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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) is the flagship programme of the Government that directly touches lives of the rural poor and promotes inclusive growth. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is the first ever law internationally that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale. The Act was notified on September 7, 2005 and came into force on February 2, 2006 in India and was implemented in a phased manner by the Ministry of Rural Development. In phase one, it was introduced in 200 of the most backward districts of the country and then extended to additional 130 districts in the financial year of 2007-2008 (113 districts on April 1, 2007 and 17 districts on May 15, 2007 in Uttar Pradesh) as phase two.

As per the initial target, NREGA was to be extended countrywide in five years. However, in order to bring the whole nation under its safety net and keeping in view of the demand, the scheme was extended to the remaining 274 rural districts of India from April 1, 2008 in phase third, except those districts that have a hundred per cent urban population.

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Objectives of MGNREGP:

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is being introduced with the following main objectives.

i) To enhance livelihood security in rural area by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled work.

ii) To provide strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate.

iii) To strengthen natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion.

iv) To have a growth engine for sustainable development of an agricultural economy.

Villages are the backbone:

According to Mahatma Gandhi, "Villages in India are the backbone of our economy". In order to fulfill his dream, the Government has renamed NREGP as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) on October 2, 2009. It is also popularly known as 100 days work scheme among the rural people.

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Works under MGNREGP:

The following works are permissible that may be taken up in the MGNREGP:

i) Water conservation and water harvesting;
ii) Drought proofing, including afforestation and tree plantation;
iii) Irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works;
iv) Provision of irrigation facility, plantation, horticulture, land development to land owned by households belonging to the SC / ST, or to land of the beneficiaries of land reforms, or to land of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana / Below Poverty Line (BPL) families;
v) Renovation of traditional water bodies, including de-silting of tanks;
vi) Flood-control and protection works, including drainage in waterlogged areas;
vii) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access (except Prime Minister Gram Sadak Yojana net work and no cement concrete roads) the construction of road may include culverts where necessary, and within the village area may be taken up along with drains. Priority should be given to roads that give access to SC / ST habitations;
viii) Any other work that may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

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Payment of Wages:

The wage for the workers are paid in the following manner:

i) Wages to workers should be paid as per the minimum wage rate fixed by the State Government (or the competent authority concerned) for agricultural labourers under the Minimum Wages Act of 1948, unless the wages have been notified by the Central Government as per the Act.
ii) Equal wage shall be paid to both men and women workers under Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.
iii) The State Government may provide a portion of the wages to labourers on a daily basis during the period of employment.
iv) Wages should be paid on a weekly basis on a pre-specified day of the week through the Banks / Post Office net work.

Conclusion:

Participation of rural women and landless people at large scale are highlights of this programme that broadcasts the success of this scheme considering other Government Schemes in India. A programme of this kind, if administrated well, would be exactly the antidote to the 'jobless growth' problem. Further on, MGNREGP is an excellent initiative that energizes the rural people in building a better sustainable ecosystem themselves.

UNIQUENESS WITH UNEASINESS: NREGP AND SOCIAL AUDIT

In a well – ordered, policy - oriented economy it is theoretically possible and practically desirable to evolve the harmonious and continuous co - existence of rapid growth, full employment and price stability.

- Kurihara .

Introduction

Though Rural Development Programmes in general and Rural Employment Programmes in particular underwent changes in their nomenclature, in India, over the years, the objectives of them underneath remained the same. That is, creation of employment opportunities, to absorb the surplus labour what Arthur Lewis called as the 'unlimited supply of labour. However, approaches and strategies followed to create rural employment differed depending upon the political climate and the ideology (if any) of those who were behind in the designing of such programmes / schemes. A few of such programmes achieved moderate to fair success and the rest disappeared, after some time.

NREGP

National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme was introduced in the year of 2005. This programme provides livelihood to rural people or households for 100 Days with guaranteed wage. The primary objective of this programme was that

- To reduce the migration or to give guaranteed livelihood security in rural areas through the employment opportunity for hundred days.

Route map before the government of India introduced NREGP a number of employment programmes were implemented

- In 1980, The National Rural Employment Programme was started
- In 1983, the Central government sponsored the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme
- During 1989, the central government launched the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) for the unemployed and underemployed in rural areas.
- The Employment Assurance Scheme was started in the year of 1993, the main objective of this programme was that to provide employment in the form of manual work in the lean agricultural season
- In 2000-2001, the Food for Work Programme was introduced. This programme aimed at augmenting food security through wage employment.

Distinguishing Features of NREGP

NREGS differs significantly compared to the earlier poverty alleviation / rural employment programmes in two respects. They are

i. The NREGS is built around notions of Citizenship and entitlement

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ii. It facilitates disclosure by means of regular social audits

Apart from this, Job Cards, Muster Rolls are a few new terms and forms which the rural poor never heard before.

Works under NREGP

The works undertaken in NREGP are

1. Water Conservation and Water Harvesting
2. Building of irrigation channels
3. Renovation of traditional water bodies
4. Land Development
5. Rural Connectivity

Social Audit: Uniqueness of NREGP

The Social Audit of NREGP is mandated to be done by the Gram Sabhas. The aim of Social Audit is to identify and plug pilferage, if any, and corruption. This helps build awareness and confidence in beneficiaries and in the process they learn to become vigilant and assertive. This type of 'institutionalized Social Audit' makes the NREGP as a unique programme, which means business without corruption.

Objective of Social Audit

Social Audit of NREGP has been done

i. To examine whether the works under NREGP are done effectively
ii. To know the complete details of both the works completed and ongoing in the villages, and
iii. To look into the records.

This Social Audit has to be done four times in a year. Theoretically it has been argued that this would help all the interested Citizens to know the progress of NREGP in their village.

At each Panchayat level, to undertake Social Audit, a Committee has been constituted. A total of six members constitute the Committee and are selected in the Gram Sabha meeting. The Composition of Social Audit Committee consists of

i. Two members from Panchayat Union representatives or Promoters / Organizers of SHGs.
ii. Two members who have completed their high schooling.
iii. Two members who have worked for at least 50 days in NREGP.

The Uneasiness

The uniqueness of the NREGP, that is, Social Audit has created uneasiness among those involved in its planning and execution. Consider the following two cases which were widely reported:

Case I

In Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu a Social Audit has been undertaken by Jean Dreze and Ethans. The visit of this team has created ripples. When the rural public supported, coordinated and cooperated in the team, the Officials and the political leaders' exerted pressure on the SA group not to probe beyond the information and data supplied by the Village Panchayats. Even physical blows are received by a member of SA team. They are intimidated and roughed up for exposing the irregularities of the scheme at the point of implementation.

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Case II

A sample 10 – day Social Audit was done on October 2009 by the Arundati Roy –led Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan in Bhilwara, Rajasthan. This was, of course, supported by the state government. From the beginning the team faced stiff objection and resistance from the Panchayat Staff, who feared that they will be held responsible if exposed the ground level reality that NREGP is susceptible to corruption. At the same time, it has been found that the village poor got100 days of employment and wages were paid promptly. Bhilwara alone got Rs.330 crore out of Rs 9500 crore allocated to the State (3.47%). The team found the important positive developments, among others:

a) Guaranteed employment had reduced distress migration by the Bhil community,
b) Raised wage levels across the private sector.

Field Survey

As a part of a Major Research Project, the villages like Vadapudur, Kannamanaikkanur and Valukkupparai in Kinathukkadavu and Madukkarai blocks of Coimbatore district were surveyed during 2009-2010. All these villages had their share of NREGP works undertaken by their respective village panchayats. The Presidents of village panchayats and the farmers of these villages were found firm on one thing that this programme is unwarranted and unsuitable in these villages as the male workers are going out for wage labour outside the village throughout the year and earn on an average Rs 200/- per day. Similarly, many women also fetch regular employment outside the village. And the farmers were facing a severe problem of labour shortage.

Further, the type and quality of work undertaken in the name of NREGP were found as extremely poor. It has been a waste of time and money in an otherwise busy agricultural area.

Enquiries with the Panchayat Presidents, Members, Farmers and Labourers reveled that neither prior planning was done to undertake a particular work under NREGP nor post – audit (leave alone Social Audit) was done.

To sum up

Notwithstanding the experiences learned elsewhere, the personal encounter with the type, quality and progress of works undertaken by NREGP found as much to be desired. To over come these practical problems at the planning, execution and evaluation levels the following suggestions are offered and they should be incorporated in the programme.

- Consultation is a must to decide about a) nature of work to be undertaken, b) time / month/ season suitable, c) the beneficial impact of the proposed work d) preparation of register, muster roll, job card and accounts, and e) the evaluation and social audit.
- Work diversification(emphasized by many like Banerji and Saha)
- Women workers should be part of the Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (Pankaj and Tankha)
- Payment of wages through banks (Adhikari and Bhatia) as a substantial protection against embezzlement.

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IMPACT OF NREGP ON AGRICULTURAL SECTOR: A VILLAGE LEVEL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction

A new dimension in the arena of Rural Employment came in the form of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which is a historic legislation passed by the Government of India in September 2005. It was enacted in order to address the crucial issues of unemployment and poverty in rural India. The NREGA guarantees a hundred days of unskilled employment to each household in every financial year at an equal wage rate for both male and female workers. Additionally, it guarantees the "right to work" as a legal right of every able-bodied adult in rural India. It is fundamentally different from all other wage employment programmes operating since 1980 in that these programmes do not guarantee employment as a legal right. The NREGA has great potential for increasing the volume of employment among the rural unemployed and underemployed.

It has been felt that NREGA provides ample opportunities for creating rural public assets, which has been largely neglected. It helps to enhance the purchasing power of rural households, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation. By providing equal wages to both men and women, NREGA upholds the social position and integrity of women and thus promotes gender equality.

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Aims of NREGA

The main aim of NREGS is to offer hundred days of work to unemployed families in rural areas

Conditions of NREGA

The two conditions for the adults of a household to apply are:

1. They must be living in a rural area.
2. They must be willing to undertake unskilled manual labour for which they would receive the minimum wage.

Official set up

The Officials responsible for implementing the NREGA are

1. The District Programme Coordinator who is the Chief Executive Officer of the District Panchayat or the Collector of the District.
2. The Programme Officer-a person who is not below the rank of Block Development Officer. The Programme Officer shall be responsible for matching the demand for employment with the employment opportunities arising from projects in the area under his jurisdiction.

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3. The Gram Panchayat, which shall be responsible for identification of the projects in the Gram Panchayat area to be taken up under a Scheme as per the recommendations of the Gram Sabha and the Ward Sabhas and for executing and supervising such works. The Gram Panchayat shall make available all relevant documents including the muster rolls, bills, vouchers, measurement books, copies of sanction orders and other connected books of account and papers to the Gram Sabha for the purpose of conducting the social audit.
4. The Gram Sabha shall monitor the execution of works within the Gram Panchayat and conduct regular social audits of all the projects under the Scheme taken up within the Gram Panchayat area.

Impact of NREGP in agriculture sector

It is obvious that a sector which is supporting about 65% of Indian population for their livelihood should be without many problems. Especially, it should not be affected by labour shortage. That means, NREGP should be implemented only where there is chronic unemployment and it implies that it should not be implemented where labour shortage has been reported. In this connection there has been a proposition that the NREGP would affect the agriculture sector in employment as well as in the wages. To examine this proposition a survey was conducted in Kinathukadavu block in Coimbatore district. The villages Kallapuram, Sattakalpudur, Meenachipuram, Vallukuparai, and Vadapudur were visited to observe the NREGP works and to elicit the views of the farmers. The number of farmers interviewed was 70. These villages have both irrigated lands and dry lands. The farmers depend on wells (open and bore well) for irrigation apart from rainfall. The major crops cultivated are Cotton, Tomato, Maize, Chilli, Cholam and a few farms had Coconut groves.

On the basis of information gathered from the experienced farmers it has been learned that earlier the labourers earned Rs.30 per day but were worked from dawn to dark. However, in the current situation the trend has changed, they are working only for limited hours but earned more than Rs 200 per day. Further, with the prospects of non- farm employment has been bright most of the able bodied men and women are leaving the villages for work and earn more.

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Findings

1. The labour shortage is the major problem for the agricultural sector in these villages. It has been observed that, during the busy season the farmers brought the labourers from their neibouring villages through hired vehicles. There was a contractor, who bring the labourers from his village or near by village for which he gets an amount as commission. Due to the shortage of labour the wage rate has also increased for both men and women in these villages. This has increased the cost of cultivation. In other words, the old and weak are remaining in the villages and when they are also observed in the NREGP it results in an absolute problem.

Wages before and after NREGP

S No	Status	Wage before the NREGP	Wage after the NREGP
1.	Men	Rs 100	Rs 150 -200
2.	Women	Rs 80	Rs 130-150

2. The cultivation of food crops like Paddy has been given up by the farmers due to labour shortage. This is not only a loss to the village but also to the region.
3. The commercial crops like cotton involves more labour. Though these villages have soil suitable for cotton cultivation, the farmers are afraid of taking it on a large scale due to the fear of non availability of adequate labour, in time.
4. The easy work with an assured payment under NREGP has changed the aptitude of the labourers that working in the farm lands is a burden.
5. The farmers complained that even the work done by the Panchayat under NREGP is not going to be of much use to the agriculture as it has not created any permanent assets like construction of bonds and tanks to save rain water.
6. The type and quality of work undertaken through NREGP has invited a lot of criticism. All the farmers opined that it has been only laying and relaying of the same village roads.

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A STUDY ON MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN KARUNGULAM BLOCK OF THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, now renamed as Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a historic Legislation passed by the Parliament in August 2005 and came into effect on 5th September 2005. There was an expectation for including right to work in the list of Fundamental Right immediately after obtaining Independence. The prime object is to enhance the prime object is to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by generating wage employment through works that develop the infrastructure base of that area.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) and its Provisions

The scheme is expected to enhance people's livelihood on sustained basis by developing economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. It is direct attack on the causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion.

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OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the employment generated by the MGNREGS in the study area.
2. To analyze the income generation of income owing to the implementation of MGNREGS in the study area.
3. To offer suggestions for the effective implementation of the scheme.

HYPOTHESES

1. Ho: There is no significant increase in employment after the emergence of MGNREGS
2. Ho: There is no significant increase in income of the sample households after moving to MGNREGS.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. On the basis of purposive sampling 125 beneficiaries in the selected villages of Karungulam Block have been considered. While selecting the beneficiaries simple random sampling at the rate of 5 beneficiaries from each village of selected

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25 villages have been considered. The selection of villages is made on the basis of the maximum number of registration of individuals under MGNREGS.

The primary data has been collected from beneficiaries of MGNREGS works in Karungulam block, through a questionnaire. A pre-tested questionnaire was used to collect information from the member of MGNREGS. Adequate precaution was taken to ascertain correct information. However, the workers had to rely on their memory for supply of information; any lapse on their memory may affect the investigation findings. The secondary data were collected from the Block Office, Panchayats, books, magazines, published pamphlets, website information, leaflets and unpublished research papers.

DATA ANALYSIS

Impact of MGNREGS on Employment

The available MGNREGS employment works are related to water conservation, land development, rural connectivity and other works. Thus, the growth of rural employment can enumerate from both agriculture and the undesirable situations prevailing in the rural areas. An attempt has been made to measure the impact of MGNREGS on employment and income of the rural households.

After the Green Revolution, farmers in different parts of our country began to use modern methods of cultivation, which are capital-intensive in nature. This has gradually paved the way for replacement of man by machines. The problem has still aggravated due to the failure of monsoon fall in number of employment, seasonal nature of employment, uncertainty in getting a regular income, phenomenal increase in the price of input and absence of corresponding increase in the price of agricultural products. This situation not only made the agricultural labourers but also landlords to make a move from agriculture to other sector or MGNREGS, which are mostly casual in nature. The rural workforce even began to migrate to nearby cities/towns to get an employment which will give permanent and high income compared to what they get from the farm sector employment.

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Table No:-1 IMPACT OF MGNREGS ON EMPLOYMENT

Sl. No	Income Group	No.of Respondents	Average Employment in Mandays		Increase
			Pre-MGNREGS	Post-MGNRGS	
1.	Lower Income Group (Less than Rs.36,000)	31	188	285 (1.06)*	97 (51.60)
2.	Middle Income Group (Rs.36,000 to 65,000)	48	193	278 (1.71)*	85 (44.04)
3.	Higher Income Group (Above Rs. 65,000)	46	207	289 (1.62)*	82 (39.61)
	Total	125	588	852 (1.38)*	264 (44.90)

Source: Primary Data

Note: *Average number of MGNREGS workers per sample household.
Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to Pre-MGNREGS Employment.

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Table 1 shows that there is an increase of employment to 264 days (44.90 per cent) persons during the Post-MGNREGS compared to the pre-MGNREGS (588). The overall average number of workers per household in the MGNREGS comes to 1.38. It is minimum (1.06) in lower income group. It is because of over dependence on other works due to earning more money. To know the impact of MGNREGS on employment in the income groups the researcher has started with the null hypothesis:

H_o: *There is no significant increase in employment after the emergence of MGNREGs.*

If $\overline{X_B}$ = Post –MGNREGS employment = Pre-MGNREGS employment, according to the null by hypothesis = . ON the basis of the above hypothesis the researcher has obtained calculated values and the results are given in

IMPACT OF MGNREGS ON HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME

TABLE NO:-2 IMPACT OF MGNREGS ON HOUSEHOLD ANNUAL INCOME

In come group (in Rs)	No.of Respondents	Average Income (in Rs.)		Increase
		Pre-MGNREGS	Post-MGNREGS	
Lower Income Group (Less than Rs.36,000)	31	28,890.32	38,665.48	9,77.5.25 (33.83)
Middle Income Group (Rs.36,000 to 65,000)	48	54,485.00	64,290.00	9,805.00 (18.00)
Higher Income Group (Above Rs. 65,000)	46	81,482.61	91,224.13	9,741.52 (11.96)
All	125	61,831.07	71,463.13	9,632.06 (15.58)

Source: Primary Data

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage increase in income over Pre-MGNREGS employment

Table No.2 shows that, there is a significant increase in income per family after moving to MGNREGS. Income has increased by 33.83 percent in lower income group followed by middle income group (18 percent). This situation may be attributed to first, shift of male and female workforce to MGNREGS due to continuous work in Karungulam block and second, employment of female workforce in MGNREGS, which provides employment throughout 100 days per year.

H_0 : There is no significant increase in income of the sample households after moving to MGNREGS. On the basis of the hypothesis researcher have obtained calculated values. The null hypothesis is rejected and concluded that there is significant increase in income of the sample households after joining NGNREGS. The increase in income is statistically significant. Thus, the results of Z – test given in Table 2 have disproved the hypothesis that there is significant increase in employment and income after moving to MGNREGS.

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DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON THE BASIS OF ANNUAL INCOME

Table:-3 DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON THE BASIS OF ANNUAL INCOME

Sl. No	Income Group (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents		Increase
		Pre-MGNREGS	Post-MGNREGS	
1.	Lower Income Group Below 36,00	31	10	-21 (-67.74)
2.	Middle Income Group 36,000 – 65,000	48	56	8 (16.67)
3.	Higher Income Group Above 65,000	46	59	13 28.26)
	Total	125	125	21 (16.80)

Source: Primary Data

Note: Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage increase in income over Pre- MGNREGS employment

Table 3 reveals that only 21 (16.80 per cent) out of 125 households have effect on their income due to work in MGNREGS. The data suggest that the income distribution among the three groups of households does not show wider variations.

Gini Concentration Ratio

In order to find out the correct estimation Gini concentration ratio was calculated. In order to find out the correct estimation Gini concentration ratio is applied. It is a mathematical method. The Gini concentration before MGNREGS is 0.19 and the Gini Concentration after MGNREGS is 0.12.

FINDINGS

It was found that there is an increase of employment to 264 days (44.90 %) persons during the post – MGNREGS compared to the pre-MGNREGS.

Regarding the income, there is a significant increase in income per family after moving to MGNRES. Income has increased by 33.83 per cent in lower income group followed by middle income group(18%).

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SUGGESTIONS

1. A well trained staff should be appointed at the Block level for the effective implementation of the programme.
2. Wages paid to the beneficiaries is far below that the ruling or minimum wage rate. It is not sufficient to lead a comfortable life. Hence, wage rate should be increased in the coming years.
3. Delay in the payment should be avoided as they have no other source of income. Sufficient funds should be allotted well in advance to save delay.
4. Frequent inspection of the higher officials will be helpful t
   o implement the scheme more effectively.

CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that the MGNREGS in the Karungulam Block has made a positive contribution. However MGNREGS provided only a temporary solution to the problem of poverty. Hence, steps should be taken to restructure this scheme for promoting social and economic standards of the rural people.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT AND PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN RURAL INDIA

Introduction:

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India implemented the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2005 and it came into force on February 2, 2006. The name of NREGA has been changed to "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employement Guarantee Act". The corresponding act deemed to have come into force on 2nd October 2009. The main aim of this programme is provide livelihood security to rural poor people and promote inclusive growth of the country. This programme provide at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members are ready to do unskilled manual work.

Implementation of MGNREGA:

The Act came into force on February 2, 2006 and was implemented in a phased manner. In Phase I it was introduced in 200 of the most backward districts of the country. It was implemented in an additional 130 districts in Phase II 2007-2008. The Act was notified in the remaining 285 rural districts of India from April 1, 2008 in Phase III (Ministry of Rural Development 2010).

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislations enacted since independence. Its significance is evident from a variety of perspectives. First, it is a bold and unique experiment in the provision of rural employment - in India and indeed in the world at large. Second, it is the first expression of the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement. In a country where labour is the only economic asset for millions of people, gainful employment is a prerequisite for the fulfilment of other basic rights - the right to life, the right to food, and the right to education. In this paper we analyse the performance of MGNREGA and Promotion of Women in Rural India.

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Objectives:

This study is based on two main objectives:

1. To study the level of women employment under the Mahathma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Rural India.
2. To analyse the impact of Mahathama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on Poverty, Labour market and Migration of women in Rural India.

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Women Labour force under MGNREGA:

There is much that the NREGA promises from the perspective of women's empowerment as well. Most boldly, in a rural milieu marked by stark inequalities between men and women – in the opportunities for gainful employment afforded as well as wage rates – NREGA represents action on both these counts. The act stipulates that wages will be equal for men and women. It is also committed to ensuring that at least 33% of the workers shall be women. By generating employment for women at fair wages in the village, NREGA can play a substantial role in economically empowering women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-esteem.

MGNREGA–Poverty-Women:

India is a developing economy. In India high percentage of people are living in rural areas. Reduction of poverty is a big challenge to Indian economy, because one-fourth of the world's poor live in India which is estimated to be around 35-40 million (Prasanna 2009). According to Selvakumar (2009) 22 per cent of people live in below the poverty line in 2007-08. Out of which, 75 per cent of them are in rural areas. The World Bank in its annual report in 1989 observed that 35 per cent of India households below the poverty line are headed by women, and in most cases, are thus, dependent exclusively on female income (Tripathy 2007). Therefore eradication of poverty is the main aim of our policy makers. It can be achieved only by way of providing employment opportunity to our rural mass. In this connection the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), enacted on February 2, 2006 is a revolutionary measures to transform the rural economy and a step towards the goal of full employment and poverty alleviation.

MGNREGA provides legal entitlement to its beneficiaries and places a judicially enforceable obligation on the state which makes it somewhat different from earlier employment programmes. Potential of this Act ranges from basic wage security and recharging rural economy through addressing the 'geography of poverty' by generating higher employment in the most deprived areas, to a transformative empowerment proves of democracy. MGNREGA has been able to impact the livelihood condition, distress mitigation and indebtedness of rural poor and marginal farmers by providing employment and income, especially during slack period in agriculture. Paid employment under MNREGA has not only transformed the bargaining position of SCs, STs, and Women but has also been able to create large social effects on the empowerment of these groups, especially women (Kumari 2010).

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MGNREGA-Labour Market-Women:

In the world of work, women status is not only subordinate to men but it is perpetuated for generation by certain norms and practices with broad social sanction. In the general social milieu, the position of women as workers have suffered two types of disadvantages,

(i) First, though almost every able bodied woman is working, either in the home or workplace, she is not being recognised as a worker.

(ii) Secondly wherever she is employed, the status of her employment and remuneration has remained much lower (Rahman and Chauhan 2007).

Govindraj and Rajendran (2000) pointed out that rural women's earnings are only 10 per cent that of their counterparts for the same work done. Tripathy (2007) also observed that discrimination against women in terms of employment opportunities, wage working condition, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work, lack of job security, and long hours of work, lack of minimum facilities at work place, ignorance and traditional bound attitudes are the major problems faced by women workers in the labour market. But this situation has been changing due to implementation of MGNREGA. The MGNREGA work towards reduced the labour market problems which are faced by women workers.

Firstly under this programme women are getting equal remuneration. It shows that women have been recognised equal to men. Secondly, women work maximum 8 hours per day and they get job opportunity with in 5 km of their village. These advantages facilitate the double work burden of women workers i.e., both home and work place work. Finally child care facilities at work place also available to women workers in the MGNREGA. These advantages are really empowering the women in sort of socially and economically.

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MGNREGA-Migration-Women:

Most migration happens because there are no sustainable means of finding any work in the rural areas during the dry season. The average annual growth rate of the migration population over the last 30 year (1971-2000) was 2.21 per cent – female migration showed a growth rate of 2.24 per cent as compared to 1.85 per cent for males during the same period. Rural females were most mobile although urban females have picked up over the decades (Arpita and Saraswati 2009). The migrant workers particularly rural agricultural labourers are the vulnerable section of the society. As the families were migrating dropouts among the children in the primary school is also increasing. Migration is also encouraging the children to participate in the labour market. Health problems are also increasing. In recent periods MGNREGA prevent the people to migrate from rural areas. MGNREGA provide employment to rural poor during the slack seasons when most household would want work (Siddaram, Biradar and Devendra 2010). Especially women not migrate now after the implementation of MGNREGA. Women get employment opportunity in their village so they need not to migrate anywhere. Jacob (2008) pointed out that under MGNREGA women receive lower wage than migrate wage level. Women did not mind earning less because they had no debts to contractors, they were in native places and the flow of income was steady and reliable as opposed to the uncertainties of informal sector work which is what they would do if they were migrant labourers. MGNREGA is control the labour migration especially women migration in rural areas of Indian economy.

Conclusion:

In rural areas women can enjoy income security and employment security through the MGNREGA. This programme has improved the standard of living of poor in rural areas because under this programme families are getting stable and predictable income. It also gives more important to gender equality and promotion of women in rural India.

THE FLIP SIDE OF MGNREGA

Introduction

India has been undertaking a number of welfare programmes with twin objectives of providing employment opportunities and alleviating poverty in the country. On October 1974, the department of rural development came into existence and it was renamed as the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) to exclusively cater to the needs of rural areas. This undertakes a number of schemes for positive impact on the economy in the long run for poverty reduction, employment generation, building rural infrastructure, habitant development and provision of basic minimum services etc.

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme - Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) aims to provide connectivity to all unconnected habitations in the rural areas. The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana scheme (after merging the Employment Assurance Scheme and the Jawahar Gram Smridhi Yojana) aims at augmenting food security through additional wage employment in the calamity affected rural areas. The construction of houses was included as one of the major activities under the National Rural Employment Programme which begun in 1980. RLEGP begun in 1983 and IAY were launched during 1985-1986 as a sub scheme of RLEGP and thereafter it continued as a sub scheme of JRY. From 1st January 1986 IAY was de-linked from JRY and made an independent scheme. The Government of India, in 1998 announced a National Housing and Habitat policy which aims at providing "Housing for all" and facilitating the construction of 20 lakh additional housing units (13 lakh in rural areas and 7 in urban areas) to emphasis on standing benefits to the poor and the deprived. In addition to the above stated welfare schemes, the MoRD introduced the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) by enacting the legislation on August 25, 2005.

This kind of scenario will affect the productivity of field crops at least. Against this back drop the present study has been undertaken to explore the implications of MGNREGA. In addition to this, various welfare schemes and role of panjayat raj institions are also explained briefly.

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Methodology

In Salem district, tapioca is widely cultivated and Ayothyapattinam block is one of the leading blocks in this district. The farmer uses both improved and normal varieties of tapioca which provide raw material to sago factories. Notchipatti, Aricadu and Periyakaunder villages are selected to study due to heavy concentration of tapioca cultivation in these villages. In these villages Focused Group Discussions were held. In India, the gap between demand and supply for tapioca is estimated as 1254587 and 233014 tones for sago and starch respectively (Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, 2006). India has shown enormous interest in the development of the horticultural industry and acquires significance in the global cassava scenario due to its highest productivity in the world (27.92 t/ha). The climate and soil types are conducive in India for this crop. India is the major producer of tapioca in Asian countries. Salem district is bounty in tapioca production due to their natural factor endowment, raw material, good sunshine

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and other agro climatic conditions leading to 80 per cent of the national demand for Sago and Starch is met by the Sago Serve – a cooperative system for tapioca

Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions

The PRIs have a greater role and stake in implementing and monitoring the MGNREGA at local level and it is considered as an important tool for the implementation of the various development programmes of the Ministry. As a step toward decentralization of the planning process and implementation of the programmes, strengthening of the PRIs has been envisaged through the Constitutional (73rd) Amendment Act, 1992 and with the passage of this Act, constitutional status has been provided to the PRIs. Therefore, under most of the rural development programmes, a crucial role has been assigned to PRIs for programme implementation. Sustained efforts are being made to strengthen local governance, institutionalizing people's participation and empowering women through PRIs. The State governments are being pursued for delegation of adequate administrative and financial powers to PRIs and a significant change has been noticed in this regard. With regard to implementing MGNREGA, PRIs do have a greater role both in implementing and monitoring.

MGNREGA VS MGNREGA

The MGNREGA is implemented for providing employment opportunities to the unemployed people, which ensures their livelihood security. Through employment and wage spiral, their poverty is deprived, raising their purchasing power of money in hands leading to increase in demand for consumer goods, investment, production and supply of goods. In socially and economically heterogeneous communities dominate in the regions like Salem, the welfare progremmes should be focused more with local demands. In Salem district, the socially under privileged communities such as MBC, SC's, and ST's concentrated on a large scale. On the one hand, agriculture under dry land farming system provides seasonal employment to peasants and agricultural labourers. In fact due to low employment, elasticity in agriculture sector, agricultural labourers and even marginal farmers migrate to places like Bangalore and Tirupur in search of employment. In the manufacturing sector, there are opportunities especially in mining and construction activities. However, in these segments only skilled and semi skilled labourers are largely employed leading the unskilled to migrate. An important observation is that of late workers who are semiskilled from far off states like Bihar and Madhya Pradesh migrate in to Salem and entering into mining and construction activities. Against this employment scenario, the welfare schemes like MGNREGA would provide some safety ness to local labourers.

The progress of MGNREGA's in Tamilnadu, Salem and Ayothyapattinum is shown in table 1.. Substantial progress of the scheme has been emphasized through the generation of employment from year to years. In the above table, fifth column shows the share of Salem district from Tamil Nadu and 6th column shows the share of Ayothyapatinum block in Salem district. On the whole, the ST's seeks employment below then other communities (MBC, BC and OC) and hence, they are higher in terms of giving works in both Salem district and Ayothyapatinum block which indicates that ST's comparatively seeks more employment their counterparts. Employment gap can be identified by demand for and supply of employment. The data reveals that in Tamil Nadu and Salem district only meager percent of the labourers are identified that they are not getting a job (i.e. 0.22 percent and 0.01 percent respectively) and in Ayothaypattinum taluk is zero employment gaps. This proved the mass success achieved by MGNREGA in terms of employment.

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Self employment generations programe like Integrated Rural Development Programme and Training for Rural Youth in Self Employment Programme had more women beneficiaries; 45 percent (Ann*, 2010). The women get 77.73, 87.94 and 94.03 percents in Tamil Nadu, Salem district and Ayothyapattinum taluk respectively.

The disabled persons have also given a job to below two percent. To emphasis on the community basis, other communities including backward, most backward communities are comparatively getting more employment, followed by SCs and STs. Among the deprived communities, SCs are the major beneficiaries under the scheme. The allocation of employment among social groups varies due to the concentration of settlement in particular social group. Since, the STs in search of employment under MGNREGA is less than others, their ratio of getting employment is comparatively higher than others as could be seen from the above table. In Salem district, during the year 2010-11, there are 2.05 lakh households are provided with employment opportunities to a total workforce of 36.92 lakhs. Total amount allocated for this work is 61.19 crores against the actual expenditure of taken 66 crores during the same period. This ultimately explains the fact that there is a scope for increasing the budget allocation for MGNREGA in this district.

Conclusion

The motto of MGNREGA is providing employment opportunities to the rural unemployed people and securing their livelihoods. At the same time there is a need to under take the rural development – MGNREGA – during off farm season. The roles of panchayat boards are indispensable and hence it should work in a constructive manner. Arena can be inspected via officials to identify the real issues and address them. Due to the inadequacy of the previous – various welfare schemes – the MGNREGA was introduced. Hence, cooperation among the centre – state - local panjayats - workers is essential to make the scheme a mass success.

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RURAL WOMEN PARTICIPATION UNDER MNREGP IN TAMILNADU

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, 2005 (MNREGP), One of the rural development programmes, guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. The Act has come into force with effect from February, 2006 in 200 districts initially and later on extended to all the rural districts of India from the financial year 2008-09.

The Act is an important step towards realization of the right to work. It is also expected to enhance people's livelihood on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. The choice of works seeks to address the causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion. Effectively implemented, the employment guaranteed under the Act has the potential of transforming the geography of poverty. Important salient feature of the Act is to improve the quality of life of rural households who are vulnerable to out-migration in search of daily wage employment by channelizing the wage workforce towards developmental activities at the village level itself.

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Financing Pattern under MNREGP

The Central Government bears:

- The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers
- 75 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers
- Administrative expenses as may be determined by the Central Government. These will include, inter alia, the salary and allowances of Programme Officers and their support staff and work site facilities.
- Administrative expenses of the Central Employment Guarantee Council.

The State Government bears:

- 25 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers unemployment allowance payable in case the State Government cannot provide Wage employment within 15 days of application.
- Administrative expenses of the State Employment Guarantee Council.

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Role of MNREGP in Tamilnadu

In Tamilnadu, with the choices of the work suggested in the act, shelf of projects chosen primarily consists of areas that address causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on a sustainable basis. The works happening in financial year 2009-2010 are flood control, rural connectivity, water conservation and water harvesting, renovation of traditional water bodies, drought proofing, irrigation canals, irrigation facilities to SC/ST, land development, etc.

Comparison of India and Tamilnadu under MNREGP

Employment to households [in Crore]	India		Tamilnadu		% of India figures
	4.49		0.33		7.32%
	No of days [in crore]	Proportion of population	No of days [in crore]	Proportion of population	
Total	216.01		12.04		5.57%
SCs	63.39	29.35%	7.25	60.27%	11.44%
STs	54.78	25.36%	0.21	1.74%	0.38%
Women	103.41	47.87%	9.56	79.67%	9.27%
Others	97.84	45.29%	4.58	37.99%	4.67%

Source: rural.nic.in

Comparison of India and Tamilnadu under MNREGP reveals that the participation of rural women workforce is significant in Tamilnadu (79.67%) while at all India level this figure is just (47.87%). Participation of rural women is delighting but such whopping participation needs a better understanding. Scheduled caste community is primarily involved in MNREGP works. While at all India level participation of SC is 29.35%, SC participation in case of Tamilnadu is very much outstanding with estimates around 61%. Participation of STs is very much discouraging. This figure is a meager 1.74% compared to all India estimates of 25.36%.

