

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

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IMPACT OF MNREGP ON INCLUSIVE GROWTH: A STUDY OF PRAKASAM DISTRICT IN ANDHRA PRADESH**DR. N.VENKATESWARA RAO****ASST. PROFESSOR****DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION****ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY****ONGOLE****B.PADMAJA****ASST. PROFESSOR****DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION****ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY****ONGOLE****ABSTRACT**

The present study is on the MNREGP impact on the growth with special reference of Prakasam District in Andhra Pradesh and it is established that the programme is still in fancy and it has a long way to go but that does not take away from what it has achieved in its infancy. Today many families are happier because of MNREGP. If targeted and implemented effectively the MNREGP could decrease poverty in the deprived areas. This can be hastened by taking up works that rejuvenate the natural resource base of the livelihood of poor communities. Later its scope can be enlarged skilled work by artisans. All that is being hoped right now is that the MNREGP should be able to mitigate the hard times and increase the abysmal household earnings for the poorest. Hopefully the small and heartening gains will spur the other parts of the nation. With the launch of the MNREGP, which provides the country with a potential social safety net, there is need to revisit the multiplicity of poverty alleviation schemes. The effective implementation of MNREGP is critical for improving inclusiveness. It should reduce poverty and improve rural infrastructure; and any failure to do so will be an indicator of its ineffective implementation.

KEYWORDS

MNREGP, Prakasam district.

INTRODUCTION

A majority of the poor in the rural areas of the country depend mainly on the wages they earn through unskilled, casual manual labour. Inadequate labour demands or unpredictable crises adversely impact their employment opportunities. Unemployment and poverty are strongly related, and hinder the economic growth and development of the country. The concept of inclusive growth is increasingly being embraced by most of the developing countries; it emphasizes ensuring that the economic opportunities created by growth are available to all particularly the poor.

The agriculture sector is passing through a complex crisis of low productivity, poor competitiveness and adverse climatic conditions. The compound annual growth rate of agriculture and the allied sector from 2000-01 to 2004-05 was 2.02%, the lowest annual growth record in the sector since 1980-81 have also shown this decline in agriculture, putting the dates slightly earlier, and starting from 1997-98. They have also shown the widespread decline in the sector, covering all subsectors.

How does employment growth pick up when output growth is stagnant? Under normal circumstances, this trend should have further reduced the employment in the rural economy. However, further probing reveals that the acceleration in rural employment growth is probably a response to the crisis that is gripping the sector. Under conditions of distress, when levels fall below sustenance, then that part of the normally non-working population is forced to enter the labour market to supplement household income.¹

The government has launched various programs such as CRASH(1961), Antyodaya Programme (1977-78), NREP (1980), TRYSEM(1979), RLEGP(1983), JRY(1989), EAS(1993), SGSY(1999), SGRY(2001), Food for work(2001), and MNREGA (2005) for poverty alleviation by providing employment to its citizens. Among these programs, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS) is the largest rural employment programme ever undertaken in India. It guarantees the right to work for 100 days in a year for any rural household. There is no limit of APL (Above Poverty Line) or BPL (Below Poverty Line). If on demand, work is not given to eligible persons, they are given unemployment allowances. For getting work under MNREGS, the villagers have to apply to the Gram Panchayat for registration. Gram Panchayat issues a job card within 15 days after the villagers' registration. After having undertaken the work, the villagers are supposed to get cash amount for the work done every week.

Under the MNREGP (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme) men and women are given equal minimum wages and Gram Sabha selects the types of rural works such as water shed, plantation, rural connectivity, land-leveling, soil conservation, etc., under the MNREGP 2005, Gram Panchayats are given more importance than Block Samithis and Zilla Parishads as 50% works under MNREGS are implemented through Panchayats.²

There are several provisions of the act which are of special interest to women workers. First the Act mandates that at least one-third of the workers should be women. This combined with the fact that the Act places no restrictions on how each household's quota of 100 days is shared within the household, means that there is an ample scope for women's participation in MNREGP works. Second, the wage earned is equal for both men and women. Besides this the MNREGP also provides for childcare facilities at the worksite when more than five children under six years of age are present at the worksite. This is an important provision given that, in large parts of the country, there are no childcare arrangements for working women.³

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MNREGP) has been made an integrated part of BHARAT NIRMAN programme. This programme will involve an annual expenditure of Rs. 40,000 for the creation of permanent assets. The MNREGP is a demand driven scheme and has its focus on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing, land development, flood control and rural connectivity in terms of all weather roads.⁴

PERFORMANCE OF MNREGP IN INDIA

The pioneering programmes saw its budget outlay increase to Rs.30, 100 crore in the interim budget for 2009-10. In the last fiscal, the same stood at Rs.16,000 crore. The MNREGP aimed at generating jobs in the rural areas, provided employment to over 4.47 crore households in the previous fiscal. During the first year of implementation (FY 2006-07) in 200 districts, more than 2.10 crore households were generated and 90.5 crore persondays were employed. In 2007-08, 3.39 crore households were provided employment and 143.59 crore persondays were generated in 330 districts. In 2008-09, 4.5 crore households have been provided employment and 215.63 crore persondays have been generated across the country.

