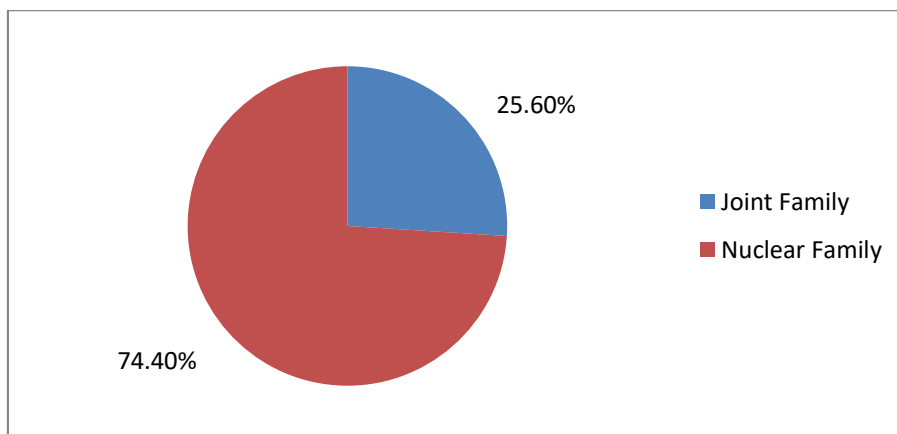


Figure 1. Family Status

### 1.14 Education Status of the Respondents

Education is the key factor which helps an individual to get a better job. This study is a backward area and most of the people depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The researcher wanted to know the educational level of the respondents in the study area.

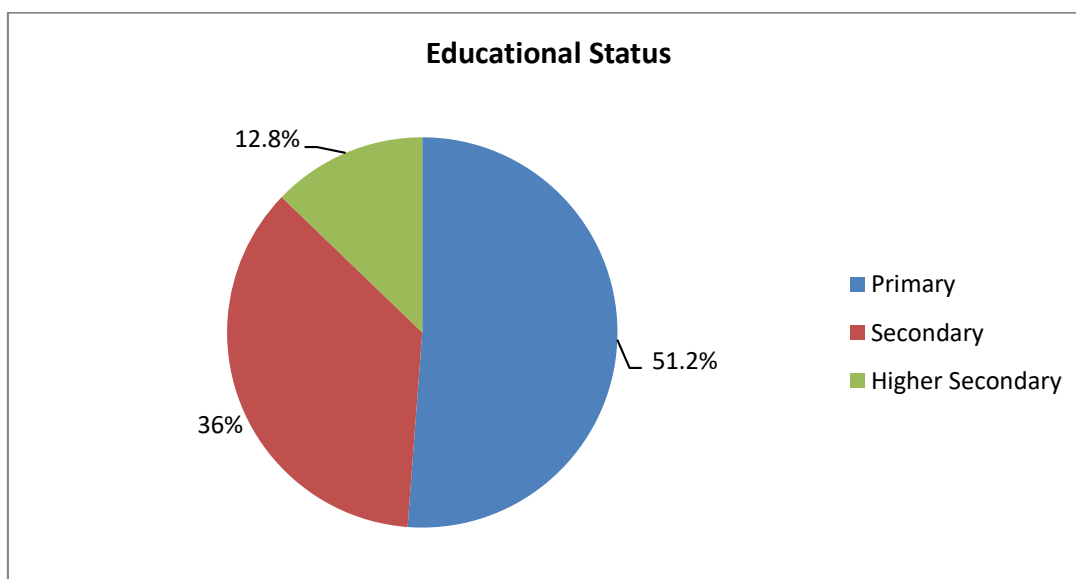


Figure: 2 - Educational Level of the Respondent Educational Status

### 1.15 Nature of work

The researcher is indented to study the nature of work of the sample respondents in the study area. It is shown in table 4

Table: 4 - Nature of the work

S.No	Nature of work	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Road Laying	19	15.20
2.	Ponds Making	31	24.80
3.	Ponds maintenance	57	45.60
4.	Others	18	14.40
	Total	125	100.00

Source: Field survey

The table 4 explains that 45.60 per cent of the respondents work under the MGNREGA in the study area are involved in ponds maintenance, 24.80 per cent of the respondents involved in ponds making work and 15.20 per cent of the respondents involved in road laying and the remaining 14.40 per cent of the respondents have involved in other works.