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Rural Women Participation under MNREGP

	India	Tamilnadu
Total Person Days (lakhs) 2006-07	9050.56	182.79
Total Women Work Days (lakhs) 2006-07	3679	148.27
Women Share of Total Person Days (percentage) 2006-07	41	82
Total Women Work Days (lakhs) 2009-10	13640.48	1982.6
Women Share of Total Person Days (percentage) 2009-10	48.1	83

Source: rural.nic.in

The above table clearly demonstrates that, in 2009-10, the total women work days of Tamilnadu is around 14.5 percent of the total women work days of India and the women share of total person days is 83 percent in Tamilnadu while India holds 48.1 percent of the women share of total person days.

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Conclusion

The design of MNREGP incorporates a number of features which explicitly tackle some of the challenges women face in the rural economy and women's differential experiences of poverty and vulnerability. The act aims to promote women participation in the workforce through a quota to ensure that at least one-third of all workers who have registered and requested work under the scheme in each state are women. To support women participation, crèche facilities are to be provided by the implementing agency when five or more children below the age of six are brought to the worksite. Women, especially single women, are given preference to work on worksites close to their residence if the worksite is 5km or more away (Ministry of Rural Development, 2008). Due to these sorts of government's concerns, the high amount of participation of rural women in MNREGP has been possible since the inception and it is obvious that Tamilnadu is much successive in providing employment to rural women through MNREGP.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME – THE CHALLENGES

Introduction

Whereas, the Government of India passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (Central Act No.42 of 2005). This Act gives legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work. The Act is applicable in the Districts notified by the Government of India. And whereas, the objective of the Act is to enhance the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment. The choice of works suggested addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion. Effectively implemented, the employment generated under the Act has the potential to transform the geography of rural poverty.

And whereas the implementation of the Act calls for the formulation of Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme by the State Governments. The Scheme so formulated would have to provide for the minimum features specified in Schedule I of the Act and may prescribe conditions, which are without prejudice to the conditions specified in Schedule II of the Act. Accordingly, the Government of has formulated the Scheme called Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to provide not less than one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household in rural areas covered under the Scheme and whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions stipulated in the Act and notified in the Scheme.

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Provisions under NREGA

- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA and is free of cost
- The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates
- Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.
- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses

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- Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notices a wage rate which will not be less than Rs. 60/ per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.

MNREGS- The Challenges

Few employment generation programmes have created as much buzz as the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. the NREGS makes it mandatory for jobseekers to have a job card, for which they have to apply to the Panchayat. The Panchayats in their turn are required to provide applicants with job cards within 15 days. The application for the work and dated receipt act as job trigger mechanism. The system is still rough around the edges with many of the states. Unable to keep pace with the demand for the job cards and provision of the dated receipts.

According to the NREGA website, as on March 2009, out of total 99 million households that demanded employment, the number of households working under NREGA is only 14 million and to cumulative number of households that have completed 100 days of employment is about 4 million. Although there is considerable lag in meeting the set targer, the fact that the NREGA has been able to provide jobs and employment to millions of rural households in some of the poorest states in the country is a major achievement. More significantly, it promises to serve millions of households, especially those who are poor. Many analysts feel that the programme is boosting the purchasing power of the rural poor and it has led to a stable income for the rural population. The most eligible rural families that the NREGA hope to benefit are those of the landless - labours as well as the small and marginal farmers.

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Shortcomings

NREGA, as it currently exists, suffers from a couple of major drawbacks, first, there is no focus on guaranteeing a minimum quality of assets that are sought to be created through the programme. Labour - intensive employment programmes are notorious for creating low-quality output.

It is not surprising that village roads that are built by unskilled under such schemes are often washed away during a heavy downpour. Thus, the entire programme has no lasting value other than providing employment for a specified number of man -days. Second, the emphasis seems to be on providing work opportunities to unskilled labour and no attempt is being made to upgrade the skills of rural youth and enable them to earn more.

NREGA needs to be a support system for the desperately poor and should enable, encourage and empower them to stand on their own feet. In its present format, NREGA could become yet another subsidy programme that runs the risk of becoming a burden on the national exchequer. NREGA offers an opportunity of introducing the target households to a saving and investing culture that has major implications for future economic growth of the country as well as for the financial security of these households.

Conclusion

The NREGA is an important step towards realisation of the right to work. It is expected to enhance people's livelihood security on a sustained basis, by developing economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. One of the most distinguishing features of the NREGA is its approach towards empowering citizens to play an active role in the implementation of employment guarantee schemes, through Gram Sabhas, social audit, participatory planning and other activities. In fact, the huge potential of the NREGA has already been evident particularly in the enthusiastic response of local people, landless and marginal farmers and women workers in particular wherever information about the program has been properly disseminated.

AN ANALYSIS OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed in 2005. According to this act 100 days of work in rural areas becomes a legal right. It ensures social justice and gives an opportunity to create assets in rural areas. The main objective of the Act is to enhance the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment through works that develop the infrastructure of that area.

Certain features of the scheme viz the responsibility for implementation entrusted to panchayats, invoking of social auditing through gram sabhas and the possibility of using the newly enacted Right to Information Act hold promise for minimizing the leakages.

In Tamilnadu the NREGA Scheme was launched in 2006 and was initially implemented in six district viz cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagappattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and villuppuram in the second phase it was implemented in four more districts viz Thjanjavur, Thiruvarur, Thirunelveli and karur from 1.4.2007 onwards. From 1.4.2008 onwards it was extended to the remaining twenty district of the state. The Tamil Nadu State Employment guarantee council has been constituted to monitor and review the implementation of the scheme. In order to ensure efficient monitoring of the scheme through Management Information system, three computers and a printer have been provided to each of the 385 block offices. In 2008-09 computers, printers and computer room facilities have been provided for the block offices of all districts, besides an exclusive telephone and a tax machine.

In order to ensure a total transparency in the implementation of the scheme, the government ordered for the conduct of social Audit. The Social Audit Team exclusively established including 6 MGNEGS workers representing various sections of the society in all village panchayats.

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Profile of the study Area

Thanjavur, one of the 31 districts in Tamil Nadu in South India, is commonly known as the 'Rice Bowl' of the South. The district is situated in the south east coast of Tamil Nadu State. Thanjavur district is part of a highly fertile delta of the cauvery river.

IADP was first introduced in seven districts with a view to stepup agricultural production through scientific methods in intensive cultivation. Thanjavur, one of the first seven districts selected for the introduction of IADP.

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According to 2001 census, the total population is 22,16,138 of which 10,96,638 are males and 11,19,500. The 2001 census reveals that 14.76,256 persons are literate ie 66.61% of population and of which8,14,354 are male and 6,61,902 are females.

The total area of the district is 3396.57 sq.km. The density of population is 652 per sq.km. The total workers in the district are 8,97,123 of which 6,18,471 are male and 2,78,652 are female. The rural workers are 6,48,543 and urban workers are 2, 48,670. The agricultural laborers are 4, 10,718 in the district. In the other categories of workers there are 3,03,477 workers.

In the district there are 3 revenue divisions with 8 revenue taluks and 906 revenue villages. In Thanjavur district there are 3 municipalities, 15 panchayat Unions and 5989 village pauchayats. There are 3 development divisions and 14 blocks in the district.

The following table reveals that blockwise performance of the scheme during the study period.

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TableI

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (Brief)

(Rs. in lakhs)

District	Approved Works		Completed Works		Incompleted	Work in progress		Work yet to begin	Total Expenditure Rs.	% of Expenditure
	Numbers	Estimate Rs.	Number	Expenditure Rs.		Number	Expenditure Rs.			
Thanjavur	48	101.20	42	91.93	6	6	3.06	0	94.99	94
Budalur	27	37.68	25	42.92	2	2	6.18	0	49.10	130
Thiruvaiyaru	45	53.13	0	0	45	44	37.27	1	37.27	70
Orathanadu	97	164.17	53	71.21	44	44	60.70	0	131.91	80
Thiruvonam	110	126.88	78	73.28	32	25	39.71	7	112.99	89
Kumbakonam	45	78.48	8	17.96	37	36	19.16	1	37.12	47
Thiruvidaimarudur	34	91.00	32	96.87	2	1	2.45	1	99.32	109
Thirupandal	35	75.96	16	19.44	19	8	12.51	11	31.95	42
Papanasam	23	60.78	21	57.06	2	2	6.13	0	63.19	104
Ammapet	63	108.41	57	86.33	6	5	10.28	1	96.61	89
Pattukottai	125	187.61	50	48.65	75	75	81.59	0	130.24	69
Madukur	65	162.47	45	99.68	20	20	30.64	0	130.32	80
Peravurani	36	68.98	31	52.91	5	5	10.49	0	63.40	92
Sethupavachatram	90	161.23	51	73.94	39	39	40.68	0	114.62	71

Source: Records of DRDA, Thanjavur.

The table portrays that in Thanjavur district 14 blocks are functioning and the program MGNREGP has been implemented in all blocks.

The highest work is allotted to Pattukottai block followed by Thiruvonam block of 125 and 110 respectively and least is allotted to Papanasam (23).

Poor work status is noticed in Thiripandal, where 11 works are yet be started following in Thuruvonam with 7 works to be started.

Among the total blocks, 8 blocks have completed their allotted work and the remaining are yet to completed their scheduled work.

The percentage column of expenditure reveals that the expenditure has exceeded the standard outlay fixed for many blocks like Budalur, Papanasam and Thiruvidaimarudur.

The following table explains the working of MGREG scheme in Madukkur Block

Table II

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in Madukkur Block

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Work details	Approved works		Completed works		Incomplete	Work in progress		Work yet to begin	Total expenditure Rs.	% of expenditure
		Number	Estimate Rs.	Number	Expenditure Rs.		Number	Expenditure Rs.			
2007-08	Formation of roads	33	111.60	29	95.07	4	4	6.21	-	101.28	90.75
	Canals	8	24.00	8	23.27	0	-	-	-	23.27	96.96
	Cleaning of tanks	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	--
2008-09	Formation of roads	2	8.04	2	7.90	0	-	-	-	7.90	98.26
	Canals	27	81.64	27	78.96	0	0	0	-	78.96	96.72
	Cleaning of tanks	27	115.14	22	90.18	5	5	12.79	0	102.97	89.43
2009-10	Formation of roads	13	48	11	40.30	2	2	5.93	-	46.23	96.31
	Canals	13	42	7	20.44	6	6	14.61	-	35.05	83.45
	Cleaning of tanks	14	50	11	40.09	3	3	6.20	-	46.29	92.58
2010-11	Formation of roads	28	97.50	4	11.82	24	17	15.83	7	27.65	28.36
	Canals	33	111.00	6	18.82	27	16	33.73	11	52.55	47.34
	Cleaning of tanks	41	145.30	13	39.41	28	12	24.83	16	64.24	44.21

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Source: Records of DRDA, Thanjavur.

The role of MGNREGP is shown in the above table with reference to Madukkur block of Thanjavur district. An equal concentration is given to all works i.e. Road formation, canals and tank cleaning.

The total number of works allotted to this block is 239 with an estimated outlay of Rs.834.72 lakhs, when this is compared with Ammapettai block it shows a very poor work status.

The finished work numbers to only 140 with a cost of Rs.454.44 lakhs and the work which is still in progress is 99 and work to be commenced counts to 34.

The following table explains the working of MGREG scheme in Ammapet Block.

Table III

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in Ammapet Block

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Work details	Approved works		Completed works		Incomplete	Work in progress		Work yet to begin	Total expenditure Rs.	% of expenditure
		Number	Estimate Rs.	Number	Expenditure Rs.		Number	Expenditure Rs.			
2007-08	Formation of roads	23	74.69	22	60.66	1	1	2.65	-	63.31	85
	Canals	42	143.35	42	139.55	0	0	0	-	139.55	97
	Cleaning of tanks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2008-09	Formation of roads	20	62.98	18	55.40	2	1	2.77	1	58.17	92
	Canals	26	78.71	26	78.49	0	0	0	-	78.49	100
	Cleaning of tanks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009-10	Formation of roads	4	12.20	3	7.51	1	1	2.10	0	9.61	79
	Canals	38	115.08	36	109.64	2	2	5.40	0	115.04	100
	Cleaning of tanks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010-11	Formation of roads	19	62.05	3	9.50	16	10	22.16	6	31.66	51
	Canals	60	209.31	25	88.94	35	31	71.64	4	160.58	77
	Cleaning of tanks	17	53.71	-	0	17	9	14.72	8	14.72	27

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Source: Records of DRDA, Thanjavur.

In this block importance in given for canal works, since it is an agriculture based block.

The total approved work for the block was 249 with an estimated cost of Rs.812.26 lakhs actual completed work and cost is 175 and Rs.549.69 lakhs, still 74 works have to be completed with 55 work in progress and 19 yet to be started.

The analysis of two blocks shows the progress of the scheme. The performance of the scheme creates awareness among the rural poor and assets creation also takes place.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUSTAINBALE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME.

Introduction

Economics uses the resources in the process of satisfying human wants. Economic development of a country depends on scientific utilization of scarce resources with the help of improved technology, so that society can be provided with better living conditions.

Economics, studies the cost of exploiting resources in the environment and the consequent benefit arising to the society at large with the increase in population and development of science and technology, the environmental resources are over exploited, leading to the imbalance in the eco system. Much more than this there is the pollution of the environment leading to more of ill fare, rather than welfare.

Objectives of the study

1. To Study the economic functions of environment
2. To study how economic functions affects environment
3. To study ecological balance and sustainable development.
4. To study how sustainable development. Can be brought through National rural Employment Guarantee programme.

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Ecological balance and sustainable development

There must be proper tradeoff between economic development and exploitation of resources without impairing the ecological balance. The reconciliation of interest between economic development and ecological balance has become imperative. For this there should be a reorientation of economic policies and principles in the context of ecological principles and development. The academicians of these two disciples (i.e.) Economics and Ecology should adopt the principle of co-existence with disciplined interaction between economic development and ecological balance. Otherwise a day will come when the living beings on earth will be doomed to perish, for want of good air, water and food. Hence there is need for integrating economics with environmental principles.

There are efforts all over the country to develop agro-forestry projects. Which address some of the fundamental ecological problems in an integrated manner. They provide opportunities for horticulture, water conservation, energy development, tree plantation floriculture, soil regeneration and similar projects in an integrated ecological planning for environmental sustainability. The task of integrating economics and ecology is formidable, as the resources are limited the problems complex and the time limited. What is needed is a vision of renewed ecological integrity, planning and use of technologies which not only protect the ecological system but which also enhance environmental quality.

The present environment crises are consequences of past polices of greed, colonial exploitation and domination. These have led to despair, deprivation, disease, disaster and probable doom. The present

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exigency demands acquiring the basic wisdom of nature and to use economic tools to follow the laws and learn to manage according to principles of nature. Economics should converse nature for future. Economists should bring environment values into economic decisions.

Therefore a sustainable development is needed in the economic functions in satisfying needs of the people. A sustainable development aims at reducing the absolute poverty of the world's poor by providing lasting and secure livelihoods that minimize resource depletion, cultural disruption and social instability.

The National Rural Employment guarantees programme and sustainable development.

As a matter of equity and fairness, the rural poor do need some kind of safety net. The national rural employment guarantee act 2005 provides enhancement of live hood security of the households in rural areas of he country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Minimum features of a Employment guarantee scheme

i. Water conservation and water harvesting
ii. Drough proofing
iii. Irrigation canals including micro irrigation
iv. Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the scheduled casts and scheduled tribes.
v. Renovation of traditional water bodies
vi. Land development
vii. Flood control and protection works including drainage in water lagged areas.
viii. Rural connectivity to provide all weather access.

Prime Minister Mr.Manmohan Singh has called for urgent action to respond to the drought situation created by deficient monsoon this year.

Potential benefits of National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme are

i. Gives bargaining power to the labor
ii. Protects rural poor households from poverty and hunger through providing 100 days of employment during non-agricultural season in the financial year.
iii. Provides priority to women to cover at least one third of the beneficiaries.
iv. Guaranteed employment would lead to a significant reduction in rural – urban migration, particularly men, which has direct impact of women's workload.
v. Provides means for organizing unorganized women work force (*60%) and strengthen their bargaining power in the labor market and empowering women.
vi. The work carried out under this program satisfies the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development.

It is the national rural employment guarantee scheme which has provided us with a mechanism to overcome this situation. The government has decided to extend this scheme by allowing coverage of jobs in small and marginal farmers and if they add to their productive capacity. A case can be made to further extend it to privately owned land, if it helps to increase irrigation facilities, water development projects or constructing ponds in private farmer areas. NREGS can thus become a very effective instrument in planned development, creating jobs and purchasing power for the millions of unskilled and semi-skilled people in rural areas. This Natural Rural Employment guarantee programme is the Eco-friendly environment programme.

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GENDER AND PRODUCTIVE ASSETS: IMPLICATIONS OF NREGA FOR WOMEN'S AGENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Introduction

In recent years, India has achieved a remarkable drop in poverty levels. The public investments in India in rural areas have significantly contributed to agricultural growth, improvement in real wages and non-farm employment (K. Sundaram 2007; Hirway, 2006; and Nathan, Reddy and Kelkar, 2008). It is further noted that with the globalized production, there has been an increase in the demand for skilled labour for development of infrastructure. But, along with a decline in poverty, there have also been persistent and growing inequalities (in both income and non-income dimensions) in key countries of Asia: China and India, accounting for 40 per cent of the world's poor, with a significant majority of women among them. Women and the poor have been prevnted from participating fully in the growth that did occur since the early 1990s (Jenkins and Micklewright, 2007). Inequality in China (measured by the Gini co-efficient) has reached 0.472 by 2004, as against 0.469 in the USA in 2005. This is more than India's 0.36 in 2004 and the EU's 0.31 in 2005. (Gini figures from Eloi Laurent, 2007).

With the increasing feminization of agricultural work in China and India, contemporary rural urban inequality in these countries is a matter of gender inequality. Women agricultural workers are frequently discriminated against in their livelihood security, education and autonomy (Montes and Linder, 2007; Kelkar, 2007). One of the liberating effects of globalization is that it at least partially frees individuals (such as women, Dalits and ethnic minorities) from their traditional holds – the family hierarchy, community governance, and caste rules. However, globalization is also a threat, especially to traditional ways of livelihoods. The ability of excluded groups of women and men to use the prospective opportunities that globalization offers "depends on their being included in newer ways of earning and living, such as new goods to produce, new skills and new techniques of production, and so on (Sen, 2003: 28).
The concept of poverty has been defined in terms of social exclusion and lack of capabilities, and "encompasses more than conventional income-based measures of poverty and inequality" (Jenkins and Micklewright, 2007: 7).

Many of the feminist economist analyses have further demonstrated that households and individual well-being are not necessarily the same, that individuals living in the same household may have very different control over the household income and assets (Rao,2006, Deere and Das,2006). The lack of control over income and assets shows how economic inequality accumulated over the life course of individuals, impacts on women's lower wages and cripples their economic agency and decision making to manage and innovate

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with assets. Lack of ownership and control rights to productive assets is increasingly being linked to negative development outcomes, specifically in relation to gender inequality and inclusive economic growth. However, relatively little research has been done on the gendered distribution of productive assets and to determine how intra-household asset distribution affects women's economic security, limits their empowerment and impacts productivity.

This study is an attempt at drawing policy attention to the complex interrelationship between gender relations and income and productive assets, through an analysis of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (henceforth NREGA). NREGA is both income redistribution and asset creation.

The major question is:

- **What has been the policy component in NREGA for overcoming gender discrimination and inequality which is a fundamental feature of Asian systems of employment and production?**

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NREGA: A Public Wage Programme with Right to Employment

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was passed in 2005 with the objectives: provide work at remunerative wages for landless labourers and marginal farmers; and create assets for raising agricultural productivity. The act became effective at the state level in February 2006 in 200 districts, guaranteeing employment up to 100 days a year to poor rural households on demand. By March 2008, NREGA was expanded to cover all rural districts in the country. Significantly, NREGA is a rights-based programme, unlike earlier employment schemes. The rights of NREGA workers include employment on demand, minimum wages, gender parity of wages, and payment of wages within 15 days, as well as the provision of basic worksite facilities, among others. There is a legal guarantee of 100 days employment in a financial year to a registered household. That the government is legally bound to provide employment within 15 days of the application for work by a job seeker; in case of delay or failure to provide employment to the job seeker, there is provision of unemployment allowance. That a person seeking such employment is to be registered with the Gram Panchayat (village administration council); after due verification, the household is to be provided a job card.

Gendered Participation in NREGA Programme: Change and Continuity

The official data indicate an impressive number of women's participatin in NREGA works. In July 2008, at the all- India level women's employment as a percentage of total employment in NREGA works was 40 per cent (www.nrega.nic.in on 17 July 2008, also see Jandu, 2008: 2). The leading states in women's participation are Tamil Nadu with 82 per cent, Kerala 71 per cent and Rajasthan 69 per cent. The effects of such participation in NREGA employment can be summed up in the following two statements: Bhagwati of Gram Panchayat Khaira in Rajnandgaon District of Chhattisgarh, said, "Before NREGA we were forced to work as agricultural labourers or casual labourers in brick kilns for Rs. 25 to 30 per day. But under NREGA we are getting Rs. 62 to 64 per day, more than double, which is almost an unexpected amount for us," (Jandu, 2008: 4).

Importantly, the star performer Rajasthan has a recent history of civil society engagement with ocial audits and Rights to Information. Against the backdrop of people's awareness, when NREGA was launched in Rajasthan, a large number of women (who have studied class 5- 8) but trained as 'mates', (worksite supervisors). In many worksites, mates were reported to have formed groups; and "most mates knew about the task required to earn the minimum wage" (Khera, 2008: 4). Another high performer state is Tamil Nadu. A social audit in Tamil Nadu found than 95 percent of women employees stated that it was their own decision to undertake work under NREGA; 73 percent of them "felt that NREGA work is very important for the economic wellbeing of their households"; and "70 percent of them kept all or part of the wages" (Narayanan, 2008: 11). Kudumbasree, a sub set of Panchayat, provides useful lessons in implementation of NREGA programme. Under Kudumbasree every household below poverty line is organized into a Neighborhood Group (NHG) at the local level consisting of 15 to 40 households, with each household being represented only by a woman. These NHGs help in better achievement NREGA schemes. For example, a systematic effort is made at promotion of transparency, explaining the nature of work, expected out turn, and the likely wages when the work is under taken (Vijayananda and Jithendra, 2008: Vijaykumar and Thomas, 2008, Abraham, 2008).

Studies report a drastic reduction in distress migration of women and men, as a result of available NREGA employment in their villages (Jha, Gaiha, Shankar, 2008; Ambasta, Shankar, Shah, 2008). In Jharkhand, one of the worst performing states in NREGA, it was observed that "the transition to a rights-based framework has led to a major decline in labor exploitation on rural public works. Wages are higher than they used to be, delays in wage payment are shorter, productivity norms are more reasonable, and complaints of worksite harassment are rare. NREGA is a valuable and valued opportunity for the rural poor, and particularly for women, to earn a living wage in a dignified manner", (Dreze, The Hindu, 19th July 2008).

Importantly, a majority of the women workers under NREGA programme say that such employment has brought a significant change in their communities and in their own lives; the NREGA wages are higher than the market wages and it has improved their spending capacity. Women are able to use their earnings for household food and consumption needs, healthcare and education of children. More important, earlier they "used to be dependent on their husbands for any expenses", but now with some cash in their hands, women have greater degree of economic independence and self- confidence, "feel empowered", as they are also earning members of the family (Jandu, 2008: 5). In many worksites, women have control rights to their wages in bank deposits. A 2008 NREGA Survey showed that 79% of women employees in NREGA works collect their own wages, and 68% keep their own wages (FRONTLINE, 2009:13).

NREGA implementation needs to learn from the earlier gender analysis of the Employment Guarantee Scheme in the state of Maharashtra – that employment and income opportunities represent important economic gains for women, but they do not automatically lead to a change in the gendered position of women (Krishnaraj, Pandey and Kanchi, 2004). A Roundtable on National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme noted the need of understanding factors that determine women's participation in labour based

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programmes, such as paying attention to flexibility in timing and location of work (ILO,2005:48-50). In other words, NREGA implementation needs to take account of women's household responsibilities, particularly childcare, appropriate time of work when children are at school, location of work near the home.

Gender is not a sub set of decentralization

Surprisingly, under NREGA the household is interpreted as a nuclear family and may include any person substantially dependent on the head of the family. The continuity of local patriarchal norms comes in their way; the concept of household head is interpreted to women's disadvantage and exclusion from seeking work for livelihood. Gender sensitivity and women's voice are essential in creation of public productive assets, such as construction of water harvesting structures, infrastructure facilities and regeneration of tree covers, common lands etc

Researchers have made the link between gender-based inequalities in land, capital and education and their adverse impact on women's ability to make use of opportunities afforded by economic development (World Bank, 2001; Dollar and Gatti, 1999; Kelkar and Nathan, 2003 and 2005; Agarwal, 1994; Rao, 2008, Tran Thi Que, 2000). Quisimbing and Maluccio (2003) used recall methods to collect data on assets brought to marriage. In all four cases, men brought more assets or wealth to marriage than women. This asset difference reflected on women's inequalities within marriage throughout the life cycle, in terms of women's limited access to information on new technologies, agricultural extension, preventing diseases of farm animals, and so on. This, in turn, limits the efficiency and revenues from agricultural activities, which are carried out mainly by women and may result in low household income.

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Economic Rights and Security

A recent ILO study observes that economic security is worsened by the fact that policies and institutions do not realize that promoting of women's control rights to incomes and resources would help boost growth and development. This is one of the 'main forms of gender inequality across the world' (ILO, 2004: p. 86) and systematically neglected in social policy and income statistics. In Asia, 'a large proportion of women are not able to retain their earned income – over 40 per cent in Bangladesh, over 40 per cent in Gujarat and over 70 per cent in Indonesia'. With regard to control over the way, their income is spent, in China 57 percent of women reported that they have "greater control than their husband on daily expenditure items. However, on bigger items, only 7 percent of the wives have the greater control of the decisions" (Bao, 2002, quoted in MacPhail and Dong, 2006:33). In South Asia, far fewer women could make their decisions, Furthermore, discriminatory barriers and socio-cultural rigidities remain the major reasons blocking women from obtaining effective control of property, assets and resources and restricting their mobility within workplace or employment / self employment structures.

Women's ownership and control rights to productive assets (both collective and household based) can not only lead to higher and better quality production. It can enable them to have voice in the community governance, planning for creation of productive assets and exercise control over use of household income

for the well-being of themselves and other members of the household. It can also benefit women by being associated with a reduction in violence. Recent studies in India and other countries, have estimated the costs of domestic violence against women. This cost includes the direct economic loss experienced by the individual (such as through absence from paid work and/or lost productivity, expenses related to physical and mental health care, lost lifetime earnings due to disability, etc.), government's costs through its health and social sector expenses, the criminal justice system, employer and third-party expenses. The India study showed that domestic violence against women can push economically fragile households into economic crisis (UNIFEM, 2005). An earlier study in India (UNIFEM 2003) estimated that women lost, on average, five working days after an incident of violence. Violence against women also has personal and social effects, besides the calculable economic costs. It is a question of women's agency, very much needed for better outcomes from international trade.

NREGA programme throughout the country has to be backed up with unmediated asset management by women; a process to enhance agricultural management skills and knowledge; a wide spread gender sensitization of rural institutions through information and communication technologies, which would help in developing the social understanding of women as workers, farmers and economic contributors. In other words, women's unmediated control rights to productive assets created under NREGA, new technologies and management skills are most likely to provide them and their households a livelihood with equality and dignity. At the same time, this is a stronger measure in overcoming poverty and social inequality.

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Effective Policy Framework

In identifying an effective policy framework related to guaranteed employment and gendered distribution of productive assets, it is important to draw attention to some distinct issues that may otherwise be neglected in more conventional measures of poverty reduction and inclusive growth. The three particularly important issues for policy consideration include: **first**, an understanding of the changing nature of women's productive work in agriculture and the unorganized/informal sector; **second**, the economic implications of gender asset inequality in India; and, **third**, a priority of context specific policy change and control rights to land, trees, water bodies, and other productive assets. These should also include measures to monitor and assess success, including trends indicative of the scale of change in institutional barriers against rural women in implementation of policies.

Undoubtedly, employment under NREGA in creation of productive assets has improved self-worth and self- perception of workers (women or men) apart from monetary benefits. However, there is absence of any organized attempt by the state to improve mandated measures of women's economic empowerment and their voice in governance, as stated in the 11th Five Year plan. With control rights to wage income and management of productive assets, women are likely to have greater prestige in the household and community. They are thus likely to determine the use of their income, which is what Amartya Sen's (1990) theory of household bargaining as cooperative conflict would predict. They are able to direct more of the household income towards improvement of their own economic agency as well as education and nutrition of children.

That equal rights to productive assets of women with those of men, can lead to greater economic activity, change in the perception of dependence on men, and thus result in substantially reducing exclusion of women from social processes and promote development of diverse capabilities, thereby enhancing productivity and reducing inequality.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN INDIA UNDER RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MGNREGP

I. Preamble:

In the recent past the Rural Development Ministry concentrated on various aspects (programmes) related to enhance the employment generation like wage employment and self employment programmes among the rural poor in the developing countries. In this view the primary self employment programmes which were introduced in the late 1970s and early 1980s such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment (TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Supply of Improved Tool-kits for Rural Artisans (SITRA), Million Wells Scheme (MWS) and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY). However the above programmes were merged on 1st April 1999 and a new self employment programme has been introduced under the banner of Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana, popularly known as SGSY.

In the present situation the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislations enacted since independence. Its significance is evident from a variety of issues. First, it is a bold and unique experiment in the provision of rural employment – in India and indeed in the world at large. Second, it is the first expression of the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement. In a country where labour is the only economic asset for millions of people, gainful employment is a prerequisite for the fulfillment of other basic rights – the right to life, the right to food, and the right to education.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act now renamed Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, guarantees 100 days of employment at the state's minimum wage. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) enacted in 2005 with the objective of enhancing the live hood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Now the question arises how far the MGNEGA is helpful in achieving full employment

The overall quality and durability of the assets built through the Program is limited because of the limited capacity to supervise the public works (i.e. limited number of staff and limited technical skills), the lack of long-term incentives and resources for operation and maintenance, and the poor quality of the construction materials. In this view the major objectives of the program as follows.

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NREGA:

- To enhance livelihood securities through the provision of minimum 100 days of employment to a rural household based on their demand
- To create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor
- Strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing a fall-back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate
- Growth engine for sustainable development of an agricultural economy
- Empowerment of rural poor through the processes of a rights-based law
- New ways of doing business, as a model of governance reform anchored on the principles of transparency and grass root democracy.

II. Research Issues and Gaps:

After reviewed the previous literature some research gap found by the researcher are as follows. Various studies concentrated on the important issues like significance of the program, role of government (central and state) in the program, productive assets, generate the employment and labour issues. In addition some of the studies focused on the role of NREGA under poverty alleviation in the country. Moreover few studies concentrated on the employment growth rate and poverty alleviation of the country. In addition to this few studies pointed out that the role of public expenditure and its importance of the rural poor. But all of the previous studies explained in the various dimension but only limited studies available in the following aspects such as to find out the relationship between the total expenditure and total wages under the program between the period of 2006-2009 and theoretical background of the program (objectives, features and significance) also discussed.

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III. Objectives and Methodology:

In this section clearly focused on the primary objectives and methodology of the present study. In this connection the present research paper based on the following objectives. (i) role of rural development programmes in particularly MGNREGP, features and significance of the programme and (ii) the trend of expenditure and wages disbursed under the programme, to explain the employment generation under the programme and what are the problems faced for the people under the programme?.

The study mainly depends on secondary data and the study period is 2006-2009. Secondary sources collected from books, reputed journals, newspapers and internet sources. In addition to this the researcher has pointed out some of the observations of the program in the rural areas. Additionally the researcher has used statistical tools like correlation, percentage and average. In particularly the correlation result derived from the statistical software SPSS 15th version.

IV. Analysis and Conclusion:

The present section dealt with the analysis and conclusion of the present study. In this view the present section analyzed the concepts like amount spent on wages, total expenditure, number of districts

established in the program and provided employment opportunity under the NREGA of the household in the country. In this connection the following table 5.1 clearly shows that the trend of amount spent on wages and total expenditure under the program between the study periods of 2006 – 2009.

Table – 1

Total Expenditure / Wages Disbursed under MGNREGA in India

Year	Amount Spent on Wages (Rs. In Crores)	Total Expenditure (Rs. In Crores)
2006-07	5842.37 (14)	8823.35 (5)
2007-08	10738.47 (26)	15856.89 (9)
2008-09	18165.57 (44)	134582.29 (80)
2009-2010 (Upto August 13, 2009)	6314.86 (16)	8561.65 (6)
Total	**41061.27 (100)**	**167824.18 (100)**
Correlation:0.058		

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

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The above table clearly shows that the trend of total expenditure / wages disbursed under MGNREGA in India during the period from 2006 – 07 to 2009-2010. In the study period (2006-2009) the wage disbursed amount increased. On the other hand the total expenditure also increased in the above study period. In addition to this the relationship between the wages and expenditure (correlation: 0.058) between the study period which is significant. Moreover the following table 5.2 shows that employment provided to households under MGNREGA in India during the study period.

Table –2

Employment Provided to Households under MGNREGA in India

Year	No. of Districts	Employment Provided (In Crores)
2006-2007	200	2.10
2007-2008	330	3.39
2008-2009	615	4.51
2009-2010	619	5.25
2010-2011	619	1.79
Employment Provided (average)		**3.408**

Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi.

The above table illustrates that the positive growth of the program established in the various districts of India. On the other hand provided the employment is increased in the year 2006 – 2010. But it could declined to 1.79 crores in the year 2010 – 11 due to the various reasons like natural disaster, lack of interest and wage fluctuations. Moreover 3.408 crores (average) people got the employment opportunity under the program in India.

Conclusion:

Based on the above analysis, the study concluded that the performance of NREGA or MGNREGA has not been uniformly successful due to the researcher observation. The main reason because lack of awareness, inability of workers to submit written (job) applications and delayed payment of wages. On the other hand the present study pointed out the employment generation is well but it should inversely affect in the agricultural sector directly. Moreover the selected variables like wages and expenditure also denoted as significant. In this view, NREGA signals a possible reshaping of state priorities in India through a democratic determination to provide real livelihood opportunities for the rural poor. Shortly states that it combined with to food and education should help erase India's image as the land of poor, hungry and illiterate.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME - A PERSPECTIVE STUDY ON THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is a historical step taken to provide guaranteed employment to the rural people. Providing employment to the rural people is the main objective of this Act. Although, the people had wage employment programmes like NREP, RLEGP, EAS, JGSY, JRY etc., but NREGA was enacted in September 2005. Later, the scheme was renamed as "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme" by the central government and the scheme was made effect from 2nd February 2006.

In the first phase, the scheme was introduced in District Chamba and Sirmour on 2006. In second phase, it was started in District Kangra and Mandi in 2007 onwards. Initially, the scheme was implemented under the banner of NREGA scheme has been launched in 200 most backward districts in India with the objective of providing minimum 100 guaranteed employment days to the unskilled rural people for each rural household. In 2007 and 2008 the scheme was further extended to 330 more districts. The Scheme has been in operation since from 1st April 2008 in the remaining districts in India.

Dr. Jean Drèze, a Belgian born economist, at the Delhi School of Economics, has been a major influence on this scheme. The Act directs state governments to implement "MNREGA schemes". Under the MGNREGA, the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments should meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF MGNREGS

The following image shows the key processes in the implementation of the scheme:

1. Cost sharing: Government : 3/4th, State Government : 1/4th
2. Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with photo to the Panchayat / programme officer.
3. The Panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his/her photo.