MNREGP already created half a million assets and provided jobs around 3% of India's population. About 4.5 crore households in the country benefited from the pioneering Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the financial year 2008-09. It was an increase of 32% over the previous year. This is a significant jump over the 3.39 crore households covered under the scheme during 2007-08.

At the National Level, average wage paid under MNREGA has increased from Rs.65 in 2006-07 to Rs. 84 in 2008-09. The enhanced wage earnings have led to strengthening of the livelihood resource base of the rural poor in India. In 2007-08, more than 68% of funds utilized (Rs.10, 738.47 crore as wage expenditure) were in the form of wages paid to the labourers. In 2008-2009, 67% of the funds have been utilized in the form of wages (Rs.18, 146.63 crore as wage expenditure in 2008-09). The Central Government has been encouraging the state governments to make wage payment through bank and post office accounts of wage seekers and over 7 crore accounts have been opened in banks and post offices throughout the country to disburse the wages.⁵

OBJECTIVES

The present study is carried out for the following objectives:

1. To know the impact of MNREGP on distribution of beneficiaries.
2. To find out the income and expenditure and net savings levels of beneficiaries before and after joining the MNREGP.

METHODOLOGY

A study has been made in the year 2010-11 in Ongole Mandal, Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh, by selecting 300 beneficiaries of the programme randomly to assess the impact of the MNREGP as a facet of inclusive growth. The Present Study also covers emphasizing the economic conditions like income and expenditure levels along with the deficit and saving pattern of the families, community, age wise particulars, occupational pattern and also evaluated the impact of the programme before and after it is launched.

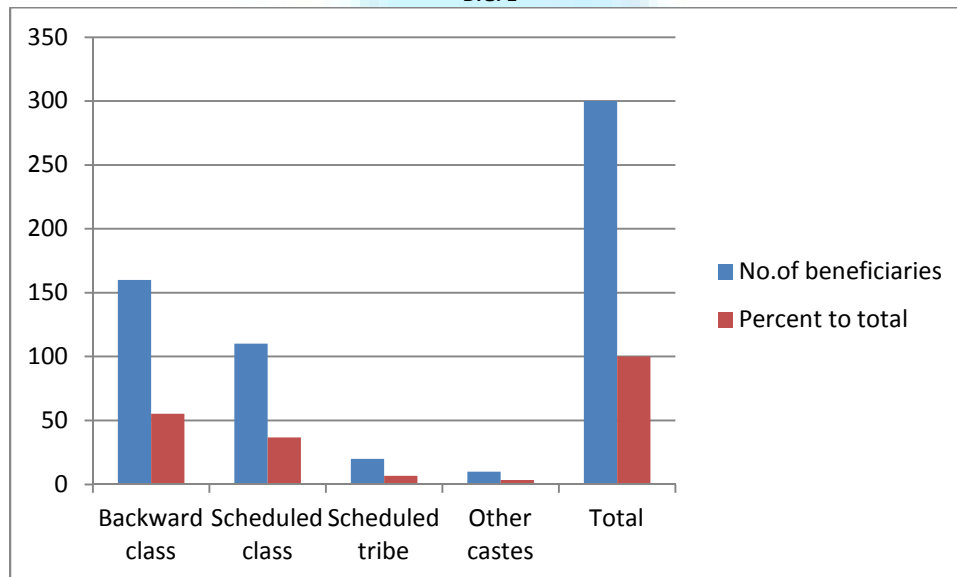
Out of 300 MNREGP workers, 71% are women, and the rest of the workers are men. This programme helped a lot in reducing the seasonal unemployment in the agriculture sector, and also contributed to empower the women folk in the rural areas. Further this also reduced the wage dissimilarity between men and women workers by increasing the minimum wages.