### 1.16 Regularity of work

NREGA stipulates that wage employment must be provided to the needy people at least for 100 days in a year. Our respondents are asked about the availability of employment to the respondents. On the basis of the regularity or otherwise of the employment available out respondents are classified and such a classification is presented in Table 5

Table: 5 – Regularity of work

Regular work	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	90	72.00
No	35	28.00
Total	125	100.00

Source: Field Survey

As seen from table 5, 72 per cent of the sample respondents feel they get regular employment through MGNREGP. Only 28 per cent of the respondents feel that they are not able to get regular employment through this scheme.

### 1.17 Mode of Payment of the Respondent

Greater part of the problem faced by our respondents centre around the question of delayed payment are given in the table 6

Table: 6 – Mode of Payment of the Respondents

Payment	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Regular	54	43.20
Irregular	16	12.80
No. of day of delay		
< 15 days	40	32.00
>15 days	15	12.00
Total	125	100.00

Source: Field survey

The table 6 shows that irregular and delayed payment of the problems faced by the sample respondents. In the opinion of 40 of the respondent wages are received by them within 15 days after the work completion, while in the option of 15 respondents wages are not given after 15 days of completing the work.

### 1.18 Impact on Employment

The available of MGNREGA employment works are ponds maintenance, ponds making work, road laying and other works. Thus, the growth of rural employment can emanate from both agriculture and the undesirable situation prevailing in the rural areas. An attempt has been made to measure the impact of MGNREGA on Employment and income of the sample households.

Table 7 shows that there is an increase of employment to average of 87 days (42.64 per cent) persons during the post-MGNREGA compared to the pre-MGNREGA (204). The overall average number of workers per household in the MGNREGA comes to 1.38. It is minimum (1.06) in low income group. It is because of over dependence on other works due to earning more money. To know the impact of MGNREGA on employment in the income groups the researcher has started with the null hypothesis:

Table: 7 – Impact of MGNREGA scheme of Employment

SL. No	Income Group	No. of Respondents	Employment		Increase
			Pre-MGNREGA	Post-MGNREGA	
1.	Low Income Group (Less than Rs.36,000)	31	188	285 (1.06)*	97 (51.60)
2.	Medium Income Group (Rs.36,000 to 65,000)	48	193	278 (1.71)*	85 (44.04)
3.	High Income Group (Above Rs.65,000)	46	207	289 (1.62)*	(39.61)
	Total	125	204	291 (1.38)*	87 (42.64)

Source: Field survey

Note: \* Average number of MGNREGA scheme workers per sample household

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to pre-MGNREGA scheme Employment.

HO: There is no significant increase employment after the emergence of MGNREGA schemes. If  $\bar{X}_A$  Post-MGNREGA employment and  $\bar{X}_B$  Pre-MGNREGA employment, according to the null hypothesis  $\bar{X}_A = \bar{X}_B$ . On the basis of the above hypothesis the researcher have obtained calculated values and the results are given in table 8.

It reveals that the calculated Z-values are greater than the table values and they are significant at five percent level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant increase in the number of persons employed per household after the emergence of MGNREGA scheme.

Table: 8 – Results of the z – test for the Impact of MGNREGA scheme on employment

Sl. No	Income Group	No. of Sample	$\bar{x}_B$	$\sigma_B$	$\bar{x}_A$	$\sigma_A$	$\bar{X}_A - \bar{x}_B$	Z – test value	Table Value of 'Z'
1.	Low Income Group	31	188	21.95	285	25.18	97	78.862	1.96
2.	Medium	48	193	18.46	278	22.05	85	92.391	1.96

	Income Group								
3.	High Income Group	46	207	13.93	289	17.19	82	122.388	1.96

Source: Field survey

### 1.19 Impact on Income

Generally agriculture provides employment, income and livelihood to people in the rural areas of developing countries like India. But, in this study area, the MGNRGA scheme employment has increased the average income per household. This may be attributed, especially women to the increasing number of employed per household in the scheme.

There is a significant increase in income per family after moving to MGNREGA scheme. Income has increased by 33.83 per cent in low income group followed by medium income group (18 per cent). This situation may be attributed to first, shift of male and female workforce to MGNREGA scheme due to continuous work in Soolaivaikal panchayat and second, employment of female workforce in MGNREGA scheme, which provides employment throughout 100 days per year.

Ho: There is no significant increase in income of the sample households after moving to MGNREGA scheme.

If  $\bar{X}_B$  = Post-MGNREGA income and  $\bar{X}_A$  = Pre- MGNREGA income according to the null hypothesis  $\bar{X}_A = \bar{X}_B$ . On the basis of the above hypothesis researcher have obtained calculated values and the results are given in table 9.