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4. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to Panchayat or to Programme Officer.
5. The Panchayat / programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicantand also displayed at Panchayat office.
6. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5km: if it is above 5km extra wage will be paid.
7. If employment under the scheme is not provided within fifteen days of receipt of the application daily unemployment allowance will be paid to the applicant.

PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGS IN INDIA

1. MGNREGS is the guaranteed employment scheme at an unprecedented wage rate. The primary objective is augmenting wage employment. Its auxiliary objective is strengthening natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion and to encourage sustainable development. The process outcomes include strengthening grassroots processes of democracy and infusing transparency and accountability in governance.
2. The scheme is also an important one for strengthening decentralization and deepening processes of democracy by giving a pivotal role to the Panchayats in planning, monitoring and implementation. Unique features of the scheme include, time bound employment guarantee and wage payment within 15 days, incentive-disincentive structure to the State Governments for providing employment as 90 percent of the cost for employment provided is borne by the Centre or payment of unemployment allowance at their own cost and emphasis on labour intensive works prohibiting the use of contractors and machinery. The scheme also mandates 33 percent participation for women. Over the last two years, implementation trends vindicate the basic objective of the scheme.
3. In 2007-2008, 3.39 crore households were provided employment and 143.5 crore person days were generated in 330 districts. In 2008-2009, upto July, 253 crore households have been provided employment and 85.29 crore person days have been generated.
4. The enhanced wage earnings have lead to strengthening of the livelihood resources base of the rural poor in India; in 2007-2008, more than 68% of funds utilized were in the form of wages paid to the labourers. In 2008-2009, 73% of the funds have been utilized in the form of wages.
5. Self-targeting in nature, the scheme has high works participation of marginalized groups like SC/ST (57%), women (43%) in 2007-2008, In 2008-2009, up to July, the participation is SC/ST (54%) and women (49%) Strengthening Natural Resources Base of Rural India: In 2007-08, 17.88 lakh works have been undertaken, of which 49% were related to water conservation. In 2008-2009 up to July, 16.88 lakh works have been undertaken, of which 49% are related to water conservation.
6. The Central government has been encouraging the state governments to make wage payment through bank and post office accounts of wage seekers. Thus far, 2.9 crore (up to July'08) NREGA approved bank and post office accounts have been opened to disburse wages.
7. Initial evidence through independent studies indicates enhancement of agricultural productivity (through water harvesting, check dams, ground water recharging, improve moisture content, check in soil

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erosion and micro-irrigation), stemming of distress migration, increased access to markets and services through rural

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE SCHEME

1. The Ministry has set up a comprehensive monitoring system. For effective monitoring of the projects 100% verification of the works at the Block level, 10% at the District level and 2% at the State level inspections need to be ensured.
2. In order to optimize the multiplier effects of the scheme, the Ministry has set up a Task Force to look at the possibility of convergence of programmes like National Horticulture Mission, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Bharat Nirman, Watershed Development with MGNRGES.
3. These convergence efforts will add value to MGNRGES, works and aid in creating durable efforts and also enable planned and coordinated public investments in rural areas.

PRESENT SCENARIO OF MGNREGS IN TAMILNADU

As per the government report (2010), the following are the particulars of the scheme implemented in Tamilnadu:

Employment provided to households	– 54.69975 Lakhs
Person days [in Lakh]	
Total	– 1990.89
SCs	– 596.83 (29.98%)
STs	– 23.41 (1.18%)
Women	– 1527.4 (76.72%)
Others	– 1370.65 (68.85%)
Total fund	– 1613.07 Crore
Expenditure	– 1637.02 Crore
Total works taken up	– 1,12,418
Works completed	– 77
Works in progress	– 1,12,341

MGNREGS IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

Employment provided to households	– 1.19732 Lakh
Person days [in Lakh]	
Total	– 46.11
SCs	– 15.19 (32.95%)
STs	– 0.19 (0.4%)
Women	– 38.62 (83.77%)
Others	– 30.73 (66.65%)

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Total fund	–	Rs. 59.32 Crore
Expenditure	–	42.16 Crore
Total works taken up	–	2,517
Works completed	–	0
Works in progress	–	2,517

CONCLUSION

From the above-mentioned statistical information regarding the implementation of scheme, it is observed that the total works taken for the scheme is not yet completed and there was only 77 works were completed. The rest of the works are in progress. Moreover, it is quite clear that the progress found in the scheme is somewhat low, because of various distinctive reasons found among the rural people. The reasons may be due to the poor wage rate, working hours etc. Even in some areas, the programme officers or members of the Panchayats do favour for their well-wishers. This favouritism makes other people to develop improper attitude towards the scheme. Hence, there may be revision of the wage rates as per the present day cost of living. Effective monitoring and supervision should be made to the scheme.

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TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL LIVELIHOOD: THE POTENTIAL AND CHALLENGES OF MGNREGS

Introduction

Independent India has witnessed implementation of a number of centrally sponsored programmes focusing on the welfare of the people and overall progress of the nation. Since India is a union of states, the states have also launched a host of schemes independently and implemented in association with the centre keeping in mind the welfare of the people at large. For example, Anaithu Grama Anna Marumalarchi Thittam and the Namakku Naame Thittam are the two major rural development programmes being implemented in Tamil Nadu as state sponsored programmes. India's strong rural base with 72.2 percent of the population residing in rural parts of the country as per 2001 census makes the policy makers to formulate a programme exclusively for the benefit of the rural people. Latest estimates show that 65 percent of India's population is residing in rural areas at present. The population of India as recorded at each decennial census from 1901 has grown steadily except for a decrease during 1911-21.

India's population as on 1 March 2001 stood at 1,028 million (532.1 million males and 496.4 million females). India accounts for a meager 2.4 per cent of the world surface area of 135.79 million sq km. Yet, it supports and sustains a whopping 16.7 per cent of the world population. The population of India, which at the turn of the twentieth century was around 238.4 million, increased to reach 1,028 million at the dawn of the twenty-first century. India, by her sustained efforts, has attained a substantial magnitude of development. However, the dark side of this development is that the rural areas could not keep pace with the urban areas for various reasons.

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Importance of Wage Employment Programmes

Wage employment programmes, an important component of the anti-poverty strategy, have sought to achieve multiple objectives. They not only provide employment opportunities during lean agricultural seasons but also in times of floods, droughts and other natural calamities. They create rural infrastructure, which support further economic activity. These programmes also put an upward pressure on market wage rates by attracting people to public works programmes, thereby reducing labour supply and pushing up demand for labour. Such an assurance would ensure 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 households, these programmes have become a significant vehicle for strengthening grassroot level democratic processes. Employment generation programmes in India continue to be one of the major interventions aimed at alleviating rural poverty.

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The MNGREA and Its Relevance

Integrated and balanced development of rural areas is one of the abiding tasks before the Government of India. The National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) of the Central government reiterates the cardinal importance of villages to the overall development of the country and commits to work towards development of rural areas, which for various reasons could not keep pace with urban areas in the past. In conformity with this commitment of the Government of India, the Ministry of Rural Development accords foremost priority to development in rural areas, eradication of poverty and hunger from the face of rural India. A number of initiatives have been taken in the recent years for creation of social and economic infrastructure in rural areas to bridge the rural-urban divide as well as to provide food security and fulfill other basic needs of the rural populace. Over a period of time, the government of India visualizes a transformation in the lives of people, rural as well as urban, so that the progress, if any, is meaningful, inclusive and egalitarian.

Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, a landmark legislation enacted to ensure social security after independence, is yet another effort very much different from the earlier attempts aiming at enhancing the livelihood security of people in the rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is different from the earlier programmes. Apart from being a guaranteed employment programme, it is one of the largest rights based social protection initiatives ever attempted in the world. This programme treats employment as a right and is intended to be demand driven. With its rights based framework, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is considered to be a paradigm shift from all other development programmes that were supply led. In making efforts towards achieving inclusive growth in India, the enactment of MGNREGA that guarantees employment and treats employment as a right is considered as a partial success towards a full fledged right to employment in a developing country like India. This landmark legislation has brought in a silent revolution in the Indian villages which have remained more or less neglected so far.

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Potentials of MGNRES

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has inherent potential to transform rural India suffering from chronic unemployment. This scheme assures 100 days of unskilled manual work to a rural household who volunteers to do such work during a financial year. Providing opportunities of employment is in consonance with the Directive Principles of State Policy which lay down that the state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, social order in which social justice, economic and political freedom shall inform all the institutions of national life. This benefits the vulnerable sections of the rural people comprising landless laborers, women workers and marginal workers.

The growth of rural population and the growth of rural labour force together have taken away whatever is achieved in India. This necessitates the fact that the problems of rural people need to be looked upon afresh and a separate programme entirely different from the earlier ones has to be implemented to make the growth process meaningful, inclusive, egalitarian and democratic. The chief characteristic of rural labour force is that a major segment of it is either unskilled or semi skilled which is the reason behind severity in the incidence of unemployment in rural areas. The Indian unemployment scenario reveals that the rural unemployment has increased at an annual growth rate of 0.58 percent between 1994-1995 and 1999-2000 while the growth of labour force was much higher. The incidence of unemployment prevailing in the urban areas of our country is the result of rural labour force migrating to the urban centres in search of opportunities of employment. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been found very effective in checking rural migration in a big way. As per the report released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation titled Migration in India 2007-2008, migration of households in both the rural and urban areas was dominated by the migration of households from rural areas. In a study conducted by Anandharaja Kumar and Well Haorei on the impact assessment of MGNREGS on rural migration in Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu, it has been found that migration has stopped in five panchayats with the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

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What MNREGS has done?

Since the launch of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in February 2006 covering all the 614 districts in the country, the programme has benefited over 10 crore rural households and the performance has been found very impressive. During the financial year 2006-07, 2.10 crore rural households were provided with employment in 200 districts of the country. The number of households which received employment during the financial year 2007-08 increased to 3.39 crores in 330 districts. In phase III, which covered all the 614 districts in India, 4.51 rural households were provided employment during the financial year 2008-09. During the current financial year 2010-11, 1.79 rural households were provided employment till June 2010 under the MGNREGS. In terms of person days, the scheme has generated 43 days of employment per household in the year 2006-07. The scheme was extended to all the districts in India under phase III and has generated 47 person days of employment per household in the rural parts of our country during 2009-10. In due consideration of the importance of India's diverse social structure, the scheme has benefited the vulnerable sections of Indian social hierarchy. In other words, a little over one fourth of the SCs and nearly one third of STs are the beneficiaries of the scheme. Moreover, there has been increasing participation of women whose potential and contribution to overall progress have remained untapped for a very long period of time.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has been found very effective to check seasonal and distress migration to the nearby urban centres. Apart from offering benefits to the rural households, the programme has got rich potential to benefit the society as well. The works undertaken under the scheme relating to afforestation, water conservation and drought proofing are sure to strengthen

natural resources which will ultimately result in an increase in agricultural output. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme involves the local people in the entire planning and decision making process through which the scheme has helped to strengthen democracy.

MGNREGS – An Evaluation

Every programme involves three different stages. The first stage is the pre implementation stage which is associated with the conceptual frame work of the programme. Before formulation of the scheme, what is needed in the rural areas, what sections of the rural folk have to be targeted, what amount of resources has to be allocated and pumped in to achieve the objectives of the programme and all such relevant things are extensively debated and deliberated. Incorporating all the outcomes of such deliberations, the programme is launched for its effective implementation. As far as the first stage is concerned, none can find a weakness and this stage has no parallel. It is always the implementation stage which has to be effective which alone will help to achieve the objectives behind the implementation of the programme. In the Indian context, the history of implementation of various anti poverty eradication and employment generation programmes reveals that there have been serious limitations with respect to implementation.

As the works undertaken include afforestation, drought proofing, flood proofing, water conservation, the MNGRES has strengthened the natural resources base which has helped to achieve higher agricultural output. In addition to its favorable effect on agricultural productivity, the programme has also addressed environmental issues. The MNGRES is necessarily inclusive at the most basic level in economic terms and tends to be more socially inclusive as it involves women, SCs and STs. The participation of the weaker sections of the society is a forerunner of social change. A rise in rural daily wage rates, reduced migration and positive social effects. But it has also contributed to rising farm input costs, withdrawal of labour from the farm sector and therefore impacted agricultural operations and food prices. Localized labour shortages have severely hampered farmers in other southern states as well.

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Concluding Remarks

In a democratic set up, political factors influence administrative decisions and as such these decisions are politically biased. Under such circumstances, an all round success of the programme is a practical impossibility. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, with its certain potential to transform the rural livelihood in our country, will end up only in small changes mostly negative undermining the very purpose of public expenditure. However, the strengthening of the mechanism of social audit will prove to of great utility in making the scheme very effective so that an entirely different rural India as visualized by our forefathers can be possible. The creation of awareness among the rural people about the ensuing benefits of the programme and their entitlements will ensure that the rural people will have a major share of allocation. Apart from this, committed and devoted administrative machinery with political support is a precondition for the adoption and building of appropriate institutional structures for socially fruitful implementation of the NREGS. It may be somewhat a repetition, but it is worthwhile to conclude that though NREGS is demand-driven legally binding right to work, unless there is a proactive political and administrative commitment the implementation of the scheme may not bring the desired results.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

The **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act** (**NREGA**, also known as **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, NREGS**) is Indian legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The NREGA 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. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Govt of India is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments.

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 below poverty line in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. Roughly one-third of the stipulated work force must be women.

Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his /her photo. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to panchayat or to Programme Officer.

The panchayat / programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid.

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Implementation status

The scheme was introduced in 200 districts during financial year 2006-07 and 130 districts during the financial year 2007-08. In April 2008 NREGA expanded to entire rural area of the country covering 34 States and Union Territories, 614 Districts, 6,096 Blocks and 2.65 lakhs Gram Panchayats.

The renaming of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGS) after the Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and observing the year 2009-10 as the "Year of Gram Sabha by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in presence of the UPA Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Minister, Dr.C.P. Joshi and a large number of Gram Pradhans, Sarpanchs and village representatives from all over the country.

The Prime Minister said that the Gram Sabha provides a forum for the villagers to discuss, deliberate, accept or reject the proposals of Gram Panchayat. Dr. Singh said that the decision to rename National

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Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) is a humble tribute to the Father of our Nation.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) of the Government of India, popularly known as the job guarantee Act. From an awareness raising programme conducted in to the village with support from the United Nations Development Programme

The kind of works permissible under the Programme and according to priority:-

Water conservation and water harvesting, Drought proofing, Forestation and tree plantation. Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works; Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to land beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India. Renovation of traditional water bodies including desalting of tanks, land development, Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas, Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access. The construction of roads may include culverts where necessary, and within the village area culverts may be taken up along with drains. Any other work, which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government

Indira Awas Yojana was launched during 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and continued as a sub-scheme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY). It became an independent scheme with effect from January 1, 1996. Indira Awaaz Yojana provides grant for the construction of houses to the rural poor. The beneficiaries are Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and non-SC/ST rural poor below the poverty line.

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Funding of MNREGA

The scheme commenced on February 2, 2006 in 200 districts, was expanded to cover another 130 districts in 2007-2008 and eventually covered all 593 districts in India by April 1, 2008. The outlay was Rs. 110 billion in 2006-2007, and rose steeply to Rs. 391 billion (140% increase in amount with respect to previous 2008-2009 budget) in 2009-2010.

Employment under MNREGA in 2010

New Delhi (ABC Live): India has provided employment to 1.79 crore households under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in 2010.

Information and confirmation to this effect was made by Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on Tuesday that As of 30th June, a total of 179,43,189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS.

States	No. of Families
Andhra Pradesh	48,04,559
Rajasthan	25,01,792
West Bengal	22,055,89
Uttar Pradesh	19,959,50

According to the state-wise data presented by the Minister, Andhra Pradesh tops the list of states where most number of families were given employment this year, followed by Rajasthan, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. While a total of 48,04,559 households in Andhra Pradesh have benefited from the scheme, 25,01,792 families in Rajasthan, 22,055,89 in West Bengal and 19,959,50 families in Uttar Pradesh were given job opportunities this year.

Pointing out the reasons why this scheme has failed in some states, the Minister said: "Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is demand based. A job seeker has to apply for work for getting employment under the Act."

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RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (NREGA) : THEORY AND EMPIRIC – AN ASSESSMENT

Introduction:

The scheme with the provision of 'Livelihood' as 'Entitlement' can eradicate poverty more effectively than the one without such provisions. In the absence of entitlement as a provision many Public Work Programmes, in the past, had brought more failure stories than success. Public Work Programme all over the world has its root in the World Employment Programme (WEP) of 1969 which openly proclaimed that the "strategies and national development plans should include as a priority objective the promotion of employment and the satisfaction of the basic needs of each country's population". Keeping this as the objective the Maharashtra Government made success with their programme, 'The Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme and Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act' since 1977. Learning from the Maharashtra experience, the Government of India, wanted a Public Works Programme in the form of an 'Act' to ensure 'Livelihood' as 'Entitlement'. As a result the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was born on September 07th, 2005 and it was put into action since February 02nd, 2006 with the following objectives and functioning features[4].

The specific objectives of the current study along with the methodology adopted are discussed in section - I. The theory and empirical relevance of NREGA are discussed in section – II, while an assessment of the programme is attempted in section – III. The findings of the study are presented in section – IV as summary.

Section – I

Objectives and Methodology Adopted

Objective of the study: The overall objective of the present exercise is to evaluate the effective functioning of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and to contextualize the theoretical backdrop of it. In order to fulfil this we have the following three specific objectives (i) to understand the theoretical and empirical relevance of NREGA (ii) to assess the quantum of employment generated by NREGA, its features and (iii) to evaluate the extent of income transfer.

Methodology adopted: The study makes use of the secondary data supplied by the Union Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India which is available in the NREGA website http://nrega.nic.in . In addition, some of the very essential qualitative information at the national level is obtained by means of discussions and interviews with many field level experts across the nation at different time points. The first objective of the study is met by making a survey of the literature and it is presented in section - II. The

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second and third objectives are analyzed through a simple percentage and tabulation methods. In addition, I make use the information on wage distribution to explain the extent of 'income transfer' by the NREGA.

Section – II

Theory and Empirical Relevance of the NREGA

Theory: The paper contextualizes NREGA within the following theoretical frameworks. (i) Sen's concept/ theory of "entitlement". To Sen, "entitlement approach to starvation and famines concentrates on the ability of people to command food through the legal means available in the society…the entitlement approach concentrates on each person's entitlements to commodity bundles including food,…" (Sen, 1981 p45). The NREGA exactly fulfils this by legally empowering the rural labourers to sue the government in the event of its failure to provide them employment with the legal minimum wage at least for 100 days or a monetary compensation equivalent to it if the employments are not given. The recent success of labour struggle in getting their wages in Rajastan is an incident to cite in this context (Sebastian, 2010). (ii) As the government is simultaneously investing a huge fund throughout rural India to create social capital via NREGA; the rural economy, in a way, is redeemed from its 'low-level equilibrium-trap' and thus fulfil the concept of the 'big push' (Rodan, 1963). (iii) Given the abysmal rural poverty and unemployment as the result of the market mechanism in India; once again it would be futile to expect the same market to get corrected on its own. Instead, a corrective measure by means of the government intervention through NREGA may bring about a positive change in rural India. This is in line with the theoretical aspects of 'government intervention' as advocated by Kalecki and Keynes in 1930s. These apart, NREGA is also capable of creating a 'multiplier' effect in the economy for an obvious reason that the marginal propensity to save (MPS) of the beneficiaries of NREGA is much lesser than their marginal propensity to consume (MPC). Hence the extra consumption expenditure injected into the economy is capable of creating new demand for capital, raw materials etc., - a multiplier effect in the economy (Shah,M. 2009).

Empirical Relevance: With the start of WTO in 1995 and World Economic Prosperity since the mid 1990s through 2005, the philosophy of "market" as the panacea, undermining the role of the government, became the order of the world at large. Nevertheless, the critics cautioned that the growth achieved by the world during this period is 'job-less' in nature and capable of creating 'poverty amidst prosperity' and doubted its sustainability. The 'Global Financial Crisis' and 'recession' since 2007 once again re-iterate the relevance of the Government intervention as recommended by Rodan, Kalecki and Keynes. Issues on unemployment are beginning to rock even the US economy. For India, the 61st round of the NSS reports that the rural unemployment in India is at the increase (Ghosh,J. 2006). "92 per cent of India's workforce of 457 million (in 2005) were informal workers without any employment or social security" (Kannan,K.P. 2010). According to the World Bank estimate in 2006, 80 per cent of India's population is living below the international poverty line of US $ 2/- per day. A finding of the National Commission of Employment in the Unorganized Sector (NCEUS) also reports that the per capita consumption expenditure of 77 per cent of

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the country's population is less than or equal to Rs.20/- per day (Shah,M. 2007). These apart, India's expenditure on employment programmes as a percentage of the country's GDP and Total Expenditure (both plan and non-plan put together) is consistently found to be very un-impressive (Table-1). Throughout this decade the expenditure on employment programmes has almost remained as half or less than half of what was spent prior to 1996-97. In terms of the Global Hunger Index (GHI) in 2010, of the 122 countries, India ranks 67. As per the GHI 2010, the problem of hunger is much less in many of the neighboring countries of India–raises many doubts about the qualities of India's economic growth attained in the recent years and the reliability of programmes to fight hunger, poverty and inequalities.

Earlier studies on NREGA has underscored that the programme is successful in transferring income to the rural household during the critical times of unfavourable agriculture seasons and protected their consumption. It is found very effective in preventing hunger, migration[13] and the wage divide between male and female as both are equally paid for similar works. Also the income transferred to the rural India through NREGA, it is reported, has empowered the rural poor to avail medical facilities to certain extent that otherwise remain beyond their reach. Thus in several contexts, both theoretically and empirically, the NREGA in India assumes its own uniqueness and relevance.

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Table.1

Expenditure on Employment Programmes as percentage of GDP and Total Expenditure in India.

Years →	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
As % of GDP_{FC}	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4
As % of Total Expenditure	2.8	2.7	1.7	1.9	1.6	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.6	1.6

Source: Shankar, Vijay P.S. (2008).

Having discussed the theory and empirical relevance of NREGA and its functioning at the very beginning, we now turn to section - III for unearthing the second objective on the amount of employment generated in rural India and its pattern.

Section - III

Assessment – An Attempt

As one of the major objectives of NREGA is to make the income transferred to the rural economy through rural employment, we intend to assess the programme at the all India level, in terms of the quantum of employment generated and income transferred by means of wage distribution.

Rural Employment Generated: The employment market of NREGA, with regard to the rural household supply of and demand for labour, almost remained in an equilibrium state (table 2) - which is not

natural in any way - as the wage paid by NREGA is less than the market wage. Otherwise, given the nature of 'entitlement' attached to the programme, the supply of labour would have exceeded the demand for it. The same table further indicates that the amount of labour demanded (*i.e. employment generated by NREGA*) and supplied (*i.e. the work demanded by households*) is generally at the increase every year. However, the average number of man-days of employment generated per district has declined in 2007-08 and 2008-09. It is mainly due to the increase in the number of districts is greater than the increase in the employment generated (table 2). Apart from this we could also observe some evolving features of 'gender' and 'caste' within the employment generated by the NREGA. For instance, over the years, the gap between male and female participating in the programme is increasingly getting bridged. Nevertheless, the Male participation is found to be at the decline from 59.35 per cent in 2006-07 to 51.4 per cent in 2009-10. This is mainly due to their preference to avail other jobs in which they are offered a better wage on a daily payment basis. Their decline, however, is compensated by the women participants as their share has steadily increased from 40.65 to 48.60 per cents during the same period (table 2). Again, given the wage discrimination among male and female in the open market, the regular women labourers also prefer to supply their labour elsewhere as they could earn more from other sources than from NREGA. Given such situation, the programme has attracted many 'fresh household labourers', who did not even have any previous manual work experience – of this, majority of them happened to be women for the following three reasons: (a) additional income to the family (b) mostly the work is made available within 5 km radius of the applicant's residence (c) the nature of the manual works are not so hard. This phenomenon is observed to be more common in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Unless such mismatch between the wages in the market and NREGA are rectified attracting the regular labourers for NREGA would be a futile exercise.

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Table 2. Features of Employment Generated in Rural India.

Years	No. of. Dist	No. of. HH (in millions) work demanded (SS of L) & work provided (DD for L)		No. of. Man-days Employed (in millions)					
				Gender Dimension			Caste Dimension		
		SS	DD	Male	Female	Total	SC	ST	Others
2006-07	200	2.11	2.10	537.16 (59.35)	367.90 (40.65)	905.06 (100)	229.5 (25.36)	329.88 (36.45)	345.68 (38.19)
2007-08	330	3.40	3.39	648.83 (53.86)	555.80 (46.14)	1204.63 (100)	394.23 (32.73)	420.56 (34.91)	389.84 (32.36)
2008-09	615	4.55	4.55	1127.56 (52.12)	1035.73 (47.88)	2163.29 (100)	633.61 (29.29)	550.16 (25.43)	979.52 (45.28)
2009-10	615	5.27	5.24	1453.02 (51.40)	1373.90 (48.60)	2826.92 (100)	866.6 (30.66)	581.90 (20.58)	1378.42 (48.76)

Source: Indira Hirway (2009), UMORD, GOI and NREGA website. Note: Figures in brackets are the percentage value.

Another important feature of the employment structure generated by the NREGA in the country is about the caste dimension. Majority of the participants of NREGA are from the socially oppressed class – Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) – together they account for more than 50 per cent of the total man-days employment generated. However, the share of STs registered a consistent decline (table 2). The inability of the NREGA due to 'no-provision' to pay the wage on a daily basis[18] being completely inconvenient to the 'consumption-expenditure behaviour' of the STs is attributed to their declining share in the programme. Unlike the STs, except for the year 2008-09, the share of SCs is at the increase. With regard to the other category, the number of their man days employed, except for the year 2007-08, is observed to be at the increase. With the share of 48.76 per cent in 2009-10 they too have come to benefit from the programme equally. Nevertheless, as already pointed out, a major reason for this is once again the 'fresh household entries' mainly coming from the 'other categories' even without any previous manual work experience.

Income Transferred to rural India: In line with Kalecki, Keynes and Sen, the NREGA aims at transfer of income to rural India. Accordingly, the fund allotted by the government for the NREGA, to spend on wage and materials in the proportion of 60:40, also appears to be consistently increasing every year (table 3). But a close scrutiny of the fund allotted at the district level reveal a different story as the total fund earmarked for the programme did not increase on par with the increase in the number of districts selected for the implementation of NREGA. A fall in the income allotted at the district level in 2007-08 and 2008-09 compared to 2006-07 would reveal this. Moreover, any increase shown during 2009-10, is only a misleading indicator, as the number of districts at the denominator remained constant at 615. The insufficiency of fund allocation is again confirmed when we explore the details on the extent of work completed (social capital created). Details of it are given in table 4. By comprehending Table 3 and 4 simultaneously one can confirm the insufficiency of fund provided for NREGA. For instance, of

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Table 3. Details of the income transferred to the rural India in term of wage distribution.

Year	Wage Fund all India (Rs. in millions, at current prices)			Wage Funds *per* District (Rs. in millions, at current prices)		
	Allocated	Transferred/Utilized	Not Transferred/ Un-utilized	Allocated	Transferred	Not Transferred
2006-07	120735.55	88233.55 (73.08)	32502 (26.92)	603.68 (0.5)	441.17	162.51
2007-08	192787.77	158584.41 (82.26)	34203.36 (17.74)	584.21 (0.3)	480.56	103.65
2008-09	363004.55	272506.87 (75.07)	90497.68 (24.93)	590.25 (0.16)	443.10	147.15
2009-10	461022.29	385953.39 (83.72)	75068.9 (16.28)	749.63 (0.16)	627.57	122.06

Source: Indira Hirway (2009), UMORD, GOI and NREGA website. Note: Figures in brackets are the percentage value. District level information given here are the average measures obtained dividing the fund by the no. of. districts.

Table 4: Details of the work (Social Capital) completed in India.

Years	Details on the No. of Works Assigned			Distribution of Works *per* District	
	To be Completed	Completed	Total	Assignments Allocated	Assignments Completed
2006-07	444806 (52.85)	396782 (47.15)	841588 (100)	4208	1984 (47.15)
2007-08	961280 (53.96)	820168 (46.04)	1781448 (100)	5398	2485 (46.04)
2008-09	1560485 (56.24)	1214139 (43.76)	2774624 (100)	4512	1975 (43.76)
2009-10	2513257 (54.72)	2079563 (45.28)	4592820 (100)	7468	3381 (45.27)

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Source: Same as in Table 3.

the allocated income 73.08 per cent (table 3) of it has been utilized or transferred to rural households just to complete 47.15 per cent (table 4) of the work allotment in 2006-07. Fulfilling the rest of 52.85 per cent of the work allotment with mere 26.92 per cent of the fund was just not possible and a similar situation prevailed for the following years. Situation in 2009-10 was so poor that 83.72 per cent of the fund was transferred to complete only 45.28 per cent of the work assigned. Completing the rest of 54.72 per cent of work allotment with mere 16.28 per cent of the un-utilized or non-transferred income would be of an impossible task unless additional funds are sanctioned by the government along with a wage revision in order to attract more participants as well. The paper, therefore, recommends resolving the mismatch between the 'insufficient fund' and 'more work allotments' at the earliest to achieve the objective of transfer of income to rural India.

Section – IV
Summary and Findings

In our attempt to evaluate the programme, at all India level, by using secondary data, we arrived at the following findings.

(1) The paper could trace relevance of NREGA within the theoretical framework of Sen's entitlement; Rodan's Big-Push; and Kalecki and Keynes' market failure and government intervention. (2) Given the

disparity between the market wage and NREGA wage, NREGA's demand for labour with regard to rural supply almost remain in an un-natural equilibrium – otherwise the supply of labour would have exceeded the demand. (3) Despite the market wage discrimination among the male and female labourers, women also prefer to supply their labour elsewhere as their earnings from other sources are more than what they could get from NREGA. (4) Given such situation, the programme attracts many 'fresh household labourers', who did not even have any previous manual work experiences – of this, majority of them happened to be women for three reasons: (a) additional income to the family (b) availability of the work, mostly, within 5 km radius of the applicant's residence (c) the nature of the manual works are not so hard. (5) Participation of labourers from the ST community is consistently at the decline due to the inability of the NREGA to pay the wage on a daily basis and it is completely inconvenient to their 'consumption-expenditure behaviour'. Their declining share also attracted many 'fresh household entries' mainly coming from the 'other categories' without any previous manual work experience. (6) Total fund earmarked for the programme did not increase on par with the increase in the number of districts and the work assigned. Hence, the objective of transferring income to the hands of the rural India suffers to this extent. More than 50 per cent of the work allotted – a major and effective means of transferring income – also remained incomplete every year. (7) Given the inflationary macroeconomic situation in the economy, the study recommends for the increased fund allotment to the NREGA along with the wage revision to avoid the existing "mismatches" so as to make the NREGA more successful because it promises livelihood as entitlement.

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ROLE OF LOCAL BODIES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME IN TAMIL NADU

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is possibly the most ambitious income security programme for India's rural poor in post independent India. About 30 per cent of Indians are living in absolute poverty but in actual terms it moves up to as much as 77 per cent. Most of the vulnerable are from scheduled casts and tribes, the minorities and other backward classes (OBC). The rural poor mainly comprise of landless labours, who are not even assured of finding work on a daily basis. It is in this context that the MGNREGS assumes importance.

The act is an important step towards realization of the right to work and aims at arresting out - migration of rural households in search of employment simultaneously enhancing people's likelihood on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. MGNREA is the most significant act in the history of Indian political economy in many ways like grass root level participation of every citizen and beneficiary through democratic process, multi-layered social audit and transparency mechanism by involvement of civil society, comprehensive planning at village level towards sustainable and equitable development etc.

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NATURE OF WORK UNDER MGNREGA

Creation of durable assets and strengthening the livlihood resources base of the rural poor shall be an important objective of the scheme. Work through contractors is not permissible. The kinds of works permissible according to priority one;

i) Water conservation and water harvesting
ii) Drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation)
iii) Irrigation canals including micro and macro irrigation works
iv) Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the SCs and STs or to land beneficiaries of land reforms
v) Renovation of traditional water bodies including desalting of tanks
vi) Land development
vii) Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas.

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viii) Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access

ix) Any other work which may be notified by the central Government in consultation with the state Government.

Implementation:

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGP have found "Significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the programme. The plan was launched in February 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts, 44, 940, 870 rural housed were provided job under NREGA during 2008 – 09, with an national average of 48 working days per household.

SUCCESS EVIDENCES OF MGNREGA: Works/Activities

The MGNREGA achieves twin objective of rural development and employment. The MGNREA stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities through local bodies (or) panchayat raj such as water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection much as construction and repair of embankments, etc. Digging of new tank/ ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc.

First a proposal is given by the panchayat raj or local bodies to the block office and then the black office decides whether the work should be sanctioned.

Local Bodies and MGNREGS in Tamilnadu

The Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee scheme was initially implemented with effect from 2.2.2006 onwards in six notified districts of TamilNadu (in Phase I). It was extended to 4 districts (in Phase II) from 1.4.2007 onwards and to the remaining 20 districts (in phase III) with effect from 1.4.2008 onwards. The details are as furnished below in Table.

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Coverage of Districts in Phases under MGNREGS

Phase – I (2.2.2006 Onwards)	Phase – II (1.4.2007 onwards)	Phase – III (1.4.2008 onwards)	
1. Cuddalore	1. Thanjavur	1. Kancheepuram	11. Trichy
2. Villupuram	2. Tiruvarur	2. Tiruvallur	12. Perambalur
3. Tiruvannamalai	3. Karur	3. Vellore	13. Ariyalur
4. Nagapattinam	4. Tirunelveli	4. Salem	14. Pudukottai
5. Dindigul		5. Namakkal	15. Madurai
6. Sivagangai		6. Dharmapuri	16. Theni
		7. Krishnagiri	17. Ramanathapuram
		8. Erode	18. Virudhunagar
		9. Coimbatore	19. Thoothukudi
		10. Nilgiris	20. Kanniyakumari

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Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme, daily wages have been disbursed for works taken up at an estimated cost of Rs.3002 crores over the last your years. Villupuram and Nagapattinam distiches have been selected for receiving awards for exemplary implementation of this scheme for the year 2008-2009 from union government. Further, TamilNadu continues to be one the leading states in implementation of this scheme. This scheme will be implemented at an outlay of Rs.2500 crores in the coming financial year. A sum of Rs.250 crores has been provided in this Budget as state government's sheme in this scheme.

MGNREGS, a sum of Rs. 3,352.58 crores has been disbursed as wages till 31.3.2010 to the rural poor, among whom 56% are scheduled castes and 76% are women. TamilNadu has won accolades as one of the Best – performing states in this scheme from no loss an institution the Honorable Supreme Court of India. As regards rural roads the total length of black-topped roads has gone up from about 29,280 kilo meters in 2006 to about 54,620 K.M. in 2010. This act is an important step towards the realization of the "right to work" it is also expected to enhance people's livelihood on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. The village panchayat issues job card to every registered individual. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme.

Funding pattern

The cost of the scheme is shared between the centre and the state in the ratio of 90:10. The central Government bears the following costs:

a. The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers.

b. 75% of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.

c. Administrative expenses, which will include, inter alia, the salary and allowances of programme officers and their support staff, work site facilities and the state MGNREGA cell.
d. Administrative expenses of the central employment guarantee council.

The State Government bears the following costs:

a. 25% of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.
b. Unemployment allowance payable in case the State Government cannot provide wage employment within 15 days of application.
c. Administrative expenses of the state Employment Guarantee council.