TABLE 1: CASTE –CATEGORY OF BENEFICIARIES

Caste	No.of beneficiaries	Percent to total
Backward class	160	55.33
Scheduled class	110	36.66
Scheduled tribe	20	6.66
Other castes	10	3.33
Total	300	100

Source: field data

DIG. 1

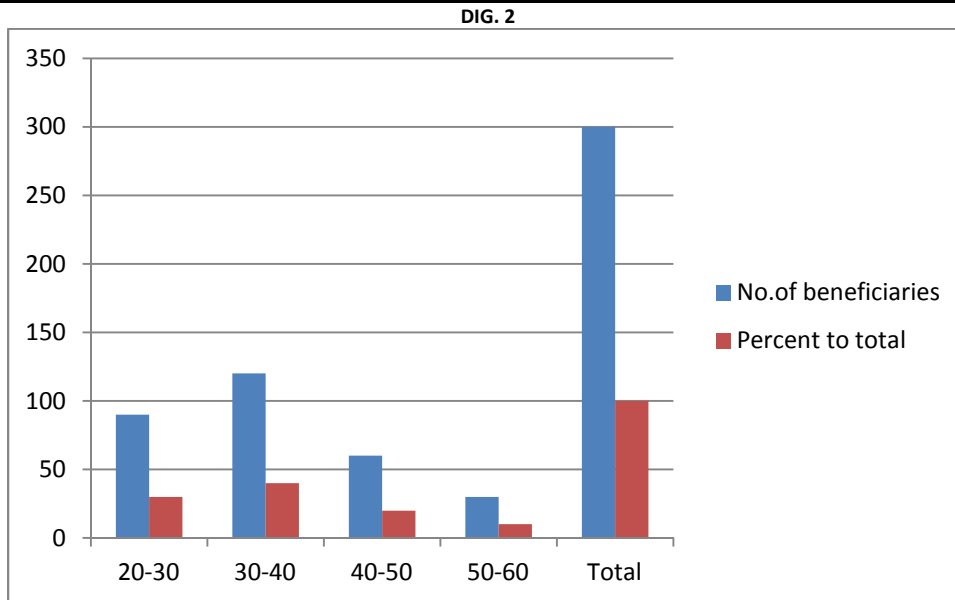


The study reveals that 53.33% of the workers are from backward class communities and 36.66% of workers are from Scheduled caste category and the rest are from ST and OC communities.

TABLE 2: AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFICIARIES

Age	No.of beneficiaries	Percent to total
20-30	90	30
30-40	120	40
40-50	60	20
50-60	30	10
Total	300	100

Source: field data

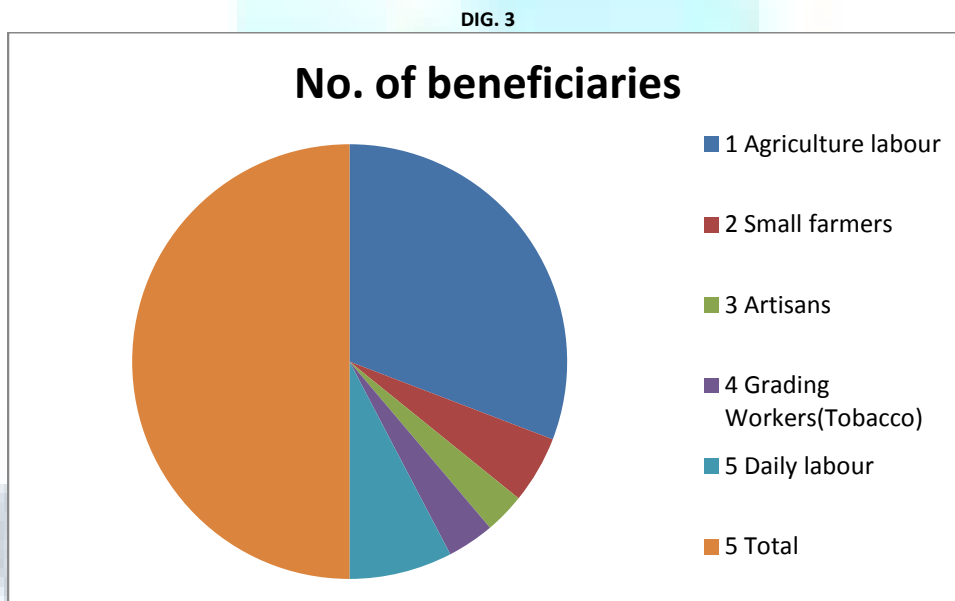


As far as age-wise distribution of beneficiary workers in the programme is concerned 40% of the workers are from the age group of 30-40 years, 30% are from 20-30 years of age, 20% are from 40-50 years of age. Only 10% of beneficiaries are between 50 and 60 years of age. This shows that majority are below 40 years of age, the programme is very useful for rural youth force.