Table: 9 – Results of the z – test for the Impact of MGNRGA scheme on Income

Sl. No	Income Groups	No. of Samples	$\bar{X}_B$	$\sigma_B$	$\bar{X}_A$	$\sigma_A$	$\bar{X}_A - \bar{X}_B$	Z-test Values	Table Value of 'Z'
1.	Low Income Group	31	28,890.32	3,293.16	38,665.48	3,589.77	9,775.25	656.057	1.96
2.	Medium Income Group	48	54,485.00	7,358.00	64,290.00	7,464.15	9,805.00	558.054	1.96
3.	High Income Group	46	81,482.61	18,985.31	91,224.13	18,750.77	9,741.52	340.137	1.96

Source: Field survey

Table 9 shows that the calculated Z-values are greater than the table values. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant increase in income of the sample households after joining MGNREGA. The increase in income is statistically significant. Thus, the result of Z-test given in table 8 and 9 have disproved the hypothesis that there is significant increase in employment and income after moving to MGNREGA.

## **2.0 Summary of Findings, Suggestions And Conclusion Findings**

1. The study concluded that 25.80 per cent of the respondents belong to 31-40 age group. Only 13.30 per cent of the respondents come under the age group of below 30 years.
2. The study reveals that 77.60 per cent of the respondents in the study area are female workers. Only 14.40 per cent of the respondents are male workers.
3. The study discloses that 74.40 per cent of the respondents are in nuclear family setup only 25.60 per cent are living in the joint family system.
4. The study reveals that 36 per cent of the respondents are having secondary level of education, and 12.80 per cent respondents have studied upto higher secondary level educations. The higher educational status of the respondents is primary level of 51.2 per cent.
5. It is observed from the study that all the respondents have got a job card for their work as a worker from the scheme.
6. The study reveals that 72 per cent of the sample respondents feel they get regular employment through MGNREGA. Only 28 per cent of the respondents feel that they are not able to get regular employment through this scheme.
7. Irregular and delayed payments are the problems faced by the sample respondents. In the opinion of 32 per cent of the respondents wages are received by them within 15 days after the completion of work, while in the option of 12 per cent of the respondents wages are not given after 15 days of completing the work.
8. The study reveals that, first aid and drinking water facilities are adequately provided by the village administration to the MGNREGA employees according to the opinion of 48 and 54 of the respondents.
9. The study further discloses that 45.60 per cent of the respondents work under the MGNREGA in the study area is ponds maintenance, 24.80 per cent of the respondents have ponds making work and 15.20 per cent of the respondents have road laying and the remaining 14.40 per cent of the respondents have involved in other works.
10. The study shows that there is an increase of employment to average of 87 days (42.64 per cent ) persons during the post-MGNREGA compared to the pre-MGNREGA (204). The overall average number of workers per household in the MGNREGA come to 1.38. It is minimum (1.06) in low income group. It is because of over dependence on other works due to earning more money.
11. The study shows that, there is a significant increase in income per family after moving to MGNREGA scheme.
12. The study shows that, there is a significant increase in expenditure per family after moving to MGNREGA scheme.

### **Suggestions**

1. The beneficiaries of this scheme should know everything about this scheme for that a special awareness camp or an orientation program can be conducted for the beneficiaries.
2. Government should assure that the fruits of this scheme are utilized by the beneficiaries to assure that a special monitoring system should be implemented.

3. Types of work, working hours, necessity of the work and all the important aspects the schemes should be explained to the beneficiaries.
4. The beneficiaries of the schemes maybe utilized in the works like planting trees in the road sides.
5. The study area is lacking in transport facilities. This causes inconvenience to the workers. It effects the enrolment too. Therefore steps should be taken to improve transport facilities in the study area.
6. At present the Government provides employment opportunity for 100 days per year. The days should be increased from 100 to 150 days. As a result of this, income and standard of people can be increased.
7. As the rural people are getting work for 100 days Only, they are not in a position to get loans from any scheduled bank. So, the Government must provide loan at low interest level to those people.
8. Awareness about the accident insurance and minimum wages should be created spread among the rural people in their "Gram Sabha Meeting".

### **Conclusion**

Empowerment of rural women has emerged as an unintended consequence of MGNREGA. Women have benefited more as workers than as a community. Women as individuals have gained because of their ability to earn independently, made possible due to the paid employment opportunity under MGNREGA. Independence and monetized earnings have increased consumption choices and reduced economic dependence. This has helped women in registering their tangible contribution to the household income. The overall effects of these have translated into an increased say for women in household affairs. The MGNREGA as a programme which has positive impact on the socio-economic well being of rural labour and their families and also hold powerful prospects of bringing major changes in the lives of women.

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