Special steps taken to ensure successful implementation of MGNREGS

The following special steps were initiated to streamline and expedite the implementation of the scheme

1. The existing formats of job cards and national muster Rolls have been revised to make these documents more transparent, informative and difficult to manipulate in the process of scheme implementation.
2. Payments to the workers are made on a weekly basis on designated days.
3. Since the scheme requires intensive touring, the Government has sanctioned additional fuel of 50 liters per month for each of the vehicles in the panchayat union.
4. Makkal Nala Paniyalars (MNPS), who are available in each village panchayat, have also been made responsible for the implementation of the scheme at the field level.
5. Additional ministerial, technical and computer staff has been sanctioned at District, Division, and Block at village levels in order to ensure proper implementation and close supervision of the scheme.
6. Only 100% labour intensive works have been taken up in order to prevent the entry of contractors who are strictly banned as per the MGNREG Act.
7. In order to ensure greater transparency and fair play, it has been ordered to disburse the wages to the workers in the presence of at least four members of his committee:

- ☺ **President of the village panchayat.**
- ☺ **Vice-president of the village panchayat.**
- ☺ **Ward member of the area where the work is excepted**
- ☺ **An SC/ST ward member**
- ☺ **Two animators of graded Self Help Groups**
- ☺ **A representative of the panchayat level federation**

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8. Savings Bank Accounts have been opened for the MGNREGS workers to enable panchayat of their wages directly to their bank accounts in case they are not available to personally receive the wages on the fixed day to the payment.
9. A 25-member TamilNadu State Employment Guarantee council has been constituted
10. In order to ensure efficient monitoring of the scheme through Management Information System (MIS).

SUGGESTIONS

1. The wage rates of the labourers should be revised and increased to the level of "Living wage" so that the workers do not feel tempted leave their village and go to city centers in search of work, at the same time there is need to revise working capacity norms also.
2. It is necessary to earmark separate fund is the budget awareness creation about the entitlement of the poor for work under MGNREGA. So as to enhance their participation levels is the scheme.
3. State government should take steps to provide adequate publicity to the programme and to persuade as many ensure that all BPL households as possible are persuaded to register under MGNREGA. In additions their periodic door to – door surveys, even at this stage, would-be useful.

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EMPOWERMENT EFFECTS OF THE NREGS ON WOMEN WORKERS IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislations enacted since independence. It significance is evident from a variety of perspectives. First, it is a bold and unique experiment in the provision of rural employment in India and indeed in the world at large. Second, it is the first expression of the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement. In a country where labour is the only economic asset for millions of people, gainful employment is a prerequisite for the fulfilment of other basic rights – the right to life, the right to food, and the right to education. There is much that the NREGA promises from the perspective of women's empowerment as well. Most boldly, in a rural milieu marked by stark inequalities between men and women – in the opportunities for gainful employment afforded as well as wage rates – NREGA represents action on both these counts. The act stipulates that wages will be equal for men and women. It is also committed to ensuring that at least 33% of the workers shall be women. By generating employment for women at fair wages in the village, NREGA can play a substantial role in economically empowering women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-esteem.

The emergence of women workers as independent bread-earners with control over their earnings has significant empowerment effects, such as a greater decision-making role in the family, discretion to spend and control the use of their earn-ings, and confidence to earn independent of male family mem-bers. Moreover, reports of their increased participation in the gram Sabha are encouraging, and might change the character of decision-making at the level of grass-roots democratic institu-tions, which continue to be male-dominated even after the in-creased representation of women following the 73rd Constitu-tional Amendment Act.

This paper examines the empowerment effects, of the NREGS on rural women at both the individual and community levels. At the individual level, this has been examined through: (i) income consumption effects; (2) infra-household effects (decision -making-roles); and (3) enhancement of choice and capability. The community-level effects have been assessed in terms of realisation of equal wages increased participation in com-munity development processes, and overall impact on gender relations, if any.

Household Economics, Paid Employment and Women's Empowerment

Till recently, intra-household affairs were considered outside the domain of mainstream economics that deals mainly with market institutions. With the assertion of feminist economics, and emer-gence of bargaining (Folbre 1986; Becker 1981) arid cooperation-conflict (Sell 1990, 1996) models, the notion of

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Empowerment Effects

How has paid employment under NREGS transformed the (bargain-ing) position of rural women within their households? And to what extent have participatory development processes under NREGS been able to create larger social effects on women's empowerment? The former has been analysed at the household level and with respect to three interrelated processes and outcomes, which are:

(1) Income-consumption effects;

(2) Intra-household effects (decision-making role); and

(3) Enhancement of choice and capability.

The latter has been explained at the larger community-level and through:

(i) process participation;

(2) wage-equality and its long-term in impacts on rural labour market conditions; and

(3) changes in gender relations, if any, because of the above and other factors.

Household-Level Effects

Women's contribution to household income and to the national economy remains largely unaccounted for as they undertake a significant amount of unpaid work. To many, this remains a fundamental challenge of women's empowerment (Boserup 1980; Follbre 2009; Hirway and Saluja 2009). A time use survey conducted by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) across six states revealed that on an average, rural women spent about 22.53 hours of their weekly time on System of National Accounts (SNA) activities and 33.95 hours on extended SNA activities. This, in fact reiterates that the average numbers of hours spent by women on unpaid work is high, and their contribution to the household's income and overall welfare remains unaccounted for and unappreciated. The NREGS has helped women in converting some unpaid hours of work into paid hours of work with significant effects, especially for those women for whom NREGs is a primary work opportunity outside the home.

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Income-Consumption Effects

By income-consumption effects, we mean an increase in the paid income of woman workers and consequently, her ability to choose her consumption baskets. Though income and consumption are related, we emphasize consumption, because an increase in income sans the ability to consume or choose consumption baskets has little significance. For example, if a woman earns, but is unable to exercise any choice on how to spend those earnings and instead, say, surrenders her entire earnings to the head of the household, she does not influence the spending decision at all, and subsequently the element of empowerment is probably missing, in spite of the income effects. Paid work under NREGS has helped rural women in realizing income-consumption effects : (1) monetized earnings, (2) better control over earnings because of monetized wages and account payment, leading to greater consumption effects.

Community-Level Effects

Women's participation in grass-roots community development processes in general, and decision-making in particular, remain weak in spite of their increased representation, following the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. A part from low participa-tion in the gram Sabha and other decision-making for a, the prob-lem of proxy (men performing the role of women representatives) is frequently found to occur. One of the latent objectives of the NREGS is to strengthen community development processes through grass-roots institutions and to make decision-making at that level more in-clusive and participatory. Women's participation in procedural aspects under NREGS, say, selection and implementation of works, social audit, asset management, etc, remains low, even though their participation as workers has surpassed the bench-mark of 33% at the all-India level in all three years of imple-mentation. The low procedural participation is a fact even in panchayats headed by women.

Conclusions

Empowerment of rural women has emerged as an unintended consequence of NREGS. 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 NREGS. Independent and monetised earnings have increased consumption choices and re-duced economic dependence. This has helped women in register-ing their tangible contribution to the household's income. The overall effects of these have translated into an increased say for women in household affairs.

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RURAL POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH NREGA

INTRODUCTION

In India, we have 623 District and then Block level, Years back Government of India started a new Employment scheme for poor who lives below poverty line in Village. Then, Ministry of Rural Development , Government of India, passed the Act in Parliament called National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme Act(NREGA) and enacted on 2nd February 2006. In this scheme rural poor people (men and women) can get guaranteed 100 days employment. Initial without ICT, there was big problem in terms of wage distribution, Identification card (Employment card) ,Records etc. As most of the people are illiterate, then there was chance for middle man ,who paid low wages to poor people and enforced them to signed on actual wages. So ICT not only helping the government but also people who get wages through various IT enable tools and it also bring transparency, credibility and accountability in effective manner. Initial it was started in 200 districts but now it is extended to almost all districts.

India's battle against rural poverty is being fought on many fronts simultaneously, with major schemes tackling one or more aspects of the challenge. The total budgetary allocation for all rural development programmes by the Government of India in 2009-10 was Rs.74,270 crores which accounted for 31 per cent of the total Central Budget Plan provision. Rural development programmes cover employment programmes such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, housing via the Indira Awaas Yojana, sanitation via the Total Sanitation Campaign, provision of drinking water via the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (described in the Chapter on Water Resources), watershed development via the Integrated Watershed Management Programme (described in the Chapter on Agriculture), road connectivity via the Pradhan Mantri Grameen Sadak Yojana (described in the Chapter on Transport), electrification via the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (described in the Chapter on Energy) and social security via the National Social Assistance Programme, the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme and the Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme.

The MGNREGA has led to the largest employment programme in human history and is unlike any other in its scale, architecture and thrust. Its bottom-up, people-centred, demand- driven, self-selecting, rights-based design is new and unprecedented. MGNREGA enjoins the state to provide a guarantee of employment for 100 days every year to each rural household that demands work. It also demands of the people that they participate actively in the design and implementation of the programme. The programme started in February 2006 in the 200 most backward districts of India. It was extended to an additional 130 districts in the first year of the Eleventh Plan in 2007-08 and to the entire country in 2008-09.

Quality of Works

A critical issue in evaluating MGNREGA relates to the quality of the work executed. The great hope (as reflected in the main objectives of the Act) was that greater water security and drought and flood proofing would be realised. The Act requires the choice of work to be made by the PRIs in order

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to ensure ownership by the community and so that works reflect their needs and priorities. However, for the works to lead to the creation of truly productive assets they need to be well planned with adequate technical support. This demands a harmonious blending of plans made by PRIs with a broad framework provided by district and state level agencies. While there have been a few successes in this regard, these remain oases of excellence.

Managing overwhelming numbers could be one of the reasons why a high percentage of works is left incomplete. The total number of works taken up under MGNREGA from February 2006 to September 2009 was over 79 lakhs but only 31 lakh i.e., 39 percent were completed. Demanding programme like MGNREGA requires full-time, dedicated staff. But it is observed that while Programme Officers are in place in most blocks, many of these are holding "additional charge". A demanding programme like MGNREGA requires full-time, dedicated staff.

The best way of ensuring that adequate human resources are made available is to stipulate that a definite proportion of the 6 per cent now allotted for administrative costs is spent on professional support at the block level and below. Since not more than 3 per cent of administrative costs on average are being utilized currently, there is ample scope to improve performance if this money were to be properly utilized. The States should have flexibility in exactly how they spend this amount.

Mission MGNREGA

For all the reforms outlined above to be carried out effectively, we need a "Mission MGNREGA" within the Ministry of Rural Development. At present, just one Joint Secretary manages this massive employment programme. Coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the programme by the States should remain the function of the Department of Rural Development, although evaluation, social audit, grievance redressal, IT innovations and human resource deployment and development demand a full-fledged Mission that works independently to support the implementer.
This would enable

- More credible and sustained studies and evaluations of MGNREGA
- Speeding up better IT innovations resulting in real-time monitoring
- Deployment of more professional human resources as also high quality capacity building, resulting in better assets and improved, enduring outcomes
- Better social audit and grievance redressal
- Charting out a course for further MGNREGA reform These "soft" elements will determine the quality of outcomes achieved through MGNREGA works and help realise the true potential of the Act.

COMPOSITION OF THE POOR

The composition of the poor has been changing and rural poverty is getting concentrated in agricultural labour and artisanal households and urban poverty in casual labour households. Agricultural labour households accounted for 41% of rural poor in 1993–94 as well as in 2004–05. The share of self-employed in agriculture among the rural poor had fallen from 32% to 21.6%. Casual labour households accounted for 62.6% in 1993–94 in urban areas and
56.5% in 2004–05.

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The occupational composition of rural poor varied across the States. In general, in developed States poverty was highly concentrated among agricultural labour households, and in contrast in backward States poverty extended to other occupational groups including self employed in agriculture.

Among social groups, SCs, STs, and backward castes accounted for 80% of the rural poor in 2004– 05, considerably more than their share in the rural population (Working Group on Poverty, Planning Commission, 2006). In 2004–05, while the HCR of the poor in the total rural population was 28.3%, among the SCs it was 36.8%. In urban areas, the HCR overall was 25.7%, but among SCs it was even higher than in rural areas at nearly 40%.

GUARANTEED WAGE EMPLOYMENT—NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (NREGA)

Workfare programmes have been important programme interventions in India and elsewhere in developing countries since long. These programmes typically provide unskilled workers with short-term employment on public works. They provide income transfers to poor households during periods when they suffer on account of absence of opportunities of em- ployment. In areas with high unemployment rates and under employment, transfer benefits from workfare programmes can prevent poverty from worsening, especially during lean periods. Durable assets that these programmes create have the potential to generate second-round employment benefits as requisite infra- structure is developed.

We have a long history and experience in imple- menting wage employment programmes. However, beginning with Jawahar Rojagar Yojana in 1989, the outreach of these programmes increased significantly as in the period 1989 to 2006, ultimately culminating in NREGA. These wage employment programmes implemented by State Governments with Central as- sistance were self-targeting, and the objective was to provide enhanced livelihood security, especially of those dependent on casual manual labour.

Based on the experience of these programmes the NREGA was enacted to reinforce the commitment towards livelihood security in rural areas. The Act was notified on 7 September 2005. The significance of NREGA lies in the fact that it creates a right based framework for wage employment programmes and makes the government legally bound to provide em- ployment to those who seek it. In this way the legislation goes beyond providing a social safety net, and towards guaranteeing the right to employment. The experience with NREGA so far suggests that it is one of the main planks of rapid poverty reduction in the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

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Suggestions for Way Forward

- Pensions need to be indexed to inflation
- States need to make their share of payment under IGNOAPS
- As suggested in the Eleventh Plan document, NFBS must cover deaths of any adult member of the family in a BPL household, without limiting it to the breadwinner.
- As suggested in the Eleventh Plan document, national schemes for maintenance of orphans, street children and other most vulnerable sections also need to be started.

A STUDY ON MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA or Act) is a landmark social security legislation that epitomises the right to employment demand. It aims to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a year to every household. MGNREGA has a Right based framework, unlike earlier employment generation programmes. Its demand based entitlements stem from the fundamental right "to live with dignity" and sets it apart from other cash conditional transfers, as well as a social safety net, dependent on Government benefaction.

The basic objective of the Act 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 labor. It has a bifocal lens as the instrumentality of works generates employment and productive assets. The process of implementation seeks to strengthen decentralized democratic governance, promote equity and empower rural communities. Transparency and public accountability are central to the implementation of this Act as a disparity in rural social structures constrict the exercise of rights by those who are poor and marginalised. The success of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS or Scheme) depends on enabling workers in rural areas to receive their entitlements under the Act as well as to leverage resources provided under the Scheme to access development opportunities through other programmes, for transiting from wage employment to sustainable livelihood.

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National Operational Frame Work

MGNREGA envisions a reliable, standardized and scalable technological solution to be delivered at the field level across the country, through a public private partnership model, aimed to build a strong and transparent accountability mechanism to enable the rural poor to demand their rights-based entitlements to employment.

- Enrolment and Registration to MGNREGS, through offline and online enrolment stations: The enrolment process will be in compliance to UIDAI framework and guidelines
- Real time attendance through offline and online hand held devices using biometric

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verification

- Measurement of work at the worksite
- Electronic generation and submission of various process reports such as attendance report, wages calculation report, work measurement report for approving authority at block, state and national level.
- Wage payment through offline and online hand held devices using biometric verification to ensure payments to the MGNREGA worker through business correspondent of Bank or Post Office.
- Electronic generation of payment reconciliation report against specific Job Card / MGNREGA worker.
- Updating and exporting data to MoRD central server for generating consolidated MGNREGA reports using Web based MIS.

Measures for Governance Reform and Transparency

- strengthening administrative systems through additional dedicated personnel,
- strengthening the Gram Panchayat (GP) through funds and functionaries.
- streamlining financial systems.

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Transforming MIS into People Information System

Efforts are on to deepen the ICT infrastructure upto the Gram Panchayat level. This penetration will trigger innovations at the grass root, helping workers to assert their Rights and hold implementation agencies accountable. A good practice to facilitate transparency is to separate worker's demand process and their access to information. A local language enabled audio visual ICT kiosk model has been developed for workers to use the system and exercise their Rights.

Workers need to authenticate their registration through a biometric process by recording their fingerprints on the biometric reader in the kiosk. The worker also records his attendance at the site in the same manner. The kiosk then provides the worker details such as work allotment, attendance, muster report, wages calculation as on date, in the local language. Workers acquire agency through simple ICT methods. This separates the agency that guarantees work, from the application receiving entity.

Business Model

The envisages that the service provider may be appropriately supported by MoRD since the project is not expected to be financially viable. The business model to be developed would provide adequate return on investment to the service provider. It would also provide the necessary incentives for quick rollout, increase in authentic transactions for greater outreach.

Selection of service provider

Selection of service provider would be done through an open competitive bidding process. A one stage / two stages bid process will be followed to select the service provider for a pre determined concession period.

Project Monitoring

The function of Monitoring will remain with the existing institutions in accordance with the provisions of the Act. MoRD will employ suitable independent agencies for program monitoring and impact assessment from time to time. Service Level Standards will be put in place for the service provider to benchmark their performance.

Capacity Building

MoRD would undertake training of the functionaries of the state, PRIs to facilitate the transition to ICT based program delivery.

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Findings

The basic objective of the Act 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 labor. It has a bifocal lens as the instrumentality of works generates employment and productive assets.

The process of implementation seeks to strengthen decentralized democratic governance, promote equity and empower rural communities. Transparency and public accountability are central to the implementation of this Act as a disparity in rural social structures constrict the exercise of rights by those who are poor and marginalised.

The success of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS or Scheme) depends on enabling workers in rural areas to receive their entitlements under the Act as well as to leverage resources provided under the Scheme to access development opportunities through other programmes, for transiting from wage employment to sustainable livelihood.

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF NREGP ON LABOUR SUPPLY FOR FARM OPERATIONS IN TIRUVARUR DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

Introduction

Agricultural has always been India's most important economic sector. As one of the world's largest agrarian economy, the agricultural sector contributed approximately 17.8 per cent of India's GDP (at constant 1999 – 2000 prices) during 2007 – 08, 12.2 per cent of total exports in 2007 -08 and provided employment to around 58.2 per cent of the work force (census 2001). Rapid growth of agricultural sector is essential to meet the food and nutritional security of the people and to provide livelihood and income in the rural areas.

Present status of Indian Agriculture – the agrarian crisis

After independence, the India economy has achieved success in accelerating the growth of Agriculture sector thanks to the intensive agricultural development programmes commonly known as "Green revolution". Of late, as against the desired growth, the agricultural sector shows a very sluggish growth.

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NREGP and changing agrarian structure

It is true in saying that agriculture is providing only seasonal employment to the rural workforce. It is also generally known that they are not well-paid. In certain areas they are paid less than the minimum wage fixed by the government. The government, keeping in mind the seasonal nature of agriculture operation has introduced the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP). This scheme provides 100 days of assured employment per household in a year. The Self Help Groups (SHG) concept has penetrated into the women folk of rural areas. Due to increase in literacy rate, the youth from rural areas are no more interested in doing agricultural operation and migrate towards urban areas. So, of late the entire structure of the rural economy has changed. The mindset of the landlords, agriculture labourers – both men and women, and that of rural youth have changed towards agriculture. This is evident from the findings given by the NCF which has given certain suggestions to retain the migrating youth from the rural areas to urban areas.

To sum up, the supply of labour force for agricultural operation may become a serious problem in future. Inadequate availability of labour force has made the farmers to think twice before undertaking cultivation process. This shortage in turn affects productivity and total production of food grains. This situation may have the snowballing effect on cultivation process and therefore on the food security in future. This phenomenon is very much prevalent in the Cauvery delta region of Tamil Nadu. NREGP is

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said to be one such major factors affecting labour supply for farm operation. So the study focuses on the problem of farm labour availability in one of the delta districts i.e. Thiruvarur.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the availability of labour force for agricultural activity in general.
2. To study the impact of NREGP on labour supply from the point of view of cultivators.
3. To study the role of NREGP on labour supply from the point of view of agricultural labourers
4. To give some policy suggestions.

Methodology

The study area is the Thiruvarur district of Tamil Nadu and the study period is 2009 – 2010. To conduct the empirical analysis stratified random technique was followed. Here the strata are the different panchayat unions. They are two revenue divisions viz. Thiruvarur and Mannargudi. In the second stage, two most populated panchayat unions from each revenue division are chosen. In the third stage most populated five village panchayats were chosen from each panchayat union So, in total ten village panchayats are chosen for the survey. The total number of samples is 500. Since the study needs to be undertaken from two angles, one from the point of view of landowner/ cultivators and the other from the point of view of Agricultural labourers, equal weightage was given to both the type of respondents. So 250 cultivators and 250 agricultural labourers were chosen as respondents. The total sample is equally divided among the 10 village panchayat and thus 50 respondents are chosen from each village panchayat. Out of fifty from each panchayat 25 respondents are cultivators and 25 are agricultural labourers. Thus out of 500 samples households 250 households are land owners and 250 are agricultural labourers. To collect information, two different types of questionnaires were prepared, One for the agricultural labourers and the other for the cultivators. The respondents were approached during both agricultural season and off season. The collected information were tabulated ,analyzed and results were discussed.

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Opinion of the cultivators about NREGP

Opinion	No of Persons					
	Marginal	Small	Semi Medium	Medium and Large	Total	Percentage
Favoring	13	17	2	0	32	12.8
Not Favoring	52	92	28	46	218	87.2
Total	**65**	**109**	**30**	**46**	**250**	**100.0**

Source : Computed from primary data.

- Since, there is general complaint that NREGP affects agricultural operation; the cultivators are enquired about its impact on agricultural activities. National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) is aimed at giving a minimum of 100 days of work for rural household. As for as the views of the cultivators are concerned, the majority i.e. 218 out of 250 cultivators are not favoring or supporting the NREGP. All the medium and large farmers view that NREGP is a main problem for them and it creates shortage of labourers for the agricultural activities in the last two or three years.
- The support to NREGP by marginal and small farmers is due to the fact that they are all the cardholders of the NREGP work. But almost all the categories of cultivators feel that the NREGP has made a strong impact on the supply of labour for the cultivation activities. They argue that of late NREGP is the major factor affecting the labour supply for agricultural operations. They want the scheme to be completely abolished. They give two reasons for these arguments. 1. Since the women workers are paid higher in NREGP they are not ready to undertake cultivation work. 2. Though the male workers are paid higher in the field work, the aged labourers who are in the higher proportion in the total work force prefer work offered under NREGP. They also argue that NREGP work take very low labour and very light work are undertaken under this scheme and mentality of the labourers.

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Opinion of agricultural labourers about NREGP

Effect of NREGP	Age group				Number of Person	%
	> 20	20 - 30	30 - 40	< 40		
Affecting	0	01	07	09	17	6.80
Non affecting	02	19	67	141	229	91.60
Moderate affecting	0	02	0	02	04	1.60
Total	**02**	**22**	**74**	**152**	**250**	**100.00**

Source: Computed from primary data.

By the way of asking the questions, in different languages and by different tones, the agricultural workers are asked about the Impact of NREGP on agricultural work. From the personal observation, it is evident that the laboures are very keen in not committing anything adverse towards NREGP. The majority of 229 (91.60%) respondents say that the employment scheme is no way affecting the agricultural work. 17 agricultural workers agree fully with the view of the cultivators that the scheme affects the agricultural operations.

- NREGP is seen as a boon by agricultural laborers. Though the cultivators in one voice want the scheme to be abolished, the agricultural labourers in one voice give all support and praise for this scheme. Almost all are members of NREGP scheme. They argue that NREGP work is provided during the agricultural off seasons and don't have any impact on the supply of agricultural labour for farm work. The views of the two groups that is land owners and agricultural labourers are in the opposite directions. Here the views of the village Panchayat Presidents were taken to come to the conclusion. Of the record they say NREGP do have strong impact on the reduction in the supply of labour force for farm operation.
- When they are asked about the preference between farm work and NREGP work when both are provided at the same time, majority prefer NREGP because of its less labour requirement.

Concluding remarks

The views of the two groups that is land owners and agricultural labourers are in the opposite directions. Here the views of the village Panchayat Presidents were taken to come to the conclusion. Of the record they say NREGP do have strong impact on the reduction in the supply of labour force for farm operation. since the majority of the cultivators are citing NREGP as one of reasons of labour shortage, the district administration should monitor that the NREGP work is offered only during the agricultural off season. It is observed from the study that this norm of NREGP is not strictly followed in many of the village panchayats. This strict move will reduce the problem of labour shortage for agricultural operations especially during agricultural peak seasons. It is observed from the study that this norm of NREGP is not strictly followed in many of the village panchayats. This strict move will reduce the problem of labour shortage for agricultural operations especially during agricultural peak seasons.

Subsidizing the wages given by the cultivators by the government may give financial burden for the government which is already subsidizing many inputs for cultivation. A thorough discussion in this aspect will solve the problem faced by the cultivators regarding the shortage of labourers and also increase the farm wages of agricultural workers.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GURANTEE PROGRAMME – A CRITICAL APPROACH

Introduction:

National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is a revolutionary Programme of poverty alleviation of India in 21st century there are many schemes and programme introduces before this progrmme. But they are not much effective in reducing the unemployment and other problems such as poor standard of living, poor health care facilities and poor infrastructure etc. of rural area in India. It was implemented by the past government of India which has been aiming at generating income for rural poor people during lean periods and they have been protecting the vulnerable section from the distress of acute poverty.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005. This programme now renamed as "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural employment Guarantee Programme. It has now emerged as one of the important tools for rural development and for combating hunger and unemployment. The scheme came into force on 5th September 2005 in 200 districts in India and extended to another 130 districts later. In April 2008 MGNREGP expanded to cover the entire India. The central government outlay for the scheme is Rs. 39.100 crores ($8 billion) In FY 2009-10.

MGNREGP is a historic employment scheme in India. It Provides a legal guarantee for at least one hundred days of employment in (above 18 years of age) of any rural household willing to public work related unskilled manual work to people living BPL in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. Roughly one-third of the stipulated work force must be women. The MGNREGP achieves twin objectives of rural connectivity, working towards measures of flood control and protection, water conservation and harvesting is one of the other important tasks carried out by the employed, digging of new tanks/ponds, percolation tanks etc. This programme covers all 615 rural districts in the country providing employment for more than 52 million rural households. About 0.5% of the GDP is yearly invested by the Government for the implementation of the Program. This is by far the largest work fare program in the world. Recent assessments of the program highlighted the following aspects, among other.

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Objective of the Study:

- ✓ To study the goals and salient features of MGNREGP
- ✓ To study the history and funding of MGNREGP
- ✓ To study the impact of MGNREGP
- ✓ To study the Critical approach of this scheme

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Methodology:

This study is based on secondary data. The information's are collected from various articles, Reports and Economics Survey.

Implementation:

The Comptroller and Audit General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGA have found "significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the Act. The plan was launched in February 2006in 200 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts. 4, 49, 40,870 rural households were provided jobs under MGNREGP during 2008-09, with a national average of 48 working days per household.

Table - 1

Overview of MGNREGA Performance 2006-10

	2006-07 (200districts)	2007-08 (330districts)	2008-09 (615 districts)	2009-10 (619 Districts)
Households Employed (crore)	2.10	3.39	4.51	3.26
Mandays of Employment generated (crore)	90.50	143.59	216.32	128.24
Central Release (Rs. crore)	8,640.85	12,610.39	29,939.60	16,006.23
Total Funds Available (including Opening Balance) (Rs. crore)	12,073.55	19,305.81	37,397.06	28,664.31
Budget Outlay (Rs. crore)	11,300.00	12,000.00	30,000.00	39,100.00
Expenditure (Rs. crore)	8,823.35	15,856.89	27,250.10	15,737.40
Average Wage per day (Rs.)	65.00	75.00	84.00	88.00
Total Works taken up (lakhs)	8.35	17.88	27.75	25.21
Works completed (lakhs)	3.87	8.22	12.14	6.39

Source: Radhakrishna Committee on Credit Related Issues under SGSY (2009)

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Table - 2

National Report (2010-2011)

Employment provided to HHS	3.9 [Crore]
Total	135.27
SCs	30.51[22.56%]
STs	23.36 [17.27%]
Women	69.14 [51.11%]
Others	81.39 [60.17%]
Total workers taken up	66.27 Lakhs.
Work completed	2.68 Lakhs.
Works in progress:	63.59 Lakhs.

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Source: National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), in 2007-08,

Achievements

The MGNREGP provided Official statistics say that 2.83 billion person days were generated in 2009-10. 113.2 million Households were given job cards. 52.5 million Households were benefited from the scheme. According to National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), in 2007-08, 1.02 billion person days at an average wage rate of Rs.78.91 (totaling Rs.8, 040 crore (Rs.80, 400 million)) were provided through the program. The official statistics give the figures as 1.44 billion person days and wage bill of Rs,10,738 crore (Rs. 100,738 million).

Criticisms of MGNREGA:

1) **MGNREGA is just a way of redistribution of Income:** There is some truth to the criticism that this act is just a way of redistributing the income rather than making any lasting improvements in the rural infrastructure. Even its main proponents are silent on the details of the infrastructure projects successfully completed through the program and the benefits of such projects to the local communities. A majority of the supporters only show its effectiveness in improving governance procedures and making people aware of their rights.

2) **Long term dependency of the poor on the Government:** It would just create a long term dependency among the poor on the largesse of the Govt. If the works are only of marginal importance, and involve mainly the equivalent of digging and filling the ground, it would be such a huge waste of human potential and resources.

3) **Lack of Administrative Capacity:** The lack of the administrative capacity to run this scheme in the desired decentralized manner and the need to build this capacity quickly and effectively. The main deficiency was the lack of adequate administrative and technical manpower at the Block and GP levels, especially the Programme Officer, Technical Assistants, and Employment Guarantee Assistants.

4) **Absence of Effective Grievance Redressal System:** The major problem with MGNREGA is that there is absolute absence of an effective grievance redressal system. The common laborers are not aware to whom to submit their grievances and what will happen to that. Although the government of India recently passed an ombudsman order, but there are also many loopholes.

5) **Absence of Strong Penalty Provisions**: Absence of One more significant problem to be considered is the problem of the absence of strong penalty provisions. Provision of Rs1000 as fine under MGNREGA will not affect any corrupt official in anyways. Strongest possible provisions should be there in the act, if we expect the proper implementation.

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Suggestions:

1. A separate staff should be appointed at the district as well as at the union level for the programme.
2. The present level of wage is for below the ruling or minimum wage rate. Hence wage rate should be modified. Further every year wage rate should be increased in relation to inflation rate. Weekly wages payment should be adopted.
3. Awareness among the target group should be improved and their participation in making and implementing the scheme should be ascertained. The beneficiaries should be allowed to express their suggestions. So that the loop-holes in the scheme may be rectified.
4. Responsibility of work should be specified and honest offices should be rewarded and dishonest should be punished.
5. In some cases, there is non-availability and irregular supply of workers, to ensure the regular supply of labour the planners should estimate the extent and nature of unemployment and the suitable period for the successful implementation of the programme.

Conclusion:

MGNREGP made a positive contribution in creating social assets. But they have no significant impact, social and economic standards in the life of rural people and in generating employment to the rural poor. The benefits appear to be inadequate. Instead of giving fruitful employment opportunities to many members of the family, it is better to identify the skilled members of the family and ensure regular employment for him/her. This programme should be restructured in such a way to generate employment throughout the year.

ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GURANTEE PROGRAMME (MGNREGP) IN TIRUVANNAMALAI DISTRICT

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) 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 adult members of any rural house hold willing to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum work of 100 per day. The central government out lay for the scheme is Rs. 40,000 crore in 2010-2011.

This act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi (or) unskilled 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. It was initially called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) but was renamed on 2nd October 2009.

The village Panchayats will issue job cards to every registered individual. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme.

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Need for the Study

This study is taken to measure the development among the people. The conceptions of the people are measured whether this programme eradicates the unemployment problem and poverty is it useful to public are the main purpose of taking this research.

Objectives of the MGNREGP:-

- To identify the impact of MGNREGP on the beneficiaries in Tiruvannamalai district.
- To asses the changes in the generation of employment and income due to the implementation of MGNREGP in Tiruvannamalai district.
- To examine the economic and social infrastructure development through MGNREGP in Tiruvannamalai district.

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G. Jayasankar,

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Government Arts College, Tiruvannamalai .

Research Methodology:-

The area of Tiruvannamalai district is 6191 Sq.kms comprising the revenue divisions of Tiruvannamalai and Cheyyar. The district has six taluks viz, Tiruvannamalai, Chengam, Polur, Cheyyar and Vandavasi. These are 18 blocks and four municipalities. The total population of this district in 21, 86,125 comprising 10, 95,859 men and 10, 90,266 women as per 2001 census. The urban population constitutes 18% of the total population the remaining 82% is rural population in which nearly 20% of salaried class people are working irrespective of rural and urban population.

Sources of Data:-

In this study, both primary and secondary data are used.

Priority of MGNREGP Works in Tiruvannamalai District:-

- Formation of new ponds
- Renovation of existing ponds, kuttais, kulams, ooranies, and temple takes etc.
- Desalting of channels
- Desilting and strengthening of bunds of irrigation tanks.
- Formation of new roads
- Other water conservation/ soil conservation measures/ flood protection measures.

Impact on Employment Through MGNREGP:-

The impact on employment of the beneficiaries after the implementation of MGNREGP is shown in the Table No:-1

Table No: 1

MGNREGP Out Comes (Physical – Employment) in Tiruvannamalai District

Years	No. of households provided employment	Total persons days (in lakhs)
2009-10	2,37,348	170.97
2010-11	3,78,521,	160.59

Source: www.nrega.nic.in.

After the implementation of MGNREGP more than 860 villages and 3, 78, 521 poor house holds are getting employment and benefited in Tiruvannamalai district.

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Table No:2

MGNREGP Out Comes (physical: Assets) in Tiruvannamalai District.

Years	Rural connectivity	Flood control and protection	Water conservation and water harvesting
	Works Completed		
2009-2010	515	0	531
2010-2011	537	21	622

Source: www.nrega.nic.in.

After the implementation of this scheme created physical assets through rural connectivity works, flood control works, water conservation and harvesting works, micro irrigation works, and social infrastructure development in Tiruvannamalai district.

Suggestions and Conclusion

MGNREGP is a boon to the people who are living below poverty line. In the drought prone district of Tiruvannamalai inspite of certain draw backs in the implementation of this is a much sought programme.

As there are more land less poor in Tiruvannamalai district who totally depend on land work and other seasonal manual labour, the number of days are to be increased from 100 to at least 150 days.

During agriculture operations the labourers who depend up on the MGNREGP works should be allowed to work on their traditional work of farming activity so that cultivable land can become more productive than it is used to be and it will lead to better yields which results in sound financial position of the farmer and also the labourer.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

Panchatyati Raj in India today completed its golden Jubilee today. 50 years ago on 2nd October, 1959, Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, the Ist prime Minister of India laid the foundations of Panchat raj at Naguar in Rajasthan. To mark the occasion a National Convention was organized at vigyan Bhawan here on 2nd October 2009. The occasion was a witness to the major announcement, the renaming of the National Rural Employment guarantee Act after the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi as Mahatma Gandhi's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and observing the year 2009 -10 as the year of Gram Sabha by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in Presence of the UPA chair-person Sonia Gandhi, Panchatyati Raj and Rural Development Mr. Dr.C.P. Joshi and a large number of gram pradhams sarpanchs and Village representatives from all over the country (2nd October 2009).

In his key note address, the Prime Minister Said that panchatyati Raj Institutions need to play a pivotal role in the nations development. Highlighting the fact that people's participation is a must to implement the Governments programmes and schemes in a transport and effective manner, he called upon the Panchayati Raj institutions to take the lead. Dr. Singh stressed the need to strive continuously to take the lead. Dr. Singh stressed the need to strive continuously to make Panchayati Raj Institutions an effective instrument of utilizing people's power.