TABLE 3: OCCUPATION DETAILS/DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFICIARIES

S.No.	Name of the occupation	No. of beneficiaries	Percent to total
1	Agriculture labour	185	61.66
2	Small farmers	30	10.00
3	Artisans	18	6.00
4	Grading Workers(Tobacco)	21	7.00
5	Daily labour	46	15.34
	Total	300	100

Source: field data

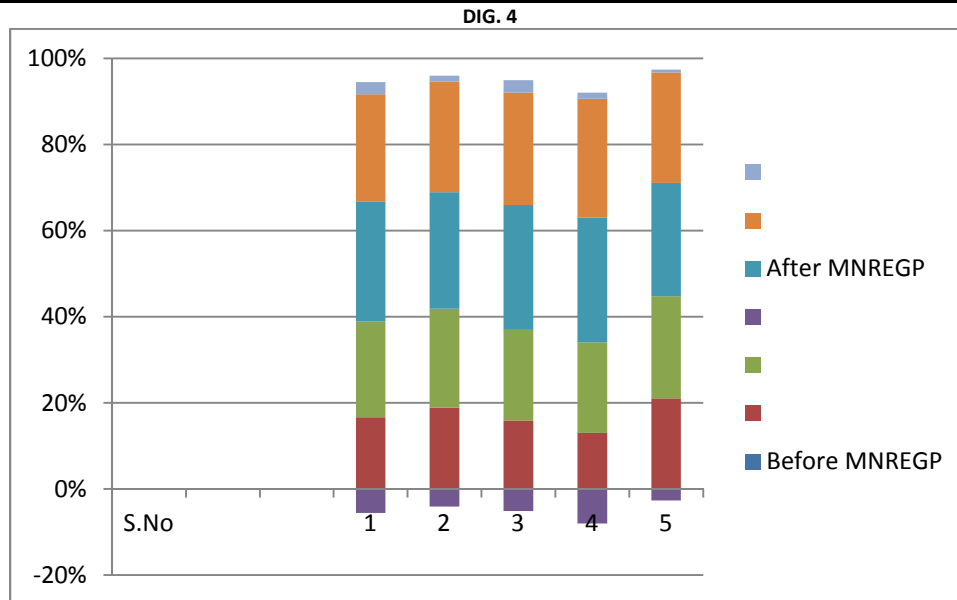


Out of the participant workers 61.66% of workers from the agricultural labourers, and 10% are from small farmers' category and 15.34% are from daily labourers and rest of them belongs to the Grading (Tobacco) workers and artisans. This evidently speaks that it is providing opportunities to all the skilled and unskilled professions. Further the observation explains that this programme has helped in reducing the wage discriminations among the different occupations in the area.

TABLE 4: NET SAVINGS PER BENEFICIARIES

S.No	Occupation	Before MNREGP			After MNREGP		
		Monthly income	Monthly expenditure	Net Surplus/deficit	Monthly income	Monthly expenditure	Net Surplus/deficit
1	Agriculture labour	1200	1600	-400	2000	1800	200
2	Small farmers	1400	1700	-300	2000	1900	100
3	Artisans	1100	1450	-350	2000	1800	200
4	Grading Workers(Tobacco)	900	1450	-550	2000	1900	100
5	Daily labour	1600	1800	-200	2000	1950	50

Source: field data



The study reveals that the expenditure levels before implementation of this programme was met by the workers by indulging debts to meet their minimum needs expenditure. Further they expressed that this programme helped in easing out the debt burden to some extent after the implementation of the MNREGP. Table4. Shows that the saving levels of the workers increased substantially, and this also helped in paying the debts they made before implementation of the programme. The light thrown on one aspect in this study is that it enhanced the affordability of the MNREGP workers in the changing circumstances, and contributed the reduction of migration from the rural areas to urban for searching petty jobs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The study reveals that most of the beneficiaries belongs to the age group ranging from 30 to 40 years
- The study reveals that 53.33% of the beneficiaries belongs to backward class community
- There is reduction of wage difference in various works by creating equal wages to male and female workers
- There is increase in living and economic conditions
- The study reveals that majority of the beneficiaries have savings in the post office

CONCLUSION

The programme is still in fancy and it has a long way to go but that does not take away from what it has achieved in its infancy. Today many families are happier because of MNREGP. If targeted and implemented effectively the MNREGP could decrease poverty in the deprived areas. This can be harsened by taking up works that rejuvenate the natural resource base of the livelihood of poor communities. Later its scope can be enlarged skilled work by artisans. All that is being hoped right now is that the MNREGP should be able to mitigate the hard times and increase the abysmal household earnings for the poorest. Hopefully the small and heartening gains will spur to the other parts of the nation. With the launch of the MNREGP, which provides the country with a potential social safety net, there is need to revisit the multiplicity of poverty alleviation schemes. The effective implementation of MNREGP is critical for improving inclusiveness. It should reduce poverty and improve rural infrastructure; and any failure to do so will be an indicator of its ineffective implementation.

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