On observing year 2009-10 as the "year of Gram Sabha, the prime Minister side that the Gram Sabha provides a forum for the villagers to discuss, deliberate, accept or reject the proposals of Gram Panchayat. Dr. Singh that the decision to rename National Rural Employment Guarantee Act as the Mahatma Gandhi Nation Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a humble tribute to the father of our Nation.

In his welcome address, the Union Minister for Panchayat raj and rural Development Minister Dr. C.P. Joshi said that it is need of the hour for the panchayate Raj Institutions to play a proactive role in the developmental process of our country. Dr. Joshi called upon the peoples representative especially those from the rural aresas to work as a catalysts of social change and add to the process of economic development and social justice. Dr. Joshi also cited the unique identification scheme and the cabinet decision of article 243D ensuring 50% reservation to women in panchayats as major initiatives to change the face of rural India. He expressed hope with the empowerment the panchayats can play a more effective role for upliftment of poor people.

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OBJECTIVES

1. The MGNREGA achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGA stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as water conservation and harvesting, afforestation rural connectivity, flood control and protection much as construction and repair of embankments etc.,

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2. Digging of new tanks / Ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc.,

HISTORY AND FUNDING

The scheme started from February 2, 2006 in 200 districts was expanded to cover another 130 districts in 2007- 08 and eventually covered all 593 districts in India in April 1, 2008. The outlay was Rs. 11,000 Crores in 2006-07 and has been rising steeply to Rs. 39,100 Crores. (140% increased amount respect of previous 2008-09 budget in 2009-10. First a proposal is given by panchayat to Block Office then Block is decided whether work would be sanction or not. The plan was launched in Feb 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts, 4,49,40,870 rural house holds were provided jobs under NREGA during 2008 – 09, with an national average of 48 working days per house hold.

SUGGESTIONS

During agriculture operations the labourers who depend up on the NREG works should be allowed to work on their traditional work of farming activity so that cultivable land can become more productive than it is used to be and it will lead to better yields which results in sound financial position of the farmer and also the labourer.

1. Barren and uncultivable lands which are brought under the preview of the NREGP are of no use either to the former or to the nation in terms of productivity. It is advisable to divert the attention of the officers who are more useful and productive oriented activities on the lands which are better than the barren ones.

2. The participation of women should be increased on par with the men for raising the income of the family. As there will be no work throughout the year particularly for women, they should be accommodated in unskilled works such as reeling activity in the silk industry, weaving mats, and making articles from palm leaves.

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CONCLUSION

Desertification of India, especially in Tamil Nadu is to some extent stopped because of this programme as the workers and farmers are involved in contour bunding, tree plantation and water storage management. It results the stopping of the migrations of farmers and labourers in good numbers. Because of the increase in their income levels, their children are able to get good education, settle in life. Education leads to better opportunities to the students hailing from this working class. Hence, efforts are to made to ensure effective implementation of NREGP.

EMPLOYMENT ENHANCES EMPOWERMENT OF FARM WOMEN –A REVIEW

Agriculture in India is the vertical backbone of the country and is regarded as the largest sector of the country's economic activity. About 80% of the Indian population either directly or indirectly depends on agriculture. Most of the women perform various works for their livelihood and agriculture is considered as the biggest unorganized sector where large number of Indian rural women takes part actively. Women all over the world play a crucial role in the development and management of their families. From early ages of history the gender role differential exists in the management of household affairs. Women, according to the previous norms of our society are meant for looking their children and also to serve their best the needs of other members of the family. Women constitute, roughly, half of the total population. The society however, does not always permit equal status to women with men. It is alleged that to most society including our own, women are exploited by men in various ways. There is a wide spread belief both among men and women that the women have a natural instinct for the management of home.

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The Objectives of the present study are:

- To identify occupational status of farm women in terms of caste an important social indicator, and To suggest a few measures to improve the level of employment and income generation by the farm women of the study area.

The present study is a special attempt to scrutinize the empowerment of farm women in Tirunelveli District. As the study is about employment of farm women in Tirunelveli District, Random Sampling method will be adopted to select the sample of 400 farm women. The necessary statistical and mathematical tools will be used. To analyze, the technique of ANOVA, trend values may be used.

Objectives of the study:

- To identify occupational status of farm women in terms of caste an important social indicator, and To suggest a few measures to improve the level of employment and income generation by the farm women of the study area.

P. Mary Thangam,

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Hypothesis:

- Employment of farm women is highly significant to determine their empowerment.

Methods and materials:

The present study is a special attempt to scrutinize the empowerment of farm women from Tirunelveli District. **Random Sampling Method** has been administered and the ultimate sample size is 400 farm women. There are 238, 4370, 4750 and 751 women in the four watersheds selected as Itteri, Melacheval, Madathupatti and Chelianallur respectively. From this total population of 6109, a sample of 400 farm women beneficiaries were selected. The present study utilized both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected from the selected sample respondents using face to face interview method by interview schedule. Secondary data for this study have been collected for the period of one decade from the documents published by various institutions; periodical magazines, journals, newspaper, and websites ,some statistical trend analysis and ANOVA, have been used to touch the objectives and justify the framed hypothesis. The study involves both primary and secondary data. Primary have been collected for the period 2009 and 2010. And the secondary data have been collected for a period of 10 years i.e.1999-2000 to 2008-2009.

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Occupation

Occupation plays a decisive role in one's progress. The sample respondents are classified into small farmer's marginal farmers, agricultural coolies and bonded labourers broadly. Details are presented in the following table

Table 1

Caste wise Distribution of Sample respondents by Occupation

Caste	Occupation of the sample respondents				Total
	Small farmers	Marginal farmer	Agricultural cooly	Bonded labour	
BC	93 (35.9)	4 (1.5)	149 (57.5)	13 (5.0)	259 (100)
MBC	16 (17.8)	35 (38.9)	6 (6.7)	33 (36.7)	90 (100)
SC/ST	0 (0)	32 (62.7)	19 (37.3)	0 (0)	51 (100)
Total	109 (27.3)	71 (17.8)	174 (43.5)	46 (11.5)	400 (100)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate the percentage to respective totals)

Source: Computed from primary data

It is observed that a maximum 43.5 percent are agricultural coolies followed by 27.3 percent small farmers; 17.8 percent marginal farmers and 11.5 percent bonded labourers respectively. The last variable is the least. There are neither small farmers nor bonded labourers among the SC/STs. BC small farmers claim 35.9 percent and their cooly size is 57.5 percent. The highest bonded labour percentage is found in the MBC group.

Total earning persons in the family

At times, as source of income for families, a single female number earns and others do not. This aspect among the samples is dealt below:

Table: 2

Caste wise Distribution of Sample respondents by number of females

Total earning persons in the family

Caste	Occupation of the sample respondents				Total
	Small farmers	Marginal farmer	Agricultural cooly	Bonded labour	
BC	93 (35.9)	4 (1.5)	149 (57.5)	13 (5.0)	259 (100)
MBC	16 (17.8)	35 (38.9)	6 (6.7)	33 (36.7)	90 (100)
SC/ ST	0 (0)	32 (62.7)	19 (37.3)	0 (0)	51 (100)
Total	109 (27.3)	71 (17.8)	174 (43.5)	46 (11.5)	400 (100)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate the percentage to respective totals)

Source: Computed from primary data

Table 2 shows that among the families 56.8 percent BC; 83.3 percent MBC and 92.2 percent respectively have no earning person. In the grand total, this works out 67.3 percent. There are one female and this, earning family on the basis of BCs, MBCs and SC/STs are 25.1 percent. 5.6 percent and 0 percent respectively. There are two earning female members in the total number of persons in a family and it work out to 18.1 percent; 11.1 percent and 7.8 percent respectively. In the total this group forms 15.3 percent, only the least.

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Knowledge through Farm – based Training:

Training programmes and orientation opportunities enhance ones awareness and inspire greatly. Necessary data are tabulated duly:

Table 1.3

Farm – Based Training

Caste of the respondents	Training attended		Total
	Yes	No	
BC	236	23	259
	(91.1)	(8.9)	(100)
MBC	49	41	90
	(54.4)	(45.6)	(100)
SC/ST	30	21	51
	(58.8)	(41.2)	(100)
Total	315	85	400
	(78.8)	(21.3)	(100)

(Figures in the parentheses indicate the percentage to respective totals) Source: primary data

Table 1.3 shows that out of the total 400 samples, 315 (78.8 percent) have attended training. 21.2 percent have not attended training.Among BCs 91.1 percent; SC/STs 58.8 percent and MBCs 54.4 percent respectively have attended training. Other have not.In this context, BC members show an encouraging trend followed by SC/STs and MBCs.

Hypothesis:

Employment of farmwomen is not significant to determine their empowerment **ANOVA**

Table: Role of Employment on Empowerment

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	131.967	3	43.989	1.447	.003
Within Groups	12039.831	396	30.404		
Total	12171.798	399			

Source: Computed from primary data

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Interpretation:

- ✓ The F- calculated value at 3 degree of freedom is 1.447.
- ✓ The p significant value is 0.003.
- ✓ Since p value is less than the 5% level of significance, this analysis is not supporting to accept the null hypothesis. It means that the employment (occupation) is a subject matter to attain empowerment.

It is agreed and accepted through analysis that the employment generation activates through Watershed Development Programme for the farm women in the study area, helps to empower them.

Suggestion:

- Women working in the rural economy and the informal sector are to be formally recognized and her labor work may be accounted in monetary terms.
- Watershed Development Programme, Horticulture practices to be specifically arranged for women.
- Encourage the linkages between women's self-help groups and watershed associations where women representatives from the self-help groups who sit on watershed committees will represent the views of their groups, and have the backing of the group members.

Conclusion

There is a need to ensure that women do not become overwhelmed by schemes and programmes focused at them and are not persuaded to participate simply for short-term incentives (wage labour), but are able to make informed choices about what is best for them and their families. That remains the big challenge. The empowerment of women thorough activities that bring them sustainable economic independence and provide them with a 'voice' can help to shift the socio-economic cultural and political norms which prevent the effective implementation of legislation which supports their right to land and property and the status that goes with those rights.Economic independence of women would accelerate the improvement of the status of women. Government would endeavour to give joint title to husband and wife in the development activities involving transfer of assets. This would be taken up for implementation to start within programmes like distribution of land and house sites and beneficiary oriented economic units. Social space for women may be created in public fora, which a will help them increase their confidence and capacity to participate effectively.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GAURANTEE SCHEME IN EMPOWERINGTHE SOCIALLY EXCLUDED COMMUNITIES

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, workfare programmes have been important programme 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, afforestation, soil conservation and road construction. The rationale for workfare programmes rests on some basic considerations. The programmes provide income transfers to poor households during critical times and therefore enable consumption smoothing specially during slack agricultural seasons or years. In countries with high unemployment rates, transfer benefits from workfare programmes can prevent poverty from worsening, especially during lean periods. Durable assets that these programmes may create have the potential to generate a second-round of employment benefits as necessary infrastructure is developed.

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WORK FARE PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

The need to evolve a mechanism to supplement existing livelihood sources in rural areas was recognized. The need to evolve a mechanism to supplement existing livelihood sources in rural areas was recognized early during Development Planning in India. The Government implemented workfare programmes that offered wage employment on public works on minimum wages.

The wage employment programmes started as pilot projects in the form of Rural Manpower (RMP) [1960-61], Crash Scheme for Rural employment (CRSE) [1971-72], Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme (PIREP) [1972], Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour Scheme (MFAL) to the poorest of the poor. These experiments were translated into a full-fledged wage-employment programme in 1977 in the form of Food for Work Programme (FWP). In the 1980's this programme was further streamlined into the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP). Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY1993-94) Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS). The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) was merged with JGSY from 1999-2000 and was made a rural infrastructure programme. The programme was merged with the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana

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from 2001-02, Sampoorna Grameen Rozgaar Yojana (SGRY, 2001) and National Food for Work (NFFWP, 2005) These wage-employment programmes implemented by State Governments with Central assistance were self-targeting, and the objective was to provide enhanced livelihood security, specially of those dependent on casual manual labour. At the State Level, the Govt. of Maharashtra formulated the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme and Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, 1977 to provide wage-employment to those who demanded it.

MRNREGS

There have been critical voices claiming that the objectives of the act are difficult to reach while a section of the researchers, practitioners and academicians claim that the act has contributed enormously to the empowerment of the marginalized communities. It is important to see if the scheme has helped the excluded communities such as dalits and tribals. So, the researcher intents to study the MGNREGS in Ariyalur district to find out the impact of MGNREGS on above said social groups. In Ariyalur , it is implemented in 6 blocks covering 36 Panchayats. The researcher will take up this study with following objectives.

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Aim of the Study

The aim of the research is to study the impact of NREGS on the social and economic conditions of the rural people.

Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To study the socio-economic background of the beneficiaries under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in Ariyalur District.
2. To study the effect of NREGS on agriculture in the study area.

.Methodology of Research

Descriptive Research Design has been used for the present study. The universe of the present study includes all the people living within 6 blocks that comes' under Ariyalur district.

Sampling

There are 6 blocks in Ariyalur. Of the six, one block was selected by lottery method. Thirumanur block, which was selected, has 36 panchayats. Among them only those panchayats with families that completed the full 100 days under the NREGS were selected by the researcher for the study. There were 20 such panchayats that came under the study with 107 families that completed 100 days of employment.Census method was used to select the beneficiaries as respondents.

Tools of Data Collection

The researcher used a self structured Interview-Schedule which included the respondent's personal details such as age, gender, education, occupation, income etc, for the

ANALYSIS & DISCUSSSION

The implementation of the scheme nation wide has many practical difficulties. Only a direct research with those who help in implementing the scheme and the beneficiaries will help to remove these difficulties.

Table – 1: Distribution of demographic traits of Respondents

S.	Age	Respondents	Percentage
1.	20 – 30 years	12	11.2 %
2.	31 – 40 years	25	23.4 %
3.	41 – 50 years	36	33.6 %
4.	51 – 60 years	26	24.3 %
5.	61 – 70 years	7	6.5 %
6.	Above 70 years	1	1.0 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Gender	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	52	48.5 %
2.	Female	55	51.5 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Religion	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Hindu	97	90.6 %
2.	Christian	10	9.4 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Educational	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Primary	30	28.0 %
2.	Secondary	38	35.5 %
3.	Higher Secondary	3	3.0 %
4.	Illiterate	36	33.5 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Community	Respondents	Percentage
1.	SC	27	25.2 %
2.	BC	72	67.3 %
3.	MBC	8	7.5 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Marital Status	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Married	100	93.5 %
2.	Unmarried	7	6.5 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Type of Family	Respondents	Percentage
1.	Nuclear	88	82.2 %
2.	Joint	19	17.8 %
	Total	107	100.0 %
S.	Family Size	Respondents	Percentage
1.	1 – 4 Members	90	84.1 %
2.	5 – 8 Members	13	12.2 %
3.	More than 8 member	4	3.7 %
	Total	107	100.0 %

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The table reads that 28 per cent of the respondents have completed primary education and 35.5 per cent have done secondary education while 33.5 per cent of them are illiterate. It is also under stood that 93.5 per cent of the respondents are married. The family type of the research universe also shows that 82.2 per cent of the respondents live in nuclear family and only 17.8 per cent of them live in joint family.

Table – 2: Distribution of Respondents by their occupation

S. No.	Type of Occupation	Before NREGS	Percentage	After NREGS	Percentage
1.	Agricultural	70	65.4 %	25	23.4 %
2.	Own agriculture	20	18.7 %	8	7.5 %
3.	Others works	17	15.9 %	-	-
4.	NREGS works	-	-	74	69.1 %
	Total	107	100.0 %	107	100.0 %

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Occupation wise distribution table shows a very salient point about the scheme. The table clearly shows that people who were agricultural labourers (70) and even those who had their own agricultural land (20) have opted to work under the scheme. About (74) of the respondents have left agricultural work and have joined the NREGS scheme. This study shows that agricultural labour has been affected by the scheme. Even the (17) who have done others works before the scheme have left them and joined the scheme after its implementation.

Table – 3:Employment Opportunity of the Respondents

S. No.	Employment Opportunity per month (In Days)	Before NREGS	Percentage	After NREGS	Percentage
1.	5 – 10	5	4.7 %	-	-
2.	10 – 15	89	83.2 %	10	9.3 %
3.	15 – 20	13	12.1 %	80	74.8 %
4.	20 – 25	-	-	17	15.9 %
	Total	107	100.0 %	107	100.0 %

The above table studies the employment opportunity of the respondents before and after the implementation of the scheme. Maximum number of respondents have expressed that NREGS has given them more number of days of employment per month. (89) of them have said that they had 10-15 days of employment per month before the scheme and (80) of them have agreed that the days of employment has increased to 15-20 days per month after the implementation of the scheme.

Table – 4:Income Variation Before and After NREGS

S. No.	Annual Income of the Individual	Before NREGS	Percentage	After NREGS	Percentage
1.	10,000 – 12,000	7	6.6 %	-	-
2.	12,000 – 14,000	78	72.9 %	13	12.2 %
3.	14,000 – 16,000	18	16.8 %	71	66.4 %
4.	16,000 – 18,000	4	3.7 %	14	13.0 %
5.	Above – 18,000	-	-	9	8.4 %
	Total	107	100.0 %	107	100.0 %

The above table shows clearly that the annual income of the beneficiaries has increased after the implementation of the scheme. The maximum number of respondents (78) have stated that their annual income was 12,000 – 14,000 before the scheme and (71) among (107) accepted that their annual income has increased to 14,000-16,000 after the implementation of the scheme.

CONCLUSION

The present study is a humble attempt to describe the important variables such as implementation of NREGS, Awareness on the scheme, salient features of the programme and employment opportunities created by the scheme while considering their socio-demographic characteristics and analyzing the associations among the different key variables. The study has brought out important findings which indicate significant differences between the NREGS works and its relation to the agricultural works, the benefits as against the drawbacks and some valuable suggestions. This study will form a basis for more methodologically sound and rigorous research studies in the broad area of norms related to NREGS works and awareness and reach of the salient features of the scheme.

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THE IMPACT OF MGNREGS IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

India is the second largest democracy and the most populous in the world. In spite of her vast man power in this world, she is still in the path of average progress. This is due to various problems but mainly due to various economic reasons. The other reason is our over population, and the failure of a few welfare schemes of the government. Due to some practical difficulties the welfare schemes intended to enhance the lives of the down trodden masses never reach them.

The implementation of national Rural employment Guarantee scheme can be considered as a partial approval of these demands (NREGS) Now the central government has decided to rename the scheme as Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee scheme. This is one of the notable development scheme implemented after independence. It is a historical scheme as it is implementing a right pronounced in the constitution. It has been viewed as the largest labour oriented project in the world now.

The implementation of MGREGS in Thanjavur District

Thanjavur is known as "the granary of Tamilnadu" it's agricultural affluence is well known by the saying' "Cholanadu Sorudaithu" Hence it is inevitable for the state to implement the scheme as it helps to provide jobs related to agricultural activities therefore, it is activated in this district since 1.4.2007.

Aims :-

This scheme aims at providing physical oriented employment for atleast 100 days.

To enhance the quality of life in the villages.

To create a stable assets

To improve the infra structure.

Action :-

This scheme has been activated since 1.4.2007. In the initial level the training was given to the heads of Municipality, people welfare officer and panchayat writer. Secondly the forms, registers and application have were printed.

Public awareness was created through newspapers, T.V. Radio and notices. The identify cards wer issued to the eligible candidates through the panchayat.

Every panchayat will receive 10 lakhs to 15 lakhs for the works creating channels and repair the ponds.

Every Friday all the works must be measured and they have to prepare a wages would be issued before the committee appointed for issuing the wages.

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Year wise Work Progress, Labour Budget and Work Expenditure in Thanjavur District during 2007-2010

S. No.	Year	Labour Budget		Administrative Sanction		Expenditure	Man Days	No. of Households given in 100 days	%
		No. of works	Esti. Cost (in Rs.)	No. of works	Esti. Cost (in Rs.)	(in Lakhs)	(in Lakhs)		
1	2007-08	-	-	876	2917.33	1141.71	15.00	0	
2	2008-09	-	-	931	3248.70	2093.00	26.00	717	
3	2009-10	1440	4735.00	512	1684.00	2700.00	32.00	14310	61
4	2010-11 (29.10.10)	1840	6642.00	1575	5603.00	4554.00	46.00	1125	69
	Total	**3280**	**11377.00**	**3894**	**13453.63**	**10488.71**	**119.00**	**16152**	

Source : DRA, Thanjavur

To regulate the wages, the scheme has introduced to open a bank account in the name of the worker in any hearby nationalisted bank.

Special Features:-

- Every adult member of the family is provided with an employment.
- The family members can go for work for 100 days in a year.
- The ID card is issued soon after the registration.
- If the worker works for 7 hours the fixed time, he will be paid upto Rs.100./-.
- There is no disparity in wages for women and men. Equal wages for them.

Conclusion

Removal of poverty is a timely and realistic policy. To alleviate poverty, we have to adopt a novel economic ideas and policies. This scheme has helped the rural masses tremendously. As it had been specially organized for the upliftment of the downtrodden, it (the scheme) method out the poverty and its related issues. The UPA government within a short period of the implementation of the programme hs successfully executed the aim ie. alleviating poverty from villages

MNGRS has turned out to be the one and only lower of income to many number of families. It is a system that has become the part of their life of the villagers. The total design of the scheme-for instance-the recruitment of the workers, the work style and nature of the work are immensely make the programme very meritorious. National level, this scheme has brought out a desirable effect.

In Thajavur, this scheme benefited many number of people. This scheme of people, in a constructive way. The downtrodden names– instead of relying the private land owners or job providers – they can seek the job directly from the panchayat. In a purely democratic way, the work is being carried out. A fixed source of income, really alleviates poverty from the villagers households, indirectly learning their life enhanced.

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NATIONAL RUAL EMPLOYMENT GUARATEE PROGRAMME IN INDIA

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) – an important policy response of the 'United Progressive Alliance' government that promised various policy initiatives in its Common Minimum Programme, was launched by Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh in February 2006. NREGS guarantees a minimum of hundred days' employment at minimum wages every year to each rural household on demand (in the selected districts of its operation). This note seeks to bring together key lessons from various parts of India, relating to initiation of the Scheme and its implementation.

Need for Greater Safeguards in Payment of Wages

In several instances identified during an audit conducted by officials of rural development department and functionaries of prominent local NGOs, labourers employed under the scheme were found to have been paid at the rate of Rs. 40/- per cubic meter of earthwork, as against Rs. 50/- prescribed under the scheme. In many cases, substantial amounts have been withdrawn from the post office accounts of labourers by means of forged signatures. According to a news release of Times News Network, irregularities have been found in more than 65 percent of the 300 post office branches of the district where wages are credited into the accounts of the labourers.

Increasing Employment Opportunities:

In 2007-08, 3.39 crore households were provided employment and 143.5 crore person days were generated in 330 districts. In 2008-2009, up to July, 253 crore households have been provided employment and 85.29 crore person days have been generated.

Enhancing Wage Earning and Impact on Minimum Wage

The enhanced wage earnings have lead to strengthening of the livelihood resource base of the rural poor in India; in 2007-2008, more than 68% of funds utilised were in the form of wages paid to the labourers. In 2008-2009, 73% of the funds have been utilized in the form of wages.

Increasing Outreach to the poor

Self targeting in nature, the Programme has high works participation of marginalized groups like SC/ST (57%), women (43%) in 2007-2008. In 2008-2009, upto July, the participation is SC/ST (54%) and women (49%), strengthening Natural Resource Base of Rural India: In 2007-08, 17.88 lakh works

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have been undertaken, of which 49% were related to water conservation. In 2008-2009, upto July, 16.88 lakh works have been undertaken, of which 49% are related to water conservation.

'Dalits' are most likely to be excluded

The likelihood of exclusion of households hailing from scheduled castes from their employment rights under the NREG Scheme needs to be carefully guarded against. Such instances were evident even in some of the well-publicized hot-spots of hunger and disasters in Bihar where many SC people lost their lives during the floods of 2004; Piprahi, Bongia and Jalhi villages in Mohanpur and Barachatti blocks in Gaya, where about fifteen SC people lost their lives after being compelled to eat off the carcass of a rotten goat; to name a few) is a matter of serious concern.

The need to effectively guarantee the entitlements under NREGS to at least the socially disadvantaged scheduled castes cannot be emphasized more. This can happen only if the monitoring designs of the governments purposively seek to examine the coverage of scheduled castes and other dalit segments of society under the Scheme. The government of Kerala has begun doing this, and nearly 32% of scheduled castes and 65% of scheduled tribes have been covered under the scheme in Palakkad and Waynad districts so far.

Similarly, a large number of Muslim families in Gujarat that had to abandon their villages after the riots of 2002 and had to take refuge in places like Vadali, Gamirpura and Kalol have not been able to avail of their entitlements under NREGS. In May 2006, the National Commission for Minorities, taking suo motu cognisance of newspaper reports about Muslims being kept out of the purview of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in three districts of Gujarat, i.e. Panchmahals, Banaskantha and Sabarkantha, had to seek a full report from the State Government on this issue.

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Need to look beyond employment provision

In a country with nearly 300 million people living below the officially defined poverty line, and over 40% of rural population estimated to be landless, provision of a hundred days' employment cannot be held as an adequate safeguard against poverty. The state also needs to bring to effect comprehensive legislations guaranteeing land rights to the poor, so that the livelihoods of the latter aren't contingent upon a few days of employment delivered by the administrative machinery of the state under circumstances that aren't always adequately responsive to the urgencies and crises faced by poor households.

Conclusion:

However, the MGNRGA offers an unprecedented opportunity to initiate broad based growth through poverty reducing employment generation and consequent demand expansion. There face, the recent reports of mobilization and straggles by rural workers for the full and proper implementation of the NREGA is good level.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION AND PARTICIAPATION OF WOMEN IN MNREGP IN SIVAKASI

INTRODUCTION

Ever since launching the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) in 2006, the UPA coalition government has missed no opportunity to extol its virtues as the country's most significant welfare scheme. The scope and purpose of the NREGP is at the heart of the National Common Minimum Programme of the UPA coalition, and made mandatory through parliamentary legislation in 2005. It seeks to provide guaranteed employment, at statutory minimum wages, of 100 days in every financial year to rural households with unemployed adult members prepared to do unskilled manual labour. This simply means the million of people in India's poorest villages will be given a chance to get short term unskilled jobs like "building up of village roads, schools and other buildings, ponds, and small dams all of which will become productive assets of the rural economy". The act is applicable to areas notified by the Central Government and will cover the whole country within 5 years of its notification. In its first phase, it was notified in 200 districts. The second phase covers 330 districts in 2006-2007. The third phase to cover all the 595 districts in 2007-2008.

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Participation of Women in NREGP

The share of women in the work force was much the same in both years (around 40 per cent) in the phase I districts, a healthy indication of growing participation of women over time. The state specific figures and rankings for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 are fairly stable, with Tamil Nadu having the highest participation of women in both years by a long margin. One interesting development is a major increase in women's participation in Bihar and Himachal Pradesh. However, the state where women constituted less than the statutory minimum of 33 per cent of the workforce in 2006-2007 remained so in 2007-2008 as well, except for Haryana and Uttarakhand. Punjab crossed the mark in the working direction. The share of SCs and STs in NREGP employment declined a little between 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 mainly on account of the decline in ST participation with no remarkable changes in state-specific figures.

NREGP in Sivakasi Block

- The I phase of the NREGP work was started in five panchayats of Sivakasi block on 1.4.2008.
- The II phase was started on 1.6.2008 and the III phase on 1.7.2008 in nine and forty panchayats respectively.
- Total panchayat in Sivakasi block is 54.

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- Total families in the block are 64874 in number.
- Registration of families under NREGP was 23,790 in number.
- Total works undertaken in the block were 110.
- Work completed in the block was 65.
- Work in progress is 45.
- Total allotment of fund sanctioned was Rs. 3, 73, 50,000/-.
- Expenditure made so far was Rs. 246, 29,425/-.

REPORT OF THE SAMPLE PANCHAYAT –2009.

Panchayat Name	Total families	Families Registered	Male	Female	Total Registration	Allotment of Funds (in Rs)	Total Expenditure (in Rs)	Total Works	Completed Works	Work in progress	Percentage
Enjar	411	201	81	190	271	450000	328653	2	1	1	49
Krishnappari	337	188	136	157	293	750000	550028	3	2	1	56
Naduvappatti	615	312	208	236	444	850000	666943	3	2	1	51
Saminatham	934	357	145	387	532	850000	630489	3	2	1	38
Vadapatti	675	348	135	219	354	1150000	950355	3	3	-	52
Vendrayapuram	725	327	160	230	390	850000	734116	3	2	1	45

Source: Collected from the records of Panchayat Union, Sivakasi.

The participation of women in this programme is directly co-inside with the over-all results obtained by the Tamil Nadu State and also with other States.

Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To estimate the employment generation of NREGP programme in the study area.
2. To analyse the participation of women in NREGP programme in the study area.

Methodology

The present study is based on primary data as well as secondary data.

Primary Data

Personal interviews and unbiased observations are the most suitable methods to establish a good report with the respondents to collect necessary data. For this, a pre – tested interview schedule has been

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used. Information collected through the direct field enquires from the respondents forms the database for the study.

Secondary Data

The present study have been collected from Government Records, Records of Taluk and District offices, Records of Sivakasi Taluk Office, Research Articles, Reports, Magazines and journals.

Sampling Design

Sivakasi block consists of 54 panchayats. In Sivakasi block the NREGP was introduced in three phases. In the first phase, this programme was introduced in five panchayats. In the second phase it was launched in nine panchayats and in the final and third phase this programme was implemented in the remaining 40 panchayats. The researchers have selected six panchayats for data collection.

Conclusion

The highest level of employment is generated in Samynatham panchayat with 160 mandays. Naduvappatti comes the last with 100 mandays of employment. 29 per cent have completed 100 mandays of work; 21per cent and 18 per cent respondents have received 80-90 and 70-80 mandays of employment respectively. Only four respondents have completed 40 to 50 days of work due to their personal and other works.

In the study area out of 120 respondents, 35 (29 per cent) respondents go for work for four days per week, the remaining two days they go for personal work. Only 18 respondents (15 per cent) out of 120 only go for work for six days in a week. Twenty two respondents (18 per cent) have worked five days in a week. The remaining respondents go for work either two days or three days in a week only.

Out of 120 respondents, only 37 (31 per cent) are getting real employment opportunities, because they are housewives and they have not engaged in any income earning work previously. Fifty five respondents (46 per cent), now working in NREGP are previously engaged in agricultural activities. The remaining respondents *i.e.,* 12 (10 per cent) 10 (8 per cent) and six (5 per cent) are already engaged in fireworks, match factory and construction works respectively. It is evident from this table that nearly 50 per cent of the workers are shifted their occupation from agriculture to NREGP.

It is inferred that 27 per cent are having their own agricultural land and hence they have engaged in farm activities. Another four respondents (13 per cent) are of the opinion that, the salary under NREGP work is very low when compared to other works. Seven respondents (23 per cent) revealed that NREGP will provide employments to only 100 days per year. Eleven respondents (37 per cent) engaged in rearing up of their cattle. Further, in general almost all the respondents are of the opinion that there is no job security throughout the year and also the wages are far less than other occupations.

It is apparent that registration of women in this programme is more in number compared to men. Further it is evident that this programme does not generate worth-full employment in the rural because the majority of the job card holders are age old and they previously engaged in some other occupations. The authors strongly criticised this programme that it has created an acute shortage of labour force in the agricultural sector and it will affect the production of agricultural commodities and make an unfavourable condition to the farmers, in future.

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"MGNREGA", A CATALYST IN THE PROCESS OF FINANCIAL INCLUSION: IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DISTRICT, KERALA.

Introduction

In India the financially excluded sections largely comprise of marginal farmers, landless labourers, oral lessees, self employed and unorganised sector enterprises, urban slum dwellers, migrants, ethnic minorities and socially excluded groups, senior citizens, women etc. The North East, Eastern and Central regions contain most of the financially excluded population. Financial exclusion is the main problem of the rural areas just because the rural population is constituted mainly by marginal and small farmers, landless labourers, self employed people, socially excluded people, etc

Nearly forty years after nationalization of banks, 60% of the country's population does not have bank accounts and nearly 90% do not get loans. Despite heightened focus on financial inclusion, Indian banks still somewhat failed to bring the under- and un-banked into the mainstream banking fold.

Rural development

Rural development is the key to development of a country. The MGNREGA which was notified on September 7, 2005, is playing a crucial role in the objective of changing the face of rural India. The change that has happened in the rural areas of India due to MGNREGA is remarkable. Inclusive growth and financial inclusion can be said as two of the prime outcomes of the Act. Economic growth follows financial inclusion. In order to achieve the objective of growth with equity, it is imperative that infrastructure is developed with financial inclusion.

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Financial Inclusion

Financial Inclusion is high on the agenda of the Government of India. Financial Inclusion is delivery of banking services at an affordable cost to sections of disadvantaged and low income groups. Financial Inclusion is considered to be critical for achieving the Inclusive Growth- which itself is required for ensuring over all sustainable growth in the country.

The basic **objective** of this study is to bring out the magnitude of the financial inclusion that has happened due to the MGNREGA in the study area.

With a view to universalise the system of wage payments through institutional accounts, it has been recommended to all States to disburse wages through Post Offices and Bank Accounts. 6.86 crore MGNREGA bank and post office accounts have been opened to disburse wages in FY 2008-09.

The number of MGNREGA bank and post office accounts opened has risen to 8.8 crore during the FY 2009-2010. 80 % of wages has been disbursed through these accounts. Initial experiments in the use of smart cards and biometric signatures for wage payment to MGNREGA workers in remote villages are being carried out in various parts of the country.

This study is conducted in Kanjiramkulam ward and Lourdepuram ward of Kanjiramkulam Grama Panchayath in Athiyannur Block, Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala. The intention of the study is to identify the magnitude of financial inclusion that has happened due to MGNREGA. As per the norms of MGNREGA, the beneficiaries are supposed to collect their wages from the State Bank of Travancore,

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Kanjirankulam branch. The wage payment through a bank account of the beneficiary is mandatory as per the MGNREGA norms. So all the beneficiaries opened there own bank accounts in the SBT.

From Table 1 it is evident that, of the 50 beneficiaries interviewed just 10 are men and rest 40 are women. Majority of them are just house wives before being part of MGNREGA. These are women who have never dreamt of earning a rupee on their own.

They realise that a bank is just a financial institution, operating to help them and facilitates money transactions. Once the fear of entering the bank is over, people start using it. MGNREGA helped in removing the fear of the people. From Table No 3 it is clear that more than 90 percent of the beneficiaries of MGNREGA did not have a bank account before joining MGNREGA. Of the 50 respondents just 4 had bank accounts before joining MGNREGA. The financial inclusion that has taken place due to MGNREGA is more than 90 percent. Just because they happened to be part of MGNREGA, 40 women and 6 men started their own bank accounts. In this group of 40 women, not even a single person had a bank account before joining MGNREGA and of the 10 men just 4 had bank accounts before joining MGNREGA.From the field study conducted, it is evident that the role played by banks in making MGNREGA corruption free is very significant. Making payment of wages through banks has not only made MGNREGA corruption free but also has provided an opportunity for the rural masses to start operating a bank account. The importance given for financial inclusion in MGNREGA has not only helped in making rural masses aware of benefits of using bank accounts but also has become a platform for the beneficiaries to start saving a part of their income in the banks itself. The uneducated people normally make small savings in the form of gold or some other material assets. They never were aware of the possibility of saving their money as money itself. From Table No 4 it is clear that majority of the beneficiaries have not yet started saving for the future but still the progress is commendable. Among men just one person had some savings and that too he preferred to keep in hand than to deposit in the bank. There were 3 women who had their savings in bank and 6 others had savings in their personal custody. Women seem to be making use of the various facilities provided by the government to them at its best.

It is not just the savings that has increased. The level of income has also risen for majority of the beneficiaries of MGNREGA. From table 5 it is very clear that majority of the MGNREGA workers before joining MGNREGA had an income in the range of '3000 to '4000. After joining MGNREGA there is a substantial increase in their incomes. Majority of the people i.e around 42 of the 50 respondents now had more than '4000 as their monthly income.

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Is financial inclusion the primary objective of MGNREGA?

No. MGNREGA intend to provide the rural household with wage employment for at least 100 days per annum. But financial inclusion turned out to be a part of its major objectives once the implementation of MGNREGA began.

Conclusion

MGNREGA is a programme that increases the speed of financial inclusion in India. It is a real catalyst. The programme, since its inception has proved to be a novel idea in all respects. It has really proved itself as a wage guarantee programme. Its potentialities are evident from the huge response it has got in the rural India. Through MGNREGA, in near future itself we can expect drastic changes in our rural areas. A rural India with good road facilities, with proper drinking water facilities, sanitation facilities, 100% financial inclusion, full employment, etc is not very far. MGNREGA acts as a catalyst in the process of rapid financial inclusion for rural development.

EVALUATION OF THE MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT: SOUTH INDIAN STATES.

Introduction

The Government of India passed National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (hereafter NREGA) on 7th September 2005. Its basic objective is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household, whose adult members are volunteer to undertake unskilled manual labour. In the past, public employment programmes in India targeted at the poor are generally identified with poverty alleviation. The NREGA goes beyond poverty alleviation and recognizes employment as a legal right of every individual in rural India [Yadav, 2008]. The significance of NREGA lies in the fact that it creates a right- based framework for wage employment programmes and makes the Government legally accountable for providing employment to those who ask for it. This programme has been launched in 200 selected poor districts on 2nd February 2006 in Phase I. It was extended to 130 more districts in 2007-08 in Phase II and remaining 285 districts from 1st April 2008 onwards [Chakraborthy, 2007].

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Past evaluative studies of this programme clearly articulated that '***Panchayati Raj Institutions***' (PRIs) are the major designated agencies for the implementation of NREGA. Gram Panchayats (GPs), which is the lowest tire of the federal system, are responsible for identification, execution, and supervision of NREGA and as a result the success of the programme critically depends up on the capacity and accountability of the local governments. For the successful evaluation of the programme social auditing by the **'Gramasabha'** is made mandatory by the Act [Mukherjee and Ghosh 2008]. Present study is an attempt to evaluate the programme in some of the South Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala by taking in to account the quantum of employment generated, wage paid, income generated to male and female workers. The present programme is designed in such a way that it is able to overcome all those problems. It is in this context an evaluation of the programme by choosing some of the south India states become relevant.

Objectives of the study

(i) To explore the theoretical background of NREGA.
(ii) To understand the level of employment generated.
(iii) To understand the wage distribution across gender.
(iv) To understand the implementation Process

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Methodology and sources of data

The present enquiry primarily relies on secondary data sources. In order to study the implementation of NREGA programme, four south Indian states, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, have been selected. The main objective of the paper is to measure the quantum of employment generated in these states, wage paid to male and female and income transferred to male and female. To fulfill these objectives I have adopted different methodologies. To full fill the first objective of theoretical approach of this programme the author has identified theories from review of literature. The author has selected fund usage and employment provided to rural households to full fill the objective of efficiency of government in NREGA. Even though NREGA website is a very useful source of data, some aspects regarding some of the states and districts are not available. These have been recorded as 'zero' value.

Analysis

Job cards issued and number of man days

The mandate of the NREG Act has been the guaranteed employment generation, and is dependent on several administrative factors viz. registration and distribution of job cards, application for work, initiation of the work, appropriate and timely measurement/valuation of the work and subsequent release of wage payment to the labourers.

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Table 1 The parentage of HHs Job cards issued and number of man days in 2010

States	% of HHs issued Job card			Percentage of HH in mandays		
	SCs	STs	Others	SCs	STs	Others
Andhra Pradesh	24.42	11.66	63.92	N.A	N.A	N.A
Karnataka	18.2	8.91	72.89	25.7	13.3	61.1
Kerala	13.85	3.71	82.44	24.1	5.3	70.6
Tamil Nadu	29.8	1.67	68.53	40.8	0.4	58.8

In Andhra Pradesh, all registered households have been provided with job cards in both 2008-09 as well 2009-10 financial years. The issue of job card can be taken as the demand side and employment provided by the Panchayat as a supply side factor in the programme. The above table explains percentage of Households received job cards in the financial year 2008-09 and 2009-10 by social group for the four states. In all the states the work demanded by the Other Caste (except SC and ST) is very high and also it has increased from first to second year. Employment demanded by the Others Caste is very high in Kerala compared to the other states.

Table2 Expenditure on NREGA Progremme (as on April 2010)

Years [FY]	Expenditure on NREGA (in Crore)
2006-07	11300
2007-08	12000
2008-09	16000
2009-10	39100
2010-11 (till April 2010)	40100

As mentioned above the expenditure on this programe can be used to measure the employment trends in India. Because, according to mandates of this programme, the 60% of this fund has used to pay as a wage. The wage can be paid only when the employment taken place. In the above table the expenditure on this programme has increased drastically from 11300 crore in the financial year of 2006-07 to 2010-11.

Women participation in NREGA in different states.

Looking at all India participation rates in the first two years of its implementation, Drèze -and Oldiges [2009] point to the marginal increase in the participation of women (from 40% in 2006-07 to 44% in 2007-08) and it has further increased 48% in 2009-10. Large inter-state variations in the participation of women, ranged from 87.8% in Kerala and 15 % in Uttar Pradesh. The role of Kudumpasree is attributed to this increased participation of women in Kerala.

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Table 3 Percentage of women participation in NREGA [as on April 2010]

States	Men	Women
Andhra Pradesh	41.9	58.1
Karnataka	54.96	45.04
Kerala	12.12	87.88
Tamil Nadu	20.09	79.91

Details of fund usage

From the available data except Kerala all other three states they have used less than 1% of the fund from the available fund for the respective states in financial year 2008-09. But in financial year 2009-10 except Andhra Pradesh all other states has increased very drastically. There is marginal increase of fund usage from 0.003 % in 2008-09 to 5.71% in 2009-10 in the Andhra Pradesh.

Table: 4 Expenditures in NREGA

States	Total Expenditure (Rs. In Lakhs)		Total Availability of fund for the states (in lakhs)		% of amount spend out of total availability of fund	
	2008-09	2009-10	2008-09	2009-10	2008-09	2009-10
Andhra Pradesh	10.66	22542.56	321910.19	394473.09(22)	0.003	5.71
Karnataka	32022.10	280583.96	3736694.0	397964.4(-89)	0.86	70.50
Kerala	22003.82	47382.33	1529927.0	55193.62(-96)	1.44	85.85
Tamil Nadu	6476.67	142851.58	10443409.0	265631.2(-97)	0.06	53.78

Source: NREGA Website (http://nrega.nic.in)

There has been declined in the availability of the fund to the states. For example in Karnataka it has declined (89%), Kerala (96%) and Tamil Nadu (97%). But in the case of Andhra Pradesh it has been increased by 22 percent. The total availability of the fund is high in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka followed by Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. This mainly based on the total number of the districts vary across the states. Total number of the districts is high in Tamil Nadu (31), Karnataka (29), Andhra Pradesh (22) and Kerala (14). Except Andhra Pradesh there is drastic reduction in the total availability of the fund to the states from first year to second year.

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Findings and Concluding Remarks

In Andhra Pradesh, all registered households have provided with job cards in both 2008-09 as well 2009-10 financial years. In all the states the work demanded by the Other Caste (except SCs and STs) is very high and also it has increased from first to second year. Employment demanded by the Other Castes is very high in Kerala compared to the other states. The women participation in NERGA is high in both Kerala (92%) and Tamil Nadu (71%) in the financial year. This is because, kudumbasree in Kerala and Self Help Group (SHGs) in Tamil Nadu play crucial role in creating awareness among the people about NREGA. Women generated more than 88 percent of income in Kerala and 80 percent of income in Tamil Nadu in the NREGA programme.

Among the four southern states, Karnataka has provided 100 days of employment for 12 percent of households. Whereas Andhra Pradesh has provided 100 days of employment only for 0.11 percent of the rural house holds. Kerala is the only state providing Rs 70 as average wage in all the districts followed by Karnataka (99), Andhra Pradesh (55) and Tamil Nadu (54). In the Financial year 2009-10 Kerala has spent more than 85 % of available fund for this programme followed by Karnataka. Karnataka has spent more than 70 percent, Tamil Nadu 53 percent but Andhra Pradesh has spent only 5 percent.

Awareness of key aspects of the Act was not there even amongst Secretaries, Gram Panchayat Presidents and lower level officials at the Block level. Awareness about wage rates and how work is measured and quantum of payment calculated was not clear to wage earners. Also at higher levels, the spirit of a demand driven NREGA Act was not fully absorbed. It is still seen exclusively in a service delivery framework. We need to organize continuous and ongoing training programs at all levels on these issues.

The NREGA fulfills most of these categories. If effectively implemented, the NREGA will go a long way towards ensuring food security and protecting rural household from hunger.

USE OF ICT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF NREGA – A VISIONARY TOOL FOR RURAL INDIA

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment guarantee scheme is the biggest and the noblest anti-poverty scheme in the post independence India. It is a landmark legislation that epitomizes the right to employment on demand. Since its inception in 2006, it has provided 800 crore person days of employment, with 50% of share for women and more than 50% for SC/ST and Rs.66976.91 crores as wages. This has resulted in increased spending on food, health and education, reduced distress migration and augmented productivity through green jobs. It has in fact ensured that the state is able to give effect to one of the directive principles spelt out in the constitution of India namely right to an adequate means of livelihood.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To understand the significance National Rural Employment Scheme.
2. To highlight the importance of use of ICT for NREGA implementation.
3. To outline various ICT tools for NREGA implementation in rural areas.

Methodology:

The study mainly uses secondary source of information collected from the Internet, newspapers and journals. Descriptive analysis is made to highlight the importance of ICT usage for NREGA implementation.

Highlights of NREGA implementation:

- Strengthening of livelihood resource base of the rural poor.
- Rise in minimum wages - on an150% increase.
- High participation of marginalized groups like scheduled caste, ST and women.
- Strengthened natural resource base of India through water conservation, water harvesting, provision of irrigation facility and rural connectivity.

Why ICT for NREGA implementation?

The above facts indicate that the size of the programme is very large from various perspectives namely geographical, financial and size of the beneficiaries. To ensure timely dissemination of information, online monitoring and evaluation of the programme for feedback and corrective actions, ICT intervention in NREGA implementation is essential.

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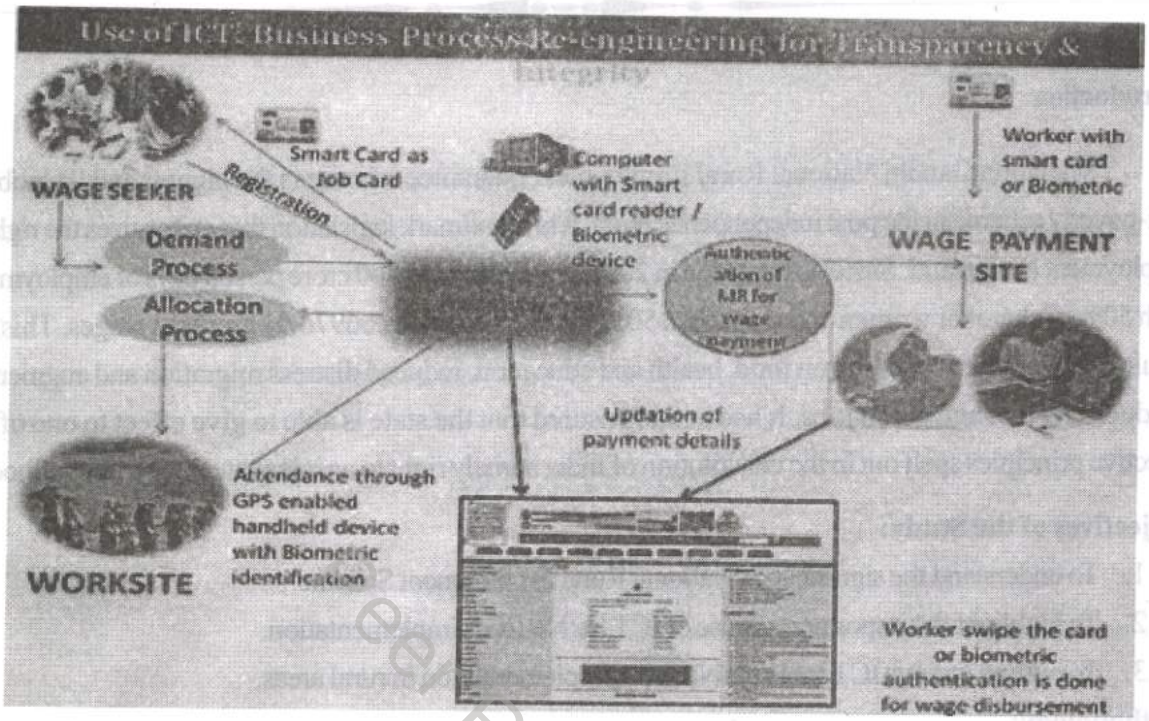
Areas of ICT intervention in NREGA implementation:

ICT has got a definite role to play in every phase of implementation of NREGA, a glimpse of which is shown below:



Broadly speaking, the major areas of implementation includes the following:

Communication and Mobilisation:

Which includes community radio, television, public address system, panchayat website & and Internet to publicize NREGA. Also it includes information Kiosks to disseminate information.

Planning phase

Creation of database of durable, productive, labour- intensive works at panchayat level and mapping out socially productive and durable assets/ infrastructure etc.,

Execution of work:

Under this phase ICT can be used effectively to maintain authentic record of attendance of works at worksites with simultaneous updating of employment records. To monitor the approval of work and

Monitoring:

To ensure that the rural household are availing the guaranteed 100 days of employment and their wage employment rights are not being misused by others. A finger print recognition based time and attendance system along with a comprehensive computerized MIS for capturing and viewing information pertaining to householders, number of days of employment provided, reports on assets created etc., may be used for this purpose. Again use of GIs (Geo-graphical information system) may be helpful in assessing the quality of assets created.

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Grievance Redressal system:

Under this, the citizens can register grievances at the panchayat level in the office of the programme officer and can later on track its follow up online.

ICT solutions Tried Thus For:

The Government of Andra pradesh is the forerunner in deploying ICT for implementation of NREGA. In collaboration with TCS, a software has been developed which integrates various process like enrolment of wage seeker, monitoring of work execution, management of wage and material payments etc., into a single framework. This software has been installed in all 656 mandals across across 13 districts of AP. Under 8 categories of work permitted by the act,62 types of work has been indentified and estimate preparation for various work is generated by the system once the data is fed into the system.

The way forward...

Few other solutions, which have been developed and are yet to reach the implementation stage, are:

SMS Based Fund Transfer:

This system would work as follows:

- Sending the muster roll of NREGS beneficiaries through SMS by the site engineer.
- The payment agent makes payment based on muster roll.
- SMS about payment made is sent to panchayat Raj Department's Banker, who in turn transfer funds to village payment agent's bank account.

Thus SMS database will be integrated with NREGS web potential to generate weekly payment details

Use of Rural ATM:

ATMs Which can work with both used and new notes and has a finger print based authentication system may be potentially be deployed.. It works on low power with a built –in a battery back-up & does not require air conditioning.

Use of Bio-Metrics:

In order to ensure that ICT could be used even with illiterates, bio-metric ATM can be used for authentication of workers, and tracking the details of payment.

Conclusion:

To conclude, use of ICT in implementation of NREGA should be seen as complementary to all the progressive initiatives of the Government and with percolation of computers to the panchayat level, it is hoped that the state wide area networks would be available at the panchayat's door steps in the very near future.

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ROLE OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME – A CASE STUDY

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act - 2005 (NREGA-2005) is an enactment under the Ministry of Rural Development. The main purpose of this act is to improve the living conditions of the rural population and the sustenance of the same in the rural sector of India. The improvement is made by the means of providing a minimum hundred working days pertaining to guarantee wage employment per year to any adult member volunteering for an unskilled manual work. The Central Council is endowed with the power to assess the different schemes formulated under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act - 2005. The Central Council may collect statistical information about the rural economy and the execution of the projects for development of the rural sector.

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 ₹100 (US$2.17) per day. The Central government outlay for scheme is 40,000 crore (US$8.68 billion) in FY 2010-11.

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Provisions under MGNREGP

Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA and is free of cost. The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application. A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen. The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates. Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States. Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses

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Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notices a wage rate which will not be less than 60 (US$1.3) per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.

Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case. At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme. Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided. The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the gram sabha and approved by the zilla panchayat. At least 50% of works will be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution. Permissible works predominantly include water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works

60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. No contractors and machinery is allowed. The Central Government bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi skilled workers. Social Audit has to be done by the Gram Sabha Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process. All accounts and records relating to the Scheme should be available for public scrutiny with an national average of 48 working days per household.

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Worksite Conditions

A proper working condition is a primary necessity for ensuring safety and efficient condition for workers which particularly in the case of women is much more important. One can take the need for child care at the worksites since many of the women have their siblings with them when they go for work. Other facilities like safe drinking water, shade for the period of rest and first aid facility were absent in the study area.

Prospectus

In spite of all the grey areas in the implementation of NREGA a silent revolution is taking place in rural India with respect to women in disguise. There is a growing concern among the workers to come to terms with NREGS. Women workers are getting empowered through NREGS as visible in the form of growing contributions to household expenditure, bearing cost of children's education and healthcare. Women have also started to appear more actively in the rural public sphere as they take up their work and responsibilities. There is a general trend of low migration in the areas where assessment was carried out and workers have started to repay their debts.

The study reveals that despite numerous problems, NREGA is a program that has begun to make a difference in the lives of women. Furthermore, it is popular among the workers, who routinely ask if more work could be made available to them under the NREGA. Clearly, there is a massive demand for NREGA work, and the administration should respond to it by increasing the scale of employment.

Employment under MGNREGP in 2010

Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on Tuesday that As of 30th June, a total of 179,43,189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS

MGNREGP and of difference works

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)under the 'Ministry of Rural Development' strives for the enhancement of rural livelihood by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

In sync with the choices of the work suggested in the act, shelf of projects chosen primarily consists of areas that address causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on a sustainable basis. The works happening in financial year 2009-2010 are flood control, rural connectivity, water conservation and water harvesting, renovation of traditional water bodies, drought proofing, irrigation canals, irrigation facilities to SC/ST, land development, etc.

.Objectives of the Study

1. Role of women beneficiaries in MGNREG Programme
2. To study the factors create awareness of this programme to women beneficiaries
3. To study the level of income of the women beneficiaries
4. To find out the factors influencing the women beneficiaries
5. To identify the age group of women beneficiaries working in this programme.

Research Desgin

The research design used by the researcher is in accordance with the empirical study requirements. Among 200 households, 60 households were selected for the study. As such it covers the type of data collected and various tools used for analyse. Percentage Analysis has been used.

Primary Data

The primary data is collected by the researcher through well structured and comprehensive questionnaire in view of the theoretical literature.

Sampling Method

The researcher used convenient sampling method. The respondent were classified based on the age gender, marital status and years of experience. Similarly the researcher has selected respondent from village of Alamarathupatti in Dindigul District.

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Analysis and Interpretation

The MGNREGP analysed with the help of the role of women beneficiaries and their socio-economic conditions. The data collected for the above purpose are tabulated, analysed and interpreted.

Though the assessment adopts both qualitative and quantitative methods, a questionnaire based field work has been extensively followed. The design and contents of the questionnaire was also discussed with various experts, researchers and concerned officials. This was important to understand and adapt with the local dynamics. The sampling method has prepared.

The questionnaire included questions focusing on respondent (age, education, marital status, whether she was a member of a group her household details including members, type of house, work details including migration information of household's ownership of land and livestock; and information on her level of awareness about NREGA, wages, her participation in gram sabhas, benefit of asset created in her villages through NREGA, economic and social benefits of NREGA to her and village.

Table 1 : Income Level of the MGNREGP Beneficiaries

S.No.	Monthly Incomes (Rs)	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	1000 – 2000	9	15.00
2	2000 – 3000	17	28.33
3	3000 – 4000	13	21.67
4	4000 – 5000	8	13.33
5	5000 – 6000	7	11.67
6	Above 6000	6	10.00
	Total	60	100.00

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Source : Primary data.

Income is the major determinant of the women beneficiaries from the above value. We analyse the MGNREGP worker's Income has been increased after joining MGNREG Programme. It shows 28.33% of the women workers belongs to the Income group between Rs.2000 – 3000. 21.67% of the respondents comes under the income level Rs.3000 – 4000.

Majority of the respondents earned the income Rs.2000 – 3000.

Table 2 : Details of Family of the Respondents

S.No.	Size of Family	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	2 – 4	20	33.33
2	4 – 6	25	41.67
3	6 – 8	9	15.00
4	8 – 10	6	10.00
	Total	60	100.00

Source: Primary data.

The table shows that the respondents' family size 41.67 having 4 – 6 in their family.33.33% of the respondents having 2 – 4 size of family.

Most of the respondents (10%) having 8 – 10 members in their family.

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Table 3 : Sources of Awareness

S.No.	Sources	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	Radio	6	10.00
2	TV	12	20.00
3	NGO Representative	15	25.00
4	Panchayat Office	20	33.34
5	Government awareness Program	5	08.33
6	Other sources	2	03.33
	Total	60	100.00

Source : Primary data.

The above table explains 33% of the respondents to joined MGNREGP programme through Panchayat office 25% of the respondents joins through NGO representative.

Majority of the respondents (33.34) get awareness through Panchayat Office.

Table4 : Reasons for joining MGNREGP

S.No.	Reasons	No.of Respondents	Percentage
1	Supplementary Income	11	18.33
2	To meet Family Expenditure	15	15.00
3	Medical Expense	13	21.67
4	Festivals / Ceremonies	6	10.00
5	Repayment of Old debts	8	13.33
6	Children Education	7	11.67
	Total	60	100.00

Source : Primary data.

In this study the table shpws many respondets (25%) join the MGNREGP works to meet family expenditure 21.67% of the respondents to meet medical expenses. 18.33% of the respondents join for Supplementary Income and 11.67% of the respondents to meet their Children education. Most of the respondents (25%) join the programme to meet family expenditure.

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Conclusion

The study was undertaken to analysis the women empowerment through MGNREGP in Alamarathupatti, Dindigul District. It was found that in income of the women increased after joining MGNREGP. The monthly household expenditure also rose by a considerable level, but the saving are increasing at slow rate because the incremental expenditure is higher. The dignity of women and consequently their social status have appreciably increased and ultimately empowering women for a better balance society praised for further forward upliftnent.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN TAMIL NADU – AN APPROACH

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people living below poverty line in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. Roughly one-third of the stipulated work force must be women. Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his /her photo. Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to panchayat or to Programme Officer.

The panchayat/programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at panchayat office. The employment will be provided within a radius of 5 km: if it is above 5 km extra wage will be paid. The scheme was introduced in 200 districts during financial year 2006-07 and 130 districts during the financial year 2007-08. In April 2008 NREGA expanded to entire rural area of the country covering 34 States and Union Territories, 614 Districts, 6,096 Blocks and 2.65 lakhs Gram Panchayats.

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NEW INITIATIVES UNDER MNREGA

- Dedication of NREGA to the memory of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi and re naming the Scheme as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.
- Guidelines have been issued to states to set up Ombudsman at district levels for effective grievance redressal : Instructions on Ombudsman have been issued. Ombudsman will be an agency independent of the central or state government. The Ombudsman will receive complaints from NREGA workers and others on any matters consider such complaints and facilitate their disposal in accordance with law. The Ombudsman will be appointed by the State Government on the recommendation of the selection committee. Ombudsmen will be well-known persons from civil society who have experience in the field of public administration, law, academics, social work or management.

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- NREGA partnership with Unique Identification Development Authority of India(UIDA): NREGA partnership with UIDA has been initiated. The database of NREGA will be utilized by the UID Authority to expedite the development of the identification system for the residents.
- Social Audits: Social Audits enable the rural communities to monitor and analyze the quality, durability and usefulness of NREGA works as well as mobilize awareness and enforcement on their rights. Social Audit is an important tool by which the people can improve and devise strategies to enhance the quality of implementation of NREGA. The Ministry has accorded utmost importance to the organization of Social Audits by the Gram Panchayats and issued instructions to the States to make necessary arrangements for the purpose. The Act was amended to provide for procedures on conducting social audits. Social audits have been undertaken in all the Gram Panchayats of the country.
- NLM Visit: Thirty two National level Monitors were deputed in different states for special monitoring of the social audit campaign initiated by the Ministry.
- Eminent Citizens Monitors for NREGA: Eminent Citizens will be identified to further Report on the progress of NREGA. Their reports and findings will be placed on the website and discussed at an annual workshop to enable the programme to improve itself.
- Convergence of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA: The Ministry of Rural Development has developed and disseminated Guidelines for convergence of the Mahatma Gandhi NREGS with different Schemes and specific programmes. 115 convergence pilot districts in 23 state, independent organisations have been instituted by the Ministry. The National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD) is monitoring the convergence projects.
- Construction of Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra /Gram Panchayat Bhawans would be constructed under the scheme to create durable assets in the Villages.
- Business correspondent Model is being adopted in Rajasthan with the help of Central Bank of India to ensure timely payment of wages to the workers under the MNREGA.

The new initiatives under MNREGA will ensure transparency and accountability in the process so that benefit of the Government's flagship program reaches out to the millions of rural poor across the country and in the process making it an effective instrument of poverty alleviation.

Priority of works

Taking into account the field conditions in Tamil Nadu, the works are being taken up in Tamil Nadu in the following priority:

a) Formation of new ponds.
b) Renovation of existing Ponds, Kuttais, Kulams, Ooranies, Temple tanks etc.
c) Desilting of channels.
d) Desilting and strengthening of bunds of irrigation tanks.
e) Formation of new roads.
f) Other water conservation/soil conservation measures/flood protection measures.

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District wise progress

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme – Tamil Nadu

Financial & Physical Progress (upto 30.07.2010)

Sl. No.	District	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs. in crores)	Mandays Generated (in crores)	No.of works Completed
PHASE I				
1	Cuddaore	381.99	4.04	4436.00
2	Villupuram	594.60	8.88	6138.00
3	Tiruvannamalai	369.04	4.74	8046.00
4	Nagapattinam	254.80	2.96	2623.00
5	Sivagangai	216.38	3.01	2604.00
6	Dindigul	241.63	2.91	4178.00
PHASE II				
7	Thanjavur	88.94	0.91	1314.00
8	Tirunelveli	150.34	1.88	2436.00
9	Tiruvarur	133.34	1.54	1433.00
10	Karur	47.87	0.64	601.00
PHASE III				
11	Kancheepuram	167.10	2.25	2347.00
12	Thiruvallur	144.81	1.51	1648.00
13	Vellore	160.11	1.83	1652.00
14	Salem	147.25	2.03	1297.00
15	Namakkal	55.86	0.69	255.00
16	Dharmapuri	58.34	0.71	565.00
17	Krishnagiri	87.48	0.85	499.00
18	Erode	62.33	0.84	1187.00
19	Coimbatore	67.87	0.85	535.00
20	The Nilgiris	5.86	0.11	22
21	Tiruchy	129.56	1.80	1506.00
22	Perambalur	37.47	0.47	573.00
23	Ariyalur	72.19	0.89	1333.00
24	Pudukottai	145.62	2.23	3033.00
25	Madurai	125.85	1.57	804.00
26	Theni	33.66	0.47	515.00
27	Ramnad	119.99	1.66	1323.00
28	Virudhunagar	115.29	1.86	1615.00
29	Thoothukudi	78.97	0.99	1157.00
30	Kanniyakumari	23.39	0.26	201.00
31	Tiruppur	65.57	0.70	1102.00
Total		**4383.50**	**56.08**	**56978.00**

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The following special steps were initiated to streamline and expedite the implementation of the scheme:

The minimum wage under NREGS has been raised from Rs.80/- to Rs.100/- vide G.O.No.146, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (CGS-1) Department, with effect from 01.01.2010. Every year a separate Rural Schedule of Rates is approved exclusively for this scheme to remove the major hurdle in getting the statutory minimum wage for eight hours of prescribed work. For 2009-10, the RSR have been issued by allowing 100% increase to the works other than single clearance and 150% increase to the single clearance works order.

The existing formats of Job Cards and Nominal Muster Rolls have been revised to make these documents more transparent informative and difficult to manipulate in the process of scheme implementation.

Additional ministerial, technical and computer staff have been sanctioned at District, Division, Block and Village levels in order to ensure proper implementation and close supervision of the scheme. Due to the extension of this scheme to the remaining 20 districts of Tamil Nadu with effect from 1.4.2008, the Government has sanctioned additional administrative staff, additional fuel for block vehicles for 20 Phase - III National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme districts vide G.O. Ms. No. 27, RD & PR (CGS-1) Department, dated 20.2.2008,G.O.Ms.No.84, RD & PR (CGS-1) Department, dated 4.8.2009, G.O.Ms.No.69, RD & PR (CGS-1) Department, dated 4.6.2010.

Only bigger works not less than Rs. 3 lakhs in value have been taken up in order to ensure that i) adequate numbers of workers get sustained employment at a work site for at least 30 days, ii) the assets created are visible, durable and genuinely beneficial to the community, iii) resources are not wasted by being spread too thinly, iv) the works are monitored closely and leakages are minimised.

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GURANTEE ACT
UPS & DOWNS IN ITS IMPLEMENTATOINS
MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GURANTEE ACT

INTRODUCTION:

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Act is an Indian Job gurantee Scheme, enacted by a legislation on August 25, 2005. The scheme provides a legal gurantee for one hundred days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related to unskilled manual work at Rs 100 Per day. The Central Government outlay for the scheme is Rs.40, 100 Crores in the Financial Year 2010-11.

It is true that MGNREP has done a tremendous effort on the eradication of poverty. It is even greeted as a unique poverty alleviation programme in the world. However, one should accept that only if this programme is implemented whole heartedly and in an effective manner, NREGP would bring out a sweeping change in our economy.

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Sustainable Development and Programmes related to Removel of Poverty:

Various programmes have been introduced right from the 4th Five year plan, to change the lives of the people who have been on the lower end of the ladder.

Sustainable development in India includes a variety of development schemes in social, cleantech (clean energy, clean water, sustainable agriculture) and human resources segments, having attracted the attention of both central and state governments and also public and private sectors. Social sector, cleantech investments into green energy and fuel alternatives and development schemes for backward and Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families are being touted as some of the more heavily invested segments in India in 2009, despite the economic slowdown.

MGNREP:

The CAG lamented the wide gap between percepts and practice of the programme, the ministry sought to play down lapses by claiming that its performance should not be judged on the basis of its operational guidelines as they were merely a recommendation.

The ministry amended the social audit provision and this over turned the basic principle of audit. It empowers the panchayat to conduct its own audit. As a result the only credible model of social audit in the country is no longer legal as it hinges on the participation of trained personnel from outside the panchayat.

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Again shifting the MGNREGA's focus from labour intensive to material intensive projects. Expanding the scope of work that could be undertaken under the Act, the ministry ordered that the MGNREGA funds be diverted to construct a facilitation centre in each village named after Rajiv Gandhi. This executive diktat, besides eroding the powers granted to the panchayat under the Act, has allowed material contractors to get a foot in the door. It has also opened up opportunity for corruption.

SWOT ANALYSIS AS ASPECTS

Strengths	Weakness
• Very successful program that promises jobs to ready.	• Expenditure oriented and not demand driven
• Livelihood alleviation program that promises relief stimulus to BPL segment.	• Very poor participation of people in deciding village needs.
• Involved participation of women compared to other states	• Very poor knowledge/ awareness of NREGA act and benefits
• Well written act promising the rural orientation	• Poor record maintenance and work measurement
• Much needed focus on irrigation land and plantation	• Lack of enforcement of wage regulation policies
	• Lack of enforcement of Redressal systems

Opportunities	Threats
• Can focus more on livelihood enhancement programs like sanitation drinking water facilitation.	• NREGS Work are implemented in slios • Need to consider the benefits of convergence with other acts.
• Program can be redesigned to build or match skill sets of that particular locality. • Build an eco system that drives itself	• Panchayat needs to develop a proactive mind set. • Should perform counseling to those who approach • Educated should not be entertained
• Integrating river channels rain water harvesting desilting	• Government approach of restricting the scope to "unskilled rural" work might be an hindrance to the program/developments in the long run.
• Civil Society Organsations (CSOs) might support PRIs in NRGA planning implementation and social audit	• Failures of similar rural development programmes in the past. • Ensure continual participation to bring a radical change

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Awareness	Satisfaction
• Majority of the respondents expressed that they are not aware of the procedures	• Most of the respondents are very satisfied with employment provision in their own village
• Sarpanch or Panchayat leader plays the key role in deciding the sheif projects.	• Majority of the respondents are dissatisfied with the wages paid to them.
• Male members in the village take advantage of women in Grama sabha meetings	• Dissatisfaction on working condition.
• Meetings were not informed and so they don't participate.	
• Most of them doesn't know when they have applied for their job and to validate the information	
• Majority are unaware of the unemployment allowance.	

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A Critic of the Functioning of MGNREGP:

No welfare programme is free from Criticisms MGNREGS is not an exception. A few such criticisms are mentioned below:

The National Advisors Council (NAC) prepared the cost of employment gurantee programme at 1% of the GDP. The calculations assume that each person day of employment gurantee will cost Rs 100 at 2004-05 prices. This includes Rs 60 as wages and Rs 40 for the non- labour (materials) component including administrative costs. For providing 100 days of employment, the cost will be Rs 10,000 per person. Since according to the census 2001, the rural population below the poverty line is 20 Crores it implies 4 Crore households (5 per family). Multiplying per person cost Rs 10,000 with 4 Crore household the total cost of the programme per year at 2004-2005 prices works out to Rs 40,000 crores i.e.1.3 percent of GDP.

In Karnataka there are plus and minus points related to NREGP. In one such instances of negative side, Rs 300 Crores has been misappropriated and a high level enquiry is ordered. It is learned that Karnataka has used only around Rs 2000 Crores as against a sanctioned amount of Rs 4000 Crores. Social Auditing is absent as far as Karnataka is considered.

In Andhra Pradesh there are instances to confirm that individuals are aware of NREGP benefits, and the corruption practices being done in Andhra Pradesh. Crores of rupees have been misappropriated but no action has been taken. Auditors admit they are under constant pressure from politicians and

officials but the monitoring process has helped recover at least some of the money siphoned off through NREGA.

In Kerala the case is different. NREGP helped the people of Kerala to grow more vegetables. It is recorded that NREGP that helped coir workers in Kerala. The promotive tribals whose women never come out but in the MGNREP, they worked shoulder to shoulder with their men in laying a new road. A great social change has come in this respect.

In Tamil Nadu, the act is not being effectively implemented for the reason that there are records of non issuance of job cards to the beneficiaries.

Conclusion:

NREGA (Scheme) is the largest of its kind anywhere in the world and the Ministry of Rural Development described it as a revolutionary measure to transform the rural economy. There is a fear that this programme may also go like many other unsuccessful poverty eradication programmes. However one must know that something is better than nothing. Like plus and minus, ups and downs, dark and light, there would be merits and demerits of any programmes. The success lies only in the way in which it is implemented. Let us hope for the whole hearted commitment of all those who are involved in this scheme for the success of NREGP.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME :AN ASSESSMENT OF RECENT TRENDS

Introduction

The **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA)** 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 adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of Rs.100 per day. The Central government outlay for scheme is Rs. 40,

An increase in agricultural wages would mean an increase in income of the agricultural workers and this will only come from the surplus that is presently being enjoyed by the rich rural peasantry. If 100 days of employment at minimum wages as envisaged under NREGA,2005, are indeed made available to the agricultural labourers then there is an opportunity for augmentation of agricultural wages. But this is also a measure that will hurt the class interests of the rich rural peasantry.

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The plan

The act directs state governments to implement MNREGA "schemes". Under the MGNREGA the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers. However, it is up to the State Government to decide the amount of unemployment allowance, subject to the stipulation that it not be less than 1/4th the minimum wage for the first 30 days, and not less than 1/2 the minimum wage thereafter. 100 days of

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employment (or unemployment allowance) per household must be provided to able and willing workers every financial year.

Process

Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address to the Gram Panchayat. The Panchayat registers households after verification and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of the adult members of the household along with their photos, which the local government is to pay for. A registered person can submit an application for work orally or in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to the panchayat or to Programme Officer.No discrimination between men and women is allowed under the act. Therefore, men and women must be paid the same wage. All adults can apply for employment.

Implementation

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGA has found "significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the act. The plan was launched in February 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts. 44,940,870 rural households were provided jobs under NREGA during 2008-09, with an national average of 48 working days per household.

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Employment under MGNREGS in 2010

Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on Tuesday that As of 30th June, a total of 179,43,189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS.

Work /Activities

The MGNREGA achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGA stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as: water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection much as construction and repair of embankments, etc. Digging of new tanks/ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc. First a proposal is given by the Panchayat to the Block Office and then the Block Office decides whether the work should be sanctioned.

Conclusion

The NREGA is closely bound up with notions of entitlement and citizenship. It was associated with a rights-based agenda pushed in the Supreme Court. Its supporters claimed it would empower the poor and foster democracy, unlike passive beneficiary employment programmes. Some argued it was mandated by the 2004 election. However, the NREGA was an elite creation. Leaders in civil society and politics shaped its progress, building coalitions between them to generate support for guaranteed employment. Champions in government were critical in pushing the NREGA onto the agenda and in overcoming the resistance of their colleagues.

The model of the 'tipping point' fits this process very well. Once on the national agenda, the only real opposition to the NREGA came from fiscal conservatives in the government and bureaucracy. Political opposition was notably absent. Rural employers who may have lost out through rising wages were far too poorly organised to protest, and not represented politically. Right-of-centre commentators expressed displeasure at the Act in the media, but their political representatives dared not echo them. Yet, political parties had not previously taken the idea forward seriously. The 'tipping point' was the Congress' surprise victory in the 2004 election. More specifically, it was the combination of a determined activist campaign targeted on the Congress party and the belief in the Congress party that the 2004 election was not winnable that allowed the inclusion of a commitment to an EGA in the Congress manifesto. To the amazement and jubilation of the EGA's advocates, one year later, that manifesto formed the basis of the national government's policy programme, and the passage of the NREGA was underway

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A STUDY ON SOCIO ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RURAL WOMEN AFFECTED IN KERALA DISTRICT

Introduction

The present paper have been reports of farmer suicides in the Wayanad district in the south Indian state of Kerala and an investigation was undertaken to assess the socio economic profile of rural women and explore the possible role of animal husbandry in this district. The three Taluks in Wayanad district were purposively selected from which a total of 103 women from self help groups functioning under the government sponsored poverty eradication programme were selected at random.Set on the Western Ghats and the Deccan Plateau, Wayanad district of Kerala state once boasted of a booming economy. Women in society often bear the brunt of changes that occur in their society. It is in this context that an investigation into their socioeconomic situation as well as the possible animal husbandry interventions that are feasible in the area of study assumes significance.

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Methods of Study

The present study is aimed at analysis present study, the three taluks in Wayanad district were purposively selected Viz Sultan Bathery, Vythiri and Manathavady. A total of 103 women from self help groups functioning under Kudumbasree, the State Poverty Eradication Programme were selected at random from these three taluks. The researchers have adopted the intrinsic case study methodology Data was collected using a pre tested interview schedule in October 2006.

Objectives

1. To examine the to assess the socio economic profile of rural women and explore the possible role of animal husbandry in this district.
2. To identification of All the women studied were interested in taking up animal husbandry on larger scale in a more systematic manner.
3. To estimation of enterprises as an income and employment generating venture in a society that has been devastated by the agricultural crisis.

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Result and Discussion

Socio-economic Profile of Respondents

Analysis of data revealed that nearly one third (32 per cent) of respondents indicated that their primary occupation was agriculture with some husbandry component while just over thirty eight per cent indicated that animal husbandry with agriculture as a minor component was their primary occupation. Twenty five per of respondents were wage laborers and while five per cent were primarily wage laborers who have some livestock species at home. Ajithkumar and Sreekumar (1996) reported that 48 per cent of dairy farmers in a village adjoining a veterinary college in Thrissur district, Kerala, indicated that agriculture and allied activities was their primary occupation while 38 per cent were agricultural and other laborers and the remaining 14 per cent were employed. Home condition has been reported as an important variable influencing the learning outcome of children.

Table -1 Distribution of households based on roofing material used

S.No	Roofing material used	f	Percentage
1	Tiles	58	56.30
2	Asbestos/Tin sheets	27	26.20
3	Thatch	13	12.60
4	Concrete	5	4.80

The shows that table - 1 illustrates the distribution of households based on the type of roofing material used. The findings of this study are similar to that observed by George and Domi who reported that 64 per cent of fisher folk in Trivandrum district of Kerala state, India, lived in tiled houses while 15.68 per cent lived in thatched houses.

Table -2 Classification of Age wise and respondents

S.No	Category	f	Percentage
1	Below 25 Years	18	17.40
2	25 – 35 Years	53	51.40
3	36-55	32	30.90

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The shows that table -2 the average age of the respondents was 31.86 years (se 0.793). More than half (51.4per cent) of\ the respondents were in the age group 25 – 35 years, while 17.4 per cent were in the group below 25 years and 30.9 per cent were in the group 36 –55 years.

Table -3
Distribution of Annual family income and households

S.No	Annual family income	f	Percentage
1	Below Rs.2000	15	15.
2	Rs.2000-3500	61	59.20
3	Rs. 3500- 8000	22	21.35
4	Above Rs. 10000	5	4.85

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their annual income. The average annual income of the families studied as reported by these women was Rs 3768 (Se 451) which is much lower than that reported in past studies. The average annual income of forty eight per cent of farmers in Thrissur district was above Rs 5000.

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A STUDY OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN TAMILNADU

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted in September 2005. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on 02.02.2006 and was initially implemented in six districts, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram from 02.02.2006 onwards and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme was extended to the remaining twenty one districts of the State which are; 1. Ariyalur, 2. Dharmapuri, 3. Perambalur,4.Pudukottai, 5. Ramanathapuram, 6. Namakkal, 7. Vellore, 8. Thoothu kudi, 9. Virudhunar 10.Salem, 11.Erode, 12. Tiruchirapalli, 13. Kanchee puram 14. Theni, 15. Tiruvallur, 16. Madurai, 17. Nilgiris, 18. Kanniyakumari, 19. Coimbatore and 20. Krishnagiri and 21. Tiruppur.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGA) guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. This Act is an important step towards the realization of the right to work. It is also expected to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. The Village Panchayat will issue job cards to every registered individual.

- Design Strengths: for the wage seeker
- Self selection: No eligibility criteria, or pre-requisite skill
- Demand based: Any Rural household willing to do unskilled manual work may apply for registration to the local Gram Panchayat, get a job card to demand work when needed
- Timed bound Guarantee Employment within 15 days of demand else unemployment allowance
- Local Employment: Work within 5 km radius of the village else extra wages
- Wage Payment: Wages as per notified wages on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight
- Rights Based Design Strength: for wage seeker
- Transparency and Accountability:
- Documents to protect Rights: Job Card, All information is proactively placed in public domain, Information demanded is given, free of cost, social audits by village assembly (gram sabha), and Grievance redressal mechanisms and Penalties for default.
- Equity: At least one third of workers should be women

As per this scheme, during a year, a minimum of hundred day's job is guaranteed to a member in a family who is unemployed. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme. Special Features:-

- Every adult member of the family is provided with an employment.
- The family members can go for work for 100 days in a year.
- The ID card is issued soon after the registration.
- If the worker works for 7 hours the fixed time, he will be paid upto Rs.100./-.
- There is no disparity in wages for women and men. Equal wages for them.

Salient Features of the Act

Salient features of the Act are summarized below:

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- Adult members of a rural household may apply for the employment if they are willing to do unskilled manual work.
- Such a household will have to apply for registration to the local Gram panchayat, in writing or orally.
- The gram panchayat after due verification will issue a job card to the household as a whole. The job card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA. The job card with photograph is free of cost
- A job card holding household may submit a written application for employment on the gram panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be fifteen
- The gram panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15days operates
- Employment will be given within 15days of application for work by an employment seeker
- If employment is not provided within 15 days, daily employment allowance in cash has to be paid, liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the states
- At least one-third of persons to whom work is allowed work have to be women.

Funding

The central Government bears the costs on the following items:

- The entire cost of wages of unskilled manual workers
- 75 per cent of the cost of material, wages of skilled and semi skilled workers
- Administrative expenses as may be determined by the central Government, which will include inter alia, the salary and the allowances of the programme officer and his supporting staff, work site facilities
- Expenses of the national Employment Guarantee council. The state government bears the costs on the following items:
- 25 per cent of the cost of material, wages of skilled and semi skilled workers
- Unemployment allowance payable in case the state government cannot provide wage employment on time.
- Administrative expenses of the state Employment Guarantee council.

Districts have dedicated accounts for NREGA funds. They have submitted their proposals based on clearly delineated guidelines so that funds may be distributed efficiently at each level, and adequate funds may be available to respond to demand. Under NREGA, fund releases are based on an appraisal of both financial and physical indicators of outcomes.

Conclusion

MGNREGS has turned out to be the one and only source of income to many numbers of families. It is a system that has become the part of the life of the villagers. The total design of the scheme-for instance-the recruitment of the workers, the work style and nature of the work are immensely make the programme very meritorious. National level, this scheme has brought out a desirable effect.

In Tamilnadu, this scheme benefited many number of people. This scheme engages people, in a constructive way. The downtrodden masses instead of relying the private land owners or job providers – they can seek the job directly from the panchayat. In a purely democratic way, the work is being carried out. A fixed source of income really alleviates poverty from the villagers households, indirectly making their life enhanced.

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A CRITICAL VIEW OF THE IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE (MGNREG) SCHEME

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) which was implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development is the flagship programme of the Government that directly touches lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. The Act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The Act came into force on February 2, 2006 and was implemented in a phased manner. In Phase one it was introduced in 200 of the most backward districts of the country. It was implemented in an additional 130 districts in Phase two 2007-2008. As per the initial target, NREGA was to be expanded countrywide in five years. However, in order to bring the whole nation under its safety net and keeping in view the demand, the Scheme was extended to the remaining 274 rural districts of India from April 1, 2008 in Phase III. Thus, NREGA covers the entire country with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population.

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OBJECTIVES OF NREGA

The primary purposes of the Act are:

1. to augment wage employment by setting up a strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups and
2. to provide a fall-back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate.

Its auxiliary objectives are

1. to strengthen natural resource management through works.
2. to address the causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation, soil erosion.
3. to encourage sustainable development.
4. to strengthen the natural resource base of rural livelihood.
5. to create durable assets in rural areas.

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IMPACT OF NREGA:

NREGA is said to be one of the largest rural employment programme in the world. It is appreciated for many of its positive impacts on the rural India. On the other hand it is said to be experiencing challenges and make in negative impacts.

Dramatic Increase in Cost of Labour

The introduction of NREGA, which provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment to the adult members of any rural family, boosts up their self confidence and simultaneously his/her expectation to earn more. Consequently this mental attitude provides them with the stronger bargaining capacity to bargain with rural landlords. The implementation of NREGA has made the agricultural labourers organized and strong. In Sikkim labourers have started to bargain for Rs. 150/- instead of Rs. 100/- earlier after the introduction of NREGA. The State Government of Sikkim is also has been forced to consider increasing the minimum waged to Rs.120/-.

NREGA: More Attractive

The job assured under NREGA has been considered more or less like a government job by the rural labourers. The general thinking that the government job is lighter and easier than working under the private landlords has forced them to move away from agricultural employment. This problem has been reported to the government recently.

Food Security: Counter Effective

The availability of 1kg of rice at Rs2/- has given the agriculture labourers the food security they need and working in agriculture become unnecessary. Such concessions and welfare of government make the rural labour get shifted to the NREGA program and leave the jobs in agriculture. This has been substantiated by the previous studies.

Low Production

The costly labour and the scarcity of labour leave the land lords and other agriculturalist a threat of low productivity and less production. The change in the mind set of rural labour reduces their interest in agricultural functions.

Inflation in Agricultural Products

The scarcity of agricultural cultivation and low production compel the farmer to increase the price of their agricultural commodities. Many critics feel that by focusing on the employment and not on the agriculture production, the scheme merely redistributes the proceeds of a limited production. The scheme no doubt increases demand without corresponding increase in agriculture production. This may lead to inflation.

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Deterioration of Cultivable Lands

The threat of costly labour and the inflating rates of agricultural inputs leave the farmers no other choice but leaving farming which deteriorate the cultivable lands and make the farmer poorer. But those who are affluent enough to buy inputs are doing other rural and agricultural activities involving less labour, such as horticulture, coconut cultivation, poultry farming, handicrafts etc.,

Fraud and Cheating in NREGA works

The inefficient and corruption inspection on the part of government supervisors in making role entries, swiping job cards, measurement of work done create a sense of irregularity among NREGA labour. This leads to reduced working hours and low productivity.

Unproductive and Immoral Spending

The money earned without hard work creates no moral commitment in the mind of NREGA labours. They use the major part of their salary lavishly for drinking, gambling and other immoral spending.

No Capital Formation:

What ever amount they get as wage it is fully spent for their day to day life. So, there is an impossibility of savings and investment. So, the Government has to take necessary steps to uplift the rural people by means of creating sources for savings for rural employees who are getting benefit out of the NREGA Scheme.

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CONCLUSION

The agricultural sector is already under heavy stress due to globalization, and urban migration. The industries took away considerable number of labours from villages. The farmers are somehow managing these extreme hardships without any government support. The Villagers are de-motivated to farming, because of the negative income.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one of the largest schemes in the World and it is the last straw to break the rural Poverty. The objectives are good and well enough to improve the social status of the rural India. But the Farmers will stop doing agriculture, and food production will decrease, which will increase food prices. If the problems and the impacts are to continue and not taken into consideration, the rural atmosphere will be spoil.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA)

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 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 house hold whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. 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 the poverty line. Around one-third of the stipulated work force is women. It was initially called the *National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)* but was renamed on 2 October 2009. The *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA)* 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 adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of 100 (US$ 2.27) per day. The Central government outlay for scheme is 40,000 crore (US$ 9.08 billion) in FY 2010-11.

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Provisions under MGNREGA

- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat.
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under MGNREGA and is free of cost.
- The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- The Gram Panchayat will issue a dated receipt of the written application for employment, against which the guarantee of providing employment within 15 days operates.
- Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the States.

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- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses.
- Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notices a wage rate which will not be less than 60 (US$ 1.36) per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.
- Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case
- At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.
- Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided
- The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the gram sabha and approved by the zilla panchayat.

Implementation

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGA has found "significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the act. The plan was launched in February 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts. 44,940,870 rural households were provided jobs under NREGA during 2008-09, with an national average of 48 working days per household.

Employment under MGNREGS in 2010

The number of families in rural areas include their living status due to this policy. The unskilled workers in rural areas are provided the employment opportunities for at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year. Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on Tuesday that As of 30th June, a total of 179,43,189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS.

Works/Activities

The MGNREGA achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGA stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as: water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection much as construction and repair of embankments, etc. Digging of new tanks/ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc. First a proposal is given by the Panchayat to the Block Office and then the Block Office decides whether the work should be sanctioned.

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Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

MGNREGA has been launched in India after an extensive debate on the alternative measures of certain minimum social protection against widespread rural underemployment. The choice in favour of MGNREGA, and much against mere 'cash transfer', was made with great expectations that it would not only provide supplementary employment and income, but also would help in augmenting rural natural resource conservation that improve agro-ecological conditions bearing on sustainable productivity improvements.

In practice, the process of implementation may largely determine the outcome of MGNREGA in two important ways:

Institutionalisation

Of implementation process matters. The best of social policies ineffectively administered amounts to nothing, and on the contrary may generate negative public reaction resulting in abrupt abandoning. On the contrary implementation should also be seen as a learning process with due attention to building appropriate institutional structures for effective delivery. The learning and institutionalization at the state down to panchayat level could generate
appropriate models of implementation even if there are inadequacies due to overcentralised design deficiencies. Considerable attention should be paid to mutual learning from the evolving best practices in implementation across the regions and in appropriate resource allocation not merely for administration but on capacity building.

Political commitment matters

The success of MGNREGA even in terms of evolving proper institutional structures depends upon political commitment. There is need to stress the related political outcomes to bring in political ownership of the MGNREGA.

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THE IMPACT OF NREGS ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN VILLUPURAM DISTRICT

The Problem Setting

An act will meet a goal set by Mahatma Gandhi for independent India: *"The God of Bread"* should bless every home and hut. There is an unacceptable extent of under-nutrition and malnutrition in India, which occupies a shameful position in all indices relating to hunger. A large segment of the chronically undernourished belongs to families of small and marginal farmers and landless labour. The position is serious in the case of women and children. Because of maternal and foetal under-nutrition and malnutrition, nearly every fourth child born is under-weight. Such low birth weight children suffer many handicaps including impaired cognitive ability. Thus, poor children are denied even at birth an opportunity for the full expression of their innate genetic potential for mental and physical development. This is inexcusable.

The successful implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and the Right to Information Act indicates that the climate is conducive for a far-reaching, rights-based legislation to eliminate hunger and deprivation. Supreme Court rulings reinforce the view that the right to food is basic to achieve the right to life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution. One of the terms of reference the UPA government set in 2004 for the National Commission on Farmers (NCF) was to "work out a comprehensive medium-term strategy for food and nutrition security in the country in order to move towards the goal of universal food security over time." The NCF held consultations all over India on the pathways to a nutrition-secure India.

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In connection with right to food, the term food security involves every individual gaining physical, economical, social and environmental access to a balanced diet that includes the necessary macro and micro-nutrients, safe drinking water, sanitation, environmental hygiene, primary healthcare and education so as to lead a healthy and productive life. The food should originate from efficient and environmentally better production technologies that conserve and enhance the natural resource base of crops, farm animals, forestry, inland and marine fisheries.

The priorities of the work to be undertaken under NREGS include watershed management and water conservation, drought-proofing, flood protection, land development, minor irrigation and rural connectivity. Such work is important to strengthen the ecological foundations of sustainable agriculture. The NREGS is probably the world's largest ecological security programme. A major weakness has been the absence of effective technical guidance and support from agricultural and rural universities and institutes. The Union Ministry of Rural Development has taken steps to achieve convergence of brain and brawn, by enlisting

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the support of Ministries and Departments. Such convergence of expertise for sustainable development will help to enhance farm productivity without causing ecological harm.

Mostly, these workers are undernourished, with poor opportunities for healthcare. Hence, there is need to bring about a convergence of child care, nutrition, health (Rural Health Mission) and education programmes at NREGS sites. Hence this paper has made an attempt to analyses the impact of NREGS on household food security in Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu.

Overview of NREGS in Villupuram District

The NREGS programme was started in April 2006 in Villupuram district, The implementation of this programme was already commenced at village/field level only 2nd February 2006. It is that the District Administration had endeavored their best for expediting the preparatory arrangements.

There has been delay due to initial teething problem such as mobilization of staff, capacity building awareness campaigns, publicity through pressed electronic media, selection of village/ block identification of works including staff of projects for short term and other compliances.

The formats A,B & C in prescribed performance for all 5 villages over 3 blocks covered and issued relating to implementation of NREGS were given, from the available cumulative amount of Rs. 13523.37 lakhs. As indicated that below the utilization of funds up to 19.05.08 works out to Rs. 17141.85 lakhs.

Table 1

Details of NREGS in Villupuram District

(Rs. in Lakhs

Year	Total Fund (Revised)	Total Expenditure	Percent
2005-06 & 2006-07	6,458.88	3,444.04	53.32
2007-2008	13,103.56	12,020.44	74.56
2008-09	9,425.57	1,677.33	12.40
Total	28,987.97	17,141.85	59.19

Source: DRDA Office, Villupuram

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Registration of Families and Job Card Issued Under NREGS

Out of 5, 42,183 households in Villupuram district as 4, 00,309 households have been registered and job cards were issued, which covered 33.84 percent of the total households. Out of the registered households 9, 20,683 individuals have been registered and 9, 12,714 job cards have been replaced so far.

Cumulative man days generated

In the year 2006-07 on the average of about 3.5 lakhs person days per month accounting for generation of whole year at 43.05 lakhs person days. The year 2007-08 recorded which works out to around 12.44 lakhs person days per month 3.4 lakhs more than previous year. Thus the total mandays generated during 2007-08 was 149.28 lakhs. It is 12.28 lakhs mandays in the month of April itself and monthly average of 12.44 in the last year 2007-08. The payment based on the movement and unexpected veins in the end of April and in the beginning of May 2008 show the progress.

Table 2 Detail of fund Received

Year	Grant Received		Other Receipts	Total Receipts
	MORD	GOTN		
2006-07	5227.08	560.09	671.71	6458.88
2007-08	11521.54	1564.17	17.88	1313.56
2008-09	9114.86	310.67	-	9425.53
Total	25863.45	2434.93	689.59	28987.97

Source: DRDA Office, Villupuram

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Methods and materials

For the study, the data were collected from both groups NREGS and Non-NREGS (control and non-control) respondents in Villupuram District in order to identify the level of household and individual food security. Villupuram is the first district in all India level where the first social auditing has been done by the famous economist Dreze. The district consist of 22 blocks and five blocks such as Kanai, Mugaiyur, Thiruvennainallur, Vanur and Kalrayan were randomly selected for the analysis. The major objective of this study is that to explore the impact analysis of the employment programme on micro food security in the households alone and not on the macro food security. To analyse, the framed objective, simple random sampling technique and interview schedule method was also employed. The sample size has been restricted to 150 households which includes NREGS (90) and non-NREGS (60) participants. Moreover physical quality life index (PQLI) also studied along with the major analysis of household food security.

There are four ways of measuring household and individual food security individual intakes, household caloric acquisition, diet diversity and indices of coping strategies (either directly measured or 24 hours recall method). But for this paper, the index of household coping strategies was adopted to study the impact of NREGS on household food security. This is an index based on how households adapt to the presence of threat of food shortages. The person within the household who has primary responsibility for preparing and serving meals asked a series of questions regarding how households are responding to food shortages. A comparative usage of these different methods of measuring the household food security on various aspects is given below.

Individual food intake data is observational one and the researcher should reside in the household throughout the day. Regarding the household caloric acquisition, food prepared for a specified period of time, usually either for 14 days to the person in the household who has the knowledge about this activity.

In case of diet diversity, it is simple form does not record quantities. Moreover it is not possible to ask about the frequency of consumption of particular quantities, further it is not possible to estimate the extent to which diets are inadequate in terms of caloric availability.

Table 3

Comparison of methods of measuring the household food security

Method details	Individual Intake	Household caloric acquisition	Dietary diversity	Index and coping strategies
Data collection costs	High	Moderate	Low	Low
Time required for analysis	High	Moderate	Low	Low
Skill level required	High	Moderately high	Moderately low	Low
Susceptibility to misreporting	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate

From the comparative analysis of different methods of measuring the household food security, it is decided to adopt the method of coping strategies liberally in this study. Due to various advantages in different grounds viz., cost of data collection, time required for the analysis, skill level required and susceptibility to misreporting.

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Comparative analysis of household coping strategy

The objective of this study is that to identify the level of food security among the respondents.

Table 4

Indices of household coping strategies

Occupational Status	Household coping strategies			Total
	< .30 (Low)	0.31 – 0.60 (Medium)	0.61 – 1 (High)	
NREGS	76 (50.7)	9 (6.0)	5 (3.3)	**90 (60)**
Non-NREGS	54 (36.0)	5 (3.3)	1 (.7)	**60 (40)**
Total	**130 (86.7)**	**14 (9.0)**	**6 (4.0)**	**150 (100)**

Source: Primary Data

(Figures in Parentheses are Percent)

The respondents have been classified into NREGS and non-NREGS. The household coping strategies are categorized viz., into three heads: low (less than 0.30 points), medium (between 0.31 to 0.60 points) and high (above 0.61 points) respectively. As per the point of view of the NREGS stakeholders, there was no impact on the household coping strategy. This could be inferred from the table that nearly half (50.7%) of the beneficiaries were in low household coping strategies, which indirectly gives the information that

already the households were in poor economic strata. Hence, the earning from this NREGS may provide the supplementary effects to these respondents. On the other hand, most (36 %) of the Non-NREGS were also in low household coping strategies. This shows that, there was no significant impact of NREGS on household coping strategy.

In addition to this, furthermore attempt has been made on the analysis of burden of work and individual food security.

Table 5

Burden of Work and Individual Food Security

Burden of work	Kilocalories per day				No. of Out stay	Total
	<1550	1551-2200	2201-2850	Above 2850		
Below 5 Years	57 (5.1)	2 (.2)	01 (0.1)	0 (.0)	8 (1.1)	48 (6.6)
Male 5-18 Years	30 (5.1)	32 (4.4)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	30 (4.1)	92 (12.70
Female 5-18 Years	27 (3.7)	18 (2.5)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	19 (2.6)	64 (8.8)
Male light activity	1 (0.1)	5 (0.7)	0 (.0)	0 (.0)	1 (0.1)	7 (1.0)
Male Moderate activity	11 (11.5)	45 (6.2)	3 (0.4)	0 (.0)	21 (2.9)	80 (11.0)
Male heavy activity	4 (0.6)	84 (1.1)	78 (10.8)	8 (1.1)	30 (4.1)	204 (3.2)
Female light activity	4 (0.6)	12 (1.8)	1 (0.1)	0 (.0)	5 (0.7)	23 (3.2)
Female moderate activity	11 (1.5)	58 (8.0)	1 (0.1)	0 (.0)	9 (1.2)	126 (17.4)
Female heavy activity	14 (1.9)	102 (14.1)	1 (0.1)	0 (.0)	9 (1.2)	126 (17.4)
Total	**139 19.2**	**360 49.7**	**84 (11.6)**	**8 (1.1)**	**133 (18.4)**	**724 (100.0)**

(Figures in Parentheses are Percent)

Source: Primary Data

It is inferred that about 6.6 percent were in the age group of below 5 years. Among them 5.1 percent were in less than 1550 kilocalories per day. Followed by this, around 13 percent were (5 – 18 years) male respondents. Within this category, about five twentieth (5.1 percent) were in less than 1550 kilocalories per day. Similarly in case of female, they were also in the same kilocalories of less than 1550 per day. It is quite interesting that, only one percent of light activity male members were available among the total respondents. But in case of male moderate activity they were in food insecurity level due to the fact that of intake of food was less than 1550 kilocalories per day. But the situation is different from male heavy activity, the respondents were in the category of 2201 – 2850 kilocalories per day. Hence, from this analysis, it is inferred that the male members had atleast minimum food security level rather than female members. This is due to the fact that, always the females are very much attached with their husband and

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her children. Because of the altruistic behaviour of the females in the household, the male members may have the food security in the households. Furthermore the intention of the female members in the household is that, to maximize the individual welfare as well as utility from each and every household chore, particularly in case of food consumption of the individuals in the household. This may lead to food insecurity among the female members and whatever may be their work burden.

Comparative analysis of Physical Quality Life Index (PQLI)

The secondary objective of the present paper is that, to compare the physical quality life index (PQLI) of the respondents.

Table 6
Physical Quality Life Index (PQLI)

Occupational Status	Standard of Living			Total
	Low (0.1 – 0.58)	Medium (0.59 – 0.80)	High (0.81 – 1)	
NREGS	83 (55.3)	6 (4.0)	1 (.7)	**90 (60)**
Non-NREGS	32 (21.3)	18 (12.0)	10 (6.7)	**60 (40.0)**
Total	**115 (76.7)**	**24 (16.0)**	**11 (7.3)**	**150 (100)**

(Figures in Parentheses are Percent)
Source: Primary Data

In addition to the household food security along with the impact of NREGS, further more attempts has been made on the physical quality life of the respondents. To construct the index, the available physical facilities were also collected with regard to basic amenities, vehicles owned, electrical items and other livelihoods in the households. Two-point scale was used to construct this index for every sample households. From the result, it shows that more than three fourth (76.7 percent) were in low and it is followed by medium (16 percent) and low (7.3 percent) respectively. It is quite interesting that about more than half of the stakeholders (55.3 percent) were in low standard of living when compared to non-stakeholders. There was no specific difference among the stakeholders and non-stakeholders with respect to the physical quality life index of the households.

Conclusion

It is concluded that economic development and social development must go in a parallel way and this may be achieved through this NREGS. The suggestions are made for creation of employment scheme with intention to gear up the factual achievement to the fullest possible extent. The NREGS will be a success only, when it can improve the status of the household and women. The mere economic success of the programme will not improve these two concepts. The NREGS helped to the rural families below the poverty line to get an additional income and the extra income earned through the NREGS beneficiaries was spent towards their food security.

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NREGS AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT – PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS FOR TAMILNADU

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one of the most progressive legislations enacted since independence. Its significance is evident from a variety of perspectives. First, it is a bold and unique experiment in the provision of rural employment – in India and indeed in the world at large. Second, it is the first expression of the right to work as an enforceable legal entitlement. In a country where labour is the only economic asset for millions of people, gainful employment is a prerequisite for the fulfilment of other basic rights – the right to life, the right to food, and the right to education.

Access to regular employment is crucial for the rural poor to be able to lift themselves out of chronic poverty. India's historic National Rural Employment Gurantee Act (NREGS), passed in 2005, guarantees atleast 100 days of wage employment per financial year to rural households. Yet implementation has been hindered by numerous challenges, including the cost, matching laborers with physical work, and endemic corruption. There is much that the NREGA promises form the perspective of women's empowerment as well. Most boldly, in a rural milieu marked by stark inequalties between men and women – in the opportunities for gainful employment as wel as wage rates – NREGA represents action on both these.

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NREGA and Women Empowerment

Emancipation of women is a pre-requistie for nation's economic development and social enlistment. The role of women and the need to empower them are central to human development programmes. Empowerment means "individuals acquiring the power to think and act freely, exercise choice and to fulfill their potentials as full and equal means of society". Empowerment could take place at two levels, individual and collective. Individual empowerment is a process of personal empowerment involving self esteem, dignity, self respect and self perception. But the woman faces number of problems in the process of empowerment at individual level. The problem of securing better access to education and skill employment,

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material resources and political power can be tackled only at collective level. The empowerment of women especially in rural area is one of the central issues in the process of economic development of any country all over the world.

Table 1: Women's participation in NREGA

(women workers as a percentage of all NREGA workers) States	2008 – 09 (%)
Tamil Nadu	82.01
Kerala	71.39
Rajasthan	69.00
Andhra Pradesh	57.75
Karnataka	49.77
Gujarat	46.54
Tripura	44.51
Uttaranchal	42.77
Chattisgarh	42.05
Madhya Pradesh	41.67
Maharashtra	39.99
Sikkim	36.73
Orissa	36.39
Haryana	34.44
Mizoram	33.62
Manipur	32.80
Meghalaya	30.87
Assam	30.85
Himachal Pradesh	30.11
Arunachal Pradesh	29.58
Nagaland	29.36
Jharkhand	27.17
Bihar	26.62
West Bengal	16.99
Punjab	16.29
Uttar Pradesh	14.53
Jammu & Kashmir	1.08
All India	**49.33**

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Source: Official data (for the first four months of the financial year 2008-09) available at www.nrega.nic.in as on 17th July 2008.

With this in mind, a survey was undertaken to assess the impact of NREGS on women. The basic objective is to measure the tangible benefits that women have received from the implementation on the scheme. The present paper examines the4 implementation issues and the immediate impact of the scheme on rural population.

Tamilnadu is usually regarded as one of the best performers with regard to education and health indicators, also on the decentralization and local governance front, and has mobilized women from low income families into groups.

NREGS and Gender

NREGS is a highly gender sensitive scheme. It is mandatory that at lest one third of the workers should be women. The share of women at the national level is 40%. It is again necessary to provide various facilities at the worksite like drinking water and baby sitters. The provision of baby sitters will free the women of all the worries of taking care of their little kids. This provision is women friendly in another way that this will spare the elder siblings form rearing the younger ones.

It is undisputed that the scheme has the potential to mobilize women in large numbers and groups (which was earlier difficult). These presents an opportunity to the Government to from productive self help groups among them and provide job training. Thus, the ideal progression from the unskilled labour to the skilled labour through the convergence of the entire scheme should materialize as an offshoot of the NREGS. This is true in the case of the men also. Such social change and upward mobility is final aim of any poverty alleviation schemes.

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NREGS: A new identity for women

Any progressive policy enactment is bound to produce associate impacts on the lives of the citizens when it is implemented in the same spirit. For example, though NREGS is about providing an immediate livelihood alternative to the poor masses in rural India it has various associate challenges in actual empowerment of the same. When women are supposed to take up economics activities under NREGS, they are also bound to make certain decisions on the kind of work they would do, like taking decision on spending ther hard earned wages, contribution to family expenditure and participation in community associations. These are some of the conditions that link NREGS with the creation of space for an emergent assertive identity of women workers in particular.

Findings

1. There is a growing concern among the workers to know and become more aware of NREGS
2. Women workers are getting empowered though NREGS as seen in form of growing contributions to household expenditure, bearing cost of children's education and healthcare.
3. in most cases workers were found to be taking decision in their won to participate in NREGS works.

4. Women have also stated appear more actively in the rural public sphere as they become economically active citizens.
5. Women workers have also started repaying their debts and free themselves from the clutches of the local moneylenders.
6. Women are found more confident to recognized as a public figure.

Prospects

NREGS has come as a ray of hope for basic employment thereby ensuring food security. Women have emerged out to be the prime beneficiaries of the program. NREGS is not only a source of living but also a space for dignity and selfhood for women as they have started economically contributing to their household expeditors.

Challenges

An important area where NREGS as a policy has to actually spend more funds and accountability is to create a better working condition for the workers to ensure safety and proper norms of labour rights.

- There is a low awareness among the workers on NREGS
- Accessibility is major challenge for women workers
- There is delayed payment of wages
- Women workers are more prone to harassment at the worksites
- There is an absolute poverty of worksite facilities

Joint families are at a distinct disadvantage in accessing the benefits of the scheme. The provision of work to one person of the household has been interpreted to mean that it is applicable only to the male head of the household. Given that around 80% of the workforce under NREGS comprises women, it means whatever is earned under the scheme is additional income for the household, something that has helped increase their purchasing power and disposable income.

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A STUDY ON MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT IN TAMIL NADU

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Poverty and Unemployment need no introduction in the developing countries. By and large the enormity of these problems has created indifference among the rich and acceptance among the poor. More importantly, these two problems are vigorous in rural areas. Also, unemployment and poverty are strongly related, which makes the study of one without the other very difficult. Poverty is one of the central problems of economics. A staggeringly large number of people in the world live on less than $ 1 a day (almost 20 per cent of the world population, accounting to over a billion people). If we raise the line to $ 2 a day, the poverty rate would be half of the world's population (Abhijit, 2006).

Even after 62 years of Independence, India has the World's largest number of poor in a single country. According to the 2001 Census, out of India's 1.3 billion inhabitants, an estimated 260.3 million live below the poverty line, of which 193.2 million are in the rural areas and 67.1 million are in the urban areas (Deaton & Dreze, 2002). The agricultural sector remains the main source of livelihood for the rural population, 60.23 per cent of the population still depends on agriculture. Whereas, the National Sample Survey (NSS) of 2004-05 estimates that the rural Indian workforce is declining.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is poised to change all this through National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP). There is no doubt that its promise to reduce the wandering rural poor for their employment has changed the hearts and minds of the rural poor with unprecedented hopes and expectations. It guarantees 100 days of employment to each household at a minimum prescribed rate (The minimum wage rate is prescribed by the respective State Governments.). The Gram Panchayat issues a job card to each household (after registering the members of the household free of cost) and provides job within 15 days of registration (on demand by the households). The long term objective of the programme is to enhance people's livelihood on a sustainable basis by developing the economic and social infrastructure in the rural areas. The types of works recommended in the scheme

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are related to economic and social infrastructure such as water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, irrigation canals, provision of irrigation facility for land owned by SC / ST beneficiaries under Indira Aawas Yojana, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas, and rural connectivity. The present study analyses the performance of NREGP as to how the scheme has fared in providing a sustainable livelihood in the rural areas in Tamil Nadu.

Data and Methodology

To examine the employment guarantee and how far it has benefited the communities, the present study is based on secondary data and the period of study ranges between 2009–2010 and 2011–2012. The data was collected from the NREGP website for the various aspects like, cumulative number of households demanded, number of households demanded, number of households provided employment, number of households completed 100 days of employment, community-wise details of person days generated, and women and disabled benefited from the scheme. Simple Average and Percentage techniques were employed to analyse the data.

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Findings

Table 1: Phase–wise Average Households Demanded

Phase	No. of Districts	2009–2010		2010–2011		2011–2012	
		HH Demanded	Average	HH Demanded	Average	HH Demanded	Average
I	6	18,45,062	3,07,510	19,71,549	3,28,592	13,70,488	2,28,415
II	4	5,57,255	1,39,314	6,40,606	1,60,152	4,82,881	1,20,720
III	21	27,97,544	1,33,216	33,81,621	1,61,029	23,42,009	1,11,524
Total	31	51,99,861	1,67,738	59,93,776	1,93,348	41,95,378	1,35,335

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011

From Table 1 it can be gathered that the Phase-wise Average Households Demanded (i.e., the number of people who demanded jobs under NREGP) is very high in Phase-I than Phase-II and Phase-III in all the three year, to be more specific, the Average Households Demanded is almost 2 times greater in Phase-I than in Phase-II and Phase-III.

Table 2: Number of Households Demanded and Provided Employment (2009–2010)

Phase	Cumulative No. of Households Demanded	Cumulative No. of Households Provided Employment	Percentage of Employment Provided against Demanded	Households Completed 100 Days	Percentage of Households Completed 100 Days
I	18,45,062	18,43,449	99.91	1,48,702	8. 07
II	5,57,255	5,56,475	99.86	33,066	5. 94
III	27,97,544	27,94,341	99.89	2,19,469	7. 85
Total	51,99,861	51,94,265	99.89	4,01,237	7. 72

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011.

Table 3: Number of Households Demanded and Provided Employment (2010–2011)

Phase	Cumulative No. of Household Demanded	Cumulative No. of Household Provided Employment	Percentage of Employment Provided against Demanded	Households Completed 100 Days	Percentage of Households Completed 100 Days
I	19,71,549	19,63,388	98.74	1, 553	0. 15
II	6,40,606	6,37,199	98.35	297	0. 06
III	33,81,621	33,66,357	99.15	3, 935	0. 17
Total	59,93,776	59,66,944	98.97	5, 785	0. 14

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011

Table 4: Number of Households Demanded and Provided Employment (2011–2012)

Phase	Cumulative No. of Household Demanded	Cumulative No. of Household Provided Employment	Percentage of Employment Provided against Demanded	Households Completed 100 Days	Percentage of Households Completed 100 Days
I	13,70,488	13,53,180	99.59	1,34,713	6. 86
II	4,82,881	4,77,872	99.47	37,147	5. 83
III	23,42,009	23,21,273	99.55	2,72,110	8. 08
Total	41,95,378	41,52,325	99.55	4,43,970	7. 44

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011.

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In the Year 2009–2010, in all the three Phases, more than 99 per cent of demanded households were employed (Table 2). But, only 8.07 per cent, 5.94 per cent and 7.85 per cent of the households were employed for the entire 100 days in Phase-I, Phase-II and Phase-III respectively. In total 51,99,861 households demanded employment under NREGP and 51,94,265 households were employed in the year 2009–2010, i.e., only 5,596 households were not employed. But starkly, only 4,01,237 (7.72%) households received employment for the entire 100 days.

Table 3 shows that the cumulative number of households that demanded employment under NREGP was 59,93,776 out of which 59,66,944 households were employed in the year 2010–2011, ie., only 26,832 households were not provided the opportunity. In all the three Phases, more than 99 per cent of the households that demanded employment under NREGP were employed. But again, the households that completed 100 days of employment was below 1 per cent in all the three Phases.

Table 4 reveals that the total number of households that demanded employment under NREGP in the year 2011–2012 was 41,95,378 out of which 41,52,325 households were provided employment, i.e., only 43,053 households were not provided employment. Yet again, only 6.86 per cent, 5.83 per cent, and 8.08 per cent of the households completed 100 days of employment in Phase-I, Phase-II and Phase-III respectively.

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Table 5: Community–wise Person days Generated (2009–2010)

Phase	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes	Others	Total	Women	Disabled
I	2,58,51,242 (30. 97)	8,27,295 (0. 99)	5,68,01,361 (68. 04)	8,34,79,898 (100)	6,30,44,911 (75. 52)	6, 497
II	83,80,471 (40. 87)	80,375 (0. 39)	1,20,42,205 (58. 74)	2,05,03,051 (100)	1,54,22,357 (75. 22)	875
III	3,48,16,519 (29 .34)	20,95,641 (1. 77)	8,17,59,884 (68. 89)	11,86,72,044 (100)	9,67,41,376 (78. 69)	22, 728

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011

Table 6: Community–wise Person days Generated (2010–2011)

Phase	Scheduled Castes	Scheduled Tribes	Others	Total	Women	Disabled
I	2,59,57,000 (30. 13)	8,15,223 (0. 95)	5,93,84,368 (68. 92)	8,61,56,591 (100)	6,29,06,431 (73. 01)	10, 507
II	91,93,497 (38. 04)	99,924 (0. 41)	1,48,77,387 (61. 55)	24,11,70,808 (100)	1,71,63,777 (71. 01)	1, 421
III	4,17,33,649 (27. 21)	23,64,695 (1. 54)	10,92,96,027 (71. 25)	15,33,94,416 (100)	12,23,99,732 (79.79)	26, 716

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011

Table 7: Community–wise Person days Generated (2011–2012)

Phase	Schedule Castes	Schedule Tribes	Others	Total	Women	Disabled
I	77,93,050 (29. 97)	2,30,195 (0. 88)	1,79,82,225 (69. 15)	2,60,05,470 (100)	1,91,08,189 (73. 48)	5, 214
II	33,61,134 (38. 90)	36,439 (0. 42)	52,43,448 (60. 68)	86,41,021 (100)	59,50,027 (683 86)	885
II	1,35,58,081 (26. 67)	8,25,895 (1. 62)	3,64,53,949 (71. 71)	5,08,37,925 (100)	3,99,19,681 (78. 52)	17, 903

Source: http://nrega.nic.in/ dt. September, 2011

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From Table 5, it can seen that in the year 2009–2010, 8,34,79,898 person days were generated in Phase-I, in which 31 per cent Scheduled Castes and 1 per cent Schedule Tribes were benefited and the remaining 68 per cent beneficiaries were from other communities. Gender–wise 75.5 per cent beneficiaries were women. Among the disabled only 8 were benefited in every lakh beneficiaries. In Phase-II, 40.87 per cent beneficiaries were Scheduled Castes and 0.39 per cent beneficiaries were Scheduled Tribes. The percentage of woman beneficiaries was 75.22 and only 4 disabled were benefited in every lakh beneficiaries. In Phase III the percentage beneficiaries in Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was 29.34 and 1.77 respectively. In this Phase also women beneficiaries register a similar percentage of 78.69 and 1 in every lakh disabled were benefited.

Table 6 shows that in 2010–2011, 30.13 per cent and 0.95 per cent of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes respectively, were benefited in Phase-I. In terms of total person days, percentage of women benefited was 73.01, while only 1 disabled was benefited in every 10,000 person days. In Phase-II, the Scheduled Castes benefited to the tune of 38 per cent and Scheduled Tribes benefited to the tune of 0.41 per cent. In terms of total person days generated, the women's person days share was 71.01 per cent, while only 6 disabled benefited for every lakh beneficiaries. In Phase-III, the Scheduled Castes performance was 27.21 per cent and it was only 1.54 per cent for Scheduled Tribes. The women beneficiaries accounted to 79.99 per cent and count for disabled was 2 for every 10,000 person days.

From Table 7 it can be inferred that in the year 2011-2012, the share of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes beneficiaries was 29.97 per cent and 0.88 per cent respectively in Phase-I. The percentage of women beneficiaries was 73.48 per cent and among the disabled, only 2 in every 10,000 person days benefited. The Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes beneficiaries was 38.9 per cent and 0.42 per cent respectively in Phase-II. The percentage of women beneficiaries was 68.86. In the Phase-II, only 1 disabled was benefited out of 10,000 person days. In Phase-III, the Scheduled Castes benefited less compared to Phase-I and Phase-II, whereas, the Schedule Tribes benefited more compared to Phase-I & Phase-II. Likewise, the women and disabled benefited more in Phase-I than in Phase-I and Phase-II.

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Conclusion

The average people demanded for the job in NREGP is high in Phase-I when compared to the other two phases. Neither in any year of the study period nor in any phase, the percentage of households completed 100 days of employment exceeds 9 per cent, i.e., the government is not able to provide 100 days employment in a year to all the people employed under NREGP as promised. It is also important to note, that only 2.85 per cent and 0.63 per cent of the total works allotted were completed in 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 respectively. The Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Women, and disabled people's participation in the NREGP has reduced over the years. Whereas, other communities (i.e., non – SCs and STs) participation has increased over the years. So, the scenario in Tamil Nadu as projected by the government is at variance from the actual situation on the ground. Hence, it is suggested that the government may check the performance of the programme at regular intervals and fulfill the lacuna at the right time.

THE NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (NREGA), AND ITS IMPACT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction:

The NREGA Scheme commenced on February 2, 2006 in 200 districts, was expanded to cover another 130 districts in 2007-2008 and eventually covered all 593 districts in India by April 1, 2008. The outlay was Rs. 110 billion in 2006-2007, and rose steeply to Rs. 391 billion (140% increase in amount with respect to previous 2008-2009 budget) in 2009-2010.

The Act directs state governments to implement MGNREGA "schemes". Under the MGNREGA the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers.

However, it is up to the State Government to decide the amount of unemployment allowance, subject to the stipulation that it not be less than 1/4th the minimum wage for the first 30 days, and not less than 1/2 the minimum wage thereafter. 100 days of employment (or unemployment allowance) per household must be provided to able and willing workers every financial year.

Process Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address to the Gram panchayat. The Panchayat registers households after verification and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of the adult members of the household along with their photos, which the local government is to pay for. A registered person can submit an application for work orally or in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to the panchayat or to Programme Officer. No discrimination between men and women is allowed under the act. Therefore, men and women must be paid the same wage. All adults can apply for employment.

Implementation

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGA has found "significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the act. The plan was launched in February 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts. 44,940,870 rural

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households were provided jobs under NREGA during 2008-09, with an national average of 48 working days per household.

Employment under MGNREGS in 2010

Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha on Tuesday that As of 30th June, a total of 179,43,189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS.

Works/Activities

The MGNREGA achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGA stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as: water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection much as construction and repair of embankments, etc. Digging of new tanks/ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc. First a proposal is given by the Panchayat to the Block Office and then the Block Office decides whether the work should be sanctioned.

Increasing Employment Opportunities: In 2007-08, 3.39 crore households were provided employment and 143.5 crore person days were generated in 330 districts. In 2008-2009, upto July, 253 crore households have been provided employment and 85.29 crore person days have been generated.

Enhancing Wage Earning and Impact on Minimum Wage: The enhanced wage earnings have lead to strengthening of the livelihood resource base of the rural poor in India; in 2007-2008, more than 68% of funds utilised were in the form of wages paid to the labourers. In 2008-2009, 73% of the funds have been utilized in the form of wages.

Increasing Outreach to the poor: Self targeting in nature, the Programme has high works participation of marginalized groups like SC/ST (57%), women (43%) in 2007-2008. In 2008-2009, upto July, the participation is SC/ST (54%) and women (49%), strengthening Natural Resource Base of Rural India: In 2007-08, 17.88 lakh works have been undertaken, of which 49% were related to water conservation. In 2008-2009, upto July, 16.88 lakh works have been undertaken, of which 49% are related to water conservation.

Financial Inclusion of the poor: The Central government has been encouraging the state governments to make wage payment through bank and post office accounts of wage seekers. Thus far, 2.9 crore (upto July '08) NREGA bank and post office accounts have been opened to disburse wages. The Ministry is also encouraging the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) workers to obtain insurance under Jan Shri Bima Yojana

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IMPACT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development refers to increases in the standrad of living of a nation's population associated with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high-income economy. Its scope includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. A large-scale public works programme like NREGA, creates purchasing power among workers. When those receiving tax breaks or working on NREGA sites spend this additional money, they create demand for commodities. The production of these commodities, in turn, creates demand for capital, raw materials and workers. The extra incomes so generated cause further demand, which again provides a stimulus to production, employment and demand . . . and so on in a spiral. This demand stimulating process is called the **multiplier**.

The value of this multiplier depends on the marginal propensity to consume (mpc) of those benefiting from government intervention. The mpc is our extra spending out of the additional rupee we earn. Clearly, the higher the mpc, the greater the stimulus provided to demand. The great thing about NREGA from this point of view is that it is putting money into the hands of those whose mpc is the highest. Those on the margins of existence are more likely to spend than save most of what they earn.

Apparently, demand in the economy is being sustained by rural buying, which has received a boost from NREGA incomes. In addition to this, it promises transformation of rural livelihoods. To understand how NREGA can deliver on this potential, we need to grasp a curious unrecognized fact about agricultural labour in the most backward regions.

Not many people know what data from the Rural Labour Enquiry of the National Sample Survey confirms, that a very high proportion of agricultural labour households in India actually owns land. The percentage is around 50 in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, 60 in Orissa and Uttar Pradesh and over 70 in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand. And if we focus on Adivasis, the proportion shoots up to as high as 76-87 per cent in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan.

This helps us understand that NREGA workers are not just consumers stimulating demand in an economy. They also include producers i.e. millions of small and marginal farmers forced to work under NREGA because the productivity of their own farms is no longer enough to make ends meet. NREGA will become really powerful when it helps rebuild this decimated productivity of small farms. Public investment in the programme incentivizes private investment by small farmers and gives them a chance to return to full-time farming. Like in the central Indian tribal belt, the earthen dams on common land have recharged wells of those poor farmers who earlier worked as labourers to build these dams. These farmers are now busy making a series of investments to improve their own farms. Thus, a mutually reinforcing relationship between investment and income is catalyzed by NREGA. First, investment generates demand and income through the multiplier. Then, income stimulates investment via the accelerator. Giving rise to a spiraling cycle repeated in successive rounds. Although not usually deployed in such a context, the accelerator principle in

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macroeconomic theory describes the positive impact of growing incomes on private fixed investment. Rising incomes also improve capacity utilization and happier expectations act as incentives for more investment. Under NREGA, farmers have come back to land they long abandoned, as increased output, in an atmosphere of renewed hope, spurs further investment. Thus, the Act has indeed led to an economic development.

Conclusion

The NREGA addresses itself chiefly to working people and their fundamental right to live with dignity. The success of the NREGA, however, will depend on people's realisation of the Act as a Right. Effective levels of awareness and sustained public pressure are crucial to ensure that the implementation problems are addressed and the objectives met.

To increase the effectiveness of the Act, we should empower the workers. NREGA is a rights-based statute and its effectiveness lies eventually in the extent to which wage seekers can exercise their choice and assert their rights to claim entitlements under the Act. While the state is expected to play a pro-active role in communicating information and facilitating access to the employment opportunities under NREGA, in the long run, workers capacity to demand and negotiate employment is critical if the Act has to be an instrument in the hands of the worker for enhancing his/her levels of employment and earnings. The issues involved in empowering workers are in the range of enhancement of knowledge levels, development of literacy skills and organizing workers. Enhancing social security levels of workers also needs to be considered. Opening savings accounts of workers in banks and post offices that have been initiated need to be supported on a larger scale so that thrift and small savings can be encouraged among workers engaged in casual labour. Including NREGA workers under the cover of various life and health insurance schemes and improving the institutional capacity of Gram Panchayats will also raise their security thresholds.

It is important to note that the Act is still in its infancy and it takes years to put in place the tools and instruments needed to actualize the right to employment through a scheme, even in the best of circumstances. And with the implementation of the above mentioned the fruits of the Act would be countless.

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A CASE STUDY ON WOMEN EMPLOYMENT THROUGH MGNREGP WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THIRUVARUR DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

In the developing countries poverty and unemployment is a frightening problem. 26.6 per cent of the people living in below poverty line. Poverty is an important reason for unemployment. In India the rate of unemployment is 10.7 per cent. Whereas, in TamilNadu the rate of unemployment is 7.6 per cent in 2010. The poverty includes unemployment, illiteracy, low standard of living, low level of purchasing power, lack of infrastructural facilities, malnutrition etc. India has been an agrarian country. Women constitute about 66 per cent of the agricultural work force. This study attempts to examine the growing women empowerment and employment opportunity provided by MGNREGP, but realistic perceptions have begun to obtrude themselves at the time of interviewing the villagers which has given interesting results that the same establishment has led to various discrimination and encroachment like the influence of caste, wage and sex etc.

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I - DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON MGNREGP

India, to sustain nine per cent GDP growth, investment in infrastructure will need to increase from 4.6 per cent of GDP to around eight per cent of GDP over the period of 2007 – 2012. Planning commission estimates that of the government, 23 per cent from private sector and 12 per cent from multilateral / bilateral agencies. This programme appears to achieve equality between men and women by offering equal wage rates. However, as **Nandini Nayak (2009)** has pointed out women do not enjoy equal space in the society. Women face some serious constraints, which would make it difficult to achieve equality. When women have employment opportunities outside home, they often face "invisible" social constraints.

Poverty alleviation schemes are considered to specially empowering women because (a) Unlike most other schemes, they treat women as earners and not just as reproducers, (b) They provide the same facilities to women as well as men, and (c) They guard against gender based biases, by reserving a fixed share for women.

Statement of the problem

A majority of the poor in rural areas of India depend mainly on the wages they earn through unskilled, casual and manual labour. Inadequate labour demand or unpredictable crisis adversely impacts their employment opportunities. Unemployment and poverty are strongly related, and hinder the economic

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growth and development of the country. The empowerment of rural women is crucial for the development of Rural Bharat. Bringing women into the mainstream of development is a major concern for the Government of India, which is why 2001 was declared as the "Year of Women Empowerment". The programme for Poverty Alleviation has a women's component to ensure flow of adequate funds to this section. So the study aims at understanding the impact NREGA on the lives of women workers who are currently working under this programme. The total female work force participation rate is more in Tiruvarur district. So this study aims at finding 1.The difficulties of women workers 2.Their decision making status after joining NREGS.

Objectives of the study.

Based on the information collected, the study would assess the

1. Difficulties for the women if any, in attending the work.
2. The share of their income to their family income.
3. Their decision making status at home before and after taking part in the programme.

Hypothesis

There is no relationship between income from daily wages and MGNREGS income.

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II - DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study proposes to take up villages with different socio- economic structure in Kudavasal taluk of Tiruvarur district, which is known for high density of landless, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe (55 per cent of total population) and agricultural population in TamilNadu. Tiruvarur district comprises of 6 taluks of Tiruvarur, Nannilam, Kudavasal, Mannargudi, Nidamangalam, and Tiruthuraipoondi. This study has been conducted in Kudavasal taluk, Tediyur Panchayat in Tiruvarur district only among the female respondents. Among the 94 respondents the minimum age was 22 and the maximum was 85. So the data were grouped into five classes and the class interval was decided as 12.6 using range. The minimum income of these respondents from MGNREGP was Rs.4,800 and maximum Rs. 24,000. The minimum level of income from other sources was Rs.200 and the maximum was Rs.20, 000.

Sample size and tools

In Tediyur panchayat total population is 2,880 persons. There are 1,420 males and 1,460 females. The total workers of NREGP are 717. It includes 354 males and 363 females. The number of workers in NREGP is 106 per day. It includes 94 females and 12 males. The study has adopted the purposive sampling method to select samples from the people. The investigator tests the hypothesis by using the statistical tools of correlation. All the necessary information has been collected through the questionnaire from the households where in all the 94 females live. The primary survey was conducted during the month of March to May 2010.

III - MGNREGP RESPONSE RESULT AT THIRUVARUR

The majority of the people i.e., 65.9 per cent of the people were Scheduled caste. In the first village there were no most backward class people. In the case of second village there are no backward class people. When comparing these two villages the number of scheduled caste population was much in these two villages. While considering the religion in the first village the Hindu people was 2.1 per cent, the Christians were 27.7 per cent. In the second village, majority of the people i.e., 70.2 per cent belong to Hindu religion (Vide Table: 1).

The NREGP was implemented in these villages in 2008. It is compulsory to keep job cards for all the people. The men and women involved in the NREGP were not getting equal wage. Before the implementation of NREGP, the people were getting only Rs.50 for even 8 hrs of hard work. But now because of NREGP there was a considerable decrease in working hours and also considerable increase in income. By involving in NREGP the infrastructure facilities were getting increased. Among this, the road facilities, drinking water, irrigation, land leveling, Construction of ponds was included. Here 100 per cent of the people replied that there was an existence of 100 per cent of road facilities and drinking water facilities, 19 per cent of irrigation, 63.8 per cent of land leveling, and 76.59 per cent of construction of ponds. Even though these infrastructure facilities were carried out in these two villages, there was no primary school in the first village. This is the main reason for the low level of enrollment ratio of this area. So it is necessary to get all the infrastructure facilities.

From the community and income wise particulars it is clearly exhibits that the average per weak income of the backward class people is higher than that of the Scheduled classes, due to the caste discriminating in paying / fixing wages to beneficiaries. (Vide Table: 2). Even though this programme was giving working opportunities, the Phanchayat was splitted into three wards. So the people were getting work less than 15 days in a month. So the people were subjected problems. (Vide Table:1). The income of the people got increased with this NREGP. So the women were not in the position to depend on the men for family expenses. After the implementation of the NREGP the monthly expenditure on food items increased in 1: 2 ratios. Among the two villages 98.9 per cent of the people replied that the economic status was improved. Only 1.1 per cent of the people replied that they could not attain any economic development from the NREGP (Vide Table: 1).

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Table No: 1.1 General particulars of the respondents

Reference group	Classification	Village 1	Village 2
Education	Illiterate	10	26
	Primary	5	28
	Middle	10	7
	Secondary	3	5
Religion	Hindu	2	66
	Christian	26	0
	Muslim	0	0
Community	BC	26	0
	MBC	0	4
	SC	2	62
Days of employment per month	15 days	17	45
	20 days	11	20
	25 days	0	1
	30 days	0	0
Decision making status of the respondents after MGNREGP	More	23	66
	Less	0	0
	Neutral	5	0
Improved economic conditions after MGNREGP	Yes	28	65
	No	0	1
Land holdings of the respondents	Yes	9	14
	No	19	52

Source: Computed from primary data

Table No: 1.2 Community and income particulars of the respondents

Community	No. of respondents	Income per weak	Average income per weak
BC	26	9750	375
MBC	4	1500	375
SC	64	20800	325

Source: Computed from primary data

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

From the community and income wise particulars it is clearly exhibits that the average per weak income of the backward class people is higher than that of the Scheduled classes, due to the caste discriminating in paying / fixing wages to beneficiaries. This has to be changed, moreover all the people very well know that they would get less than Rs. 80 per day instead of Rs. 100 as per the announcement of central government. But they were not raising any questions against this problem. Because the illiterate people were afraid that they might lose their work too while raising quarries. What is the remedy to this problem? There is no doubt that this NREGP scheme has created a considerable effect among the rural poor illiterate and unskilled workers in this area. Yet it has to overcome all its flaws such as, by filling in false information either regarding the names of workers or number of days or both. To get rid of this leakage the government has adopted the system of payments through the bank or post office. This solution also is fraught with some deficiencies. For this some institutional mechanisms for making complaints or seeking redressal of grievances must be evolved. People's development council's at the village level should be created to break the present nexus among the various implementing authorities of the scheme for its effective implementation.

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MGNREGA: Features, Progress and Prospects

NREGA is the Act that was enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005 by the UPA coalition government supported by the left parties. It was initially called the *National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA* also known as **National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, NREGS),** but was renamed as *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act* (MGNREGA) on 2 October 2009. 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 the poverty line. It provides a legal guarantee of 100 days of wage employment per household for doing unskilled manual work on demand. The responsibility for the implementation of the scheme lies with the States and the Union Ministry provides financial assistance to them as per provisions. The Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Government of India is monitoring the entire implementation of this scheme in association with state governments.

The present paper is an attempt to highlight the distinct features of the MGNREGA, its achievements and the prospects of the scheme. It is also attempted to analyse the challenges ahead in the proper implementation of the scheme so as realize its potential benefits and outcome. The study relies on secondary information available from earlier reports and studies. The entire discussion is organized in four sections. Section 1 presents the salient features of MGNREGA. The section 2 analyses the progress and performance of the Scheme. The third section highlights the problems of the scheme implementation. The last section highlights the challenges ahead and provides conclusion.

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Section 1
Features of MGNREGA

MGNREGA requires every State 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 Panchayats (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 State Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes are implemented as Centrally Sponsored Schemes on a cost sharing basis between the Centre and the States. The specific features of the Act /Scheme is listed below:

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- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat (The Rural Local Self Government).
- The Gram panchayat registers households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult member enrolled and his /her photo.
- Registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to panchayat or to Programme Officer.
- The panchayat/programme officer will accept the valid application and issue dated receipt of application, letter providing work will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at panchayat office.
- The Government of India (GoI) has established a fund called the National Employment Guarantee Fund, from which grants are released directly to Districts.
- Revolving funds are to be set up under REGS at the District, Block and Gram Panchayat levels, with separate bank accounts being opened for such funds at each level.
- NREGA is a demand-based programme and hence, no targets can be fixed under the Act.

NREGA Factsheet	2007-07 Phase I	2007-08 Phase I+II	2008-09 hase I+II+III
Number of Districts under NREGA	200	330	615
Person days of employment generated			
Total (Crore)	90	144	261.01
Per rural household	17	16	19.32
Per job card	24	22	37.74
Per household employed in NREGA	43	42	58.13
Share of marginalized groups in NREGA employment (per cent)			
Women	40	42	47.88
ST	36	29	25.36
SC	26	27	29.34
Expenditures			
Total (Rs. Crore)	8813	15857	27141
Average expenditure per district(Rs. Crore)	44	48	44.13
Average expenditure per person day(Rs.)	98	110	103.99
Average wage cost per person-day (Rs.)	65	75	67.02
Share of wages in total expenditure (Per cent)	66	68	66.89

Source: www.indiadevelopmentblog.com/2009/06/nrega-snapshot.html

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Section 3
Problems of MGNREGA

Some of the problems in the implementation of the MGNREGA as revealed from the earlier studies are reviewed and collated together to capture the various issues related and the same were presented as below:

Poor administrative and planning skills: Under MGNREGA, villages are the basic unit of planning. Panchayats (the village local bodies) are required to prepare project estimates that involve extensive mapping of village resources and making an annual plan every year to identify works that

can be taken up for local resource improvement. However with limited skill in planning, resource management, handling of monetary resources and poor leadership skills, village Panchayats fail to implement the scheme in the desired manner. Since it involves rigorous planning and resource management, many Panchayat members are hesitant to implement MGNREGA as it greatly increases their workload.

Inadequate awareness: MGNREGA is a rights based programme, which guarantees 100 days of employment to poor household in rural areas. However due to poor awareness among rural population, people are not aware about their basic entitlements such as job cards, minimum wage amount, minimum number of employment days, unemployment allowance, etc. Even Panchayats, Rozgar Sevaks and block development officers are ignorant about all the details of the scheme. They are poorly informed about various processes like registering household, forming vigilance committees, making muster roll, etc. Under MGNREGA there is a provision of unemployment allowance in case the local authorities fail to provide employment, however there is a widespread ignorance about how to avail the allowance. Sometimes even the officials deliberately do not give out this information as they fear punishment for not providing jobs. Poor awareness not only leads to corruption but also to poor management of the scheme and thus true potential of MGNREGA is not being realised.

Plagued with discrimination: Though MGNREGA has provided a unique opportunity to people from rural India to earn their own income without any discrimination of caste or gender, cases of discrimination against women and people from backward groups are reported from several regions of the country. Some states such as Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have registered high percentage of women workers getting enrolled in the scheme whereas others have registered a very low percentage of women availing benefit under MGNREGA. Lack of facilities such as drinking water, a crèche at the worksites, etc adds to the problems of the women workers.

Corruption and irregularities: There are several cases of fake muster roll entries, overwriting, false names and irregularities in job cards. Even the names of dead people have been entered in the muster rolls. Similarly, the names of people who have not registered often feature in the muster rolls, or the same name is repeated more than once. There are cases of payments being made without taking the worker's signature. In most of the States there is a huge gap between job card distribution and actual provision of employment.

Delay in payment of wages: According to the MGNREGA guidelines, payments for the work should be made within 14 days of the completion of the work. However delay in payment and incorrect payments are a common problem under MGNREGA. This delay can be from several weeks to sometimes months. Often workers have to make several visits to the post office or the co-operative bank only to find that their wages have not been credited into their accounts. Sometimes delay is

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also caused because works are carried out without proper approval and thus the payment is withheld.

Challenges in creating useful assets: So far, works related to rainwater harvesting and conservation, desilting of canal distributaries, desilting and renovation of old ponds/tanks and digging up of new farm ponds are mainly being carried out under MGNREGS. There is a need of improvisation in creating/identifying new employment opportunities and dovetailing various programmes run by the Central and the State Governments with MGNREGA. Several works that were taken up under MGNREGA remain incomplete even after two years of their start. Since there is no provision to factor in the completion of work in the overall planning, state governments have initiated a large number of new works and abandoned the old incomplete works mid-way. In many states, buildings and other structures built under the programme were washed away during monsoons. This led to enormous wastage of financial and human resources. Completion and maintenance of works under MGNREGA should be made compulsory.

Problem of labour availability and inflation: Many economists attribute increasing labour scarcity in agriculture, rising food price and inflation to MGNREGA. MGNREGA has no doubt raised rural daily wage rates, reduced migration and led to several other positive social effects in rural India. But at the same time it has also contributed to rising farm input costs, withdrawal of labour from the farm sector and therefore impacted agricultural operations and food prices. Farmers in Punjab and Haryana now find it increasingly difficult to get labour and are left with no other choice but to increase the wage rate to attract the labourers. High labour costs due non-availability of labour is resulting in high cultivation cost and thus leading to higher food prices. Many critics feel that by focusing on the employment and not on the production, the scheme merely redistributes the proceeds of a limited production. The scheme no doubt inflates demand but, without corresponding increase in production of useful asset, leads to inflation.

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Section 4
Summary and Conclusion

The study revealed that though the MGNREGA has shown high level of impact on rural areas, there are several setbacks that call for coordinated attention at various levels so as to resolve the problems of planning and implementation. A few such challenges are:

There is an urgent need to ensure more administrative assistance for the programme at all levels, which means both resources and personnel devoted to the actual implementation, monitoring and financial

management of the programme. Much needs to be done to strengthen village-level planning. Panchayats need to be equipped with the necessary personnel and funds for effective implementation of the programme.

The government must carry out an intensive training and awareness-building programme to make the officials and citizens fully aware of all the details of the programme. People at the grassroots level must be made aware of Right to Information (RTI) Act and be encouraged to use it.

More thought must be given to ensuring that a larger number of women get work which they can do easily. Also facilities like drinking water and crèche must be ensured at the worksites.

There should be a strict enforcement of transparency safeguards. Muster rolls must be kept at the worksite, job cards must be regularly maintained, wages be paid in public, implementation agencies should be separated from payment agencies, formation of vigilance committees should be done, muster roll record must be verified periodically etc. Also, Panchayats must be directly involved in making payments.

Minimum wage under MGNREGA should be cautiously increased keeping in view its impact on other unorganised sectors, especially agriculture and that it must be ensured that it is targeted at only the really poor and needy. Possibilities of MGNREGA being dovetailed with the farming activities, so as to minimize its adverse effect on agriculture, should be explored.

The constructive impact of the 100-day employment guarantee must be confined strictly to months when there is no harvesting or sowing activity so that it does not affect agriculture adversely. With the rural workforce drawn into this scheme the mechanisation and modernisation of agriculture needs to be focused upon.

To conclude, MGNREGA cannot be a long-term solution to the unemployment problem of rural India. If this scheme is treated as a welfare programme for temporary relief, it may end up as ahuge permanent burden on the Indian exchequer or as an indifferently implemented intervention. Therefore, a comprehensive and a more sustainable solution that creates large-scale self-employment opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors in the rural areas, stimulates demand and increases rural productivity still need to be addressed properly.

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IMPACT OF NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN RURAL AREAS - A DETAILED STUDY OF PUDUKKOTTAI DISTRICT

Introduction

"India lives in its villages"- Mahatma Gandhi.

Literally and from the social, economical and political perspectives the statement is valid even today.Around 65 percent of the states population is living in rural areas. People in rural areas should have the same quality of life as is enjoyed by people living in suburban and urban areas. Further there are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas. Hence rural development which is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs becomes essential. The present strategy of rural development mainly focuses on poverty alleviation, better livelihood opportunities, provision of basic amenities and infrastructure facilities through innovative programmes of wage and self-employment.

The above goals can be achieved by various programmes. The department of rural development has been setup to provide logistic support both on technical and administrative sides for programme implementation. Other aspects that will ultimately lead to transformation of rural life are also being emphasized simultaneously.

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National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)

The parliament enacted an Act No.42 of 2005 called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. The Act provides a guarantee for rural employment to house holds whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work not less than 100 days of such work in a financial year in accordance with the scheme made under the Act. The scheme has been launched on February 2nd 2006 in 200 districts of the country. In J&K state it has been introduced in the districts of kupwara, poonch and doda in the first instance. It is being extended to all other districts within 5 years in a phased manner. It is expected to enhance people's livelihood on sustained basis by developing economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. It is a direct attack on the causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion.

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Objectives of the Scheme

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. This Act is an important step towards the realization of the right to work. It is also expected to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme.

Statement of the Problem

India is the second most populated in the world. It is highly difficult to give employment to all the people in the country. However the government has to cater to the needs of the people. India is the largest democratic country with rich and varied culture and life styles. There are industrious cities and fertile villages. The villagers depend on agriculture for their living. More than 80 percent of the Indians live in villages. When agriculture fails them, they hurl in poverty. The central and state governments have implemented various schemes to eradicate the poverty of the rural people. MGNREGS is one such a scheme which is popularity known as 100 days employment scheme. Has this scheme reached the people?. This is a key point to be researched upon. Moreover the study on this scheme becomes essential as it has affected the rural people and agricultural works both directly and indirectly and in a positive and negative way. This should be studied closely to identify the negative aspects and the central reason behind them.

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Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To study the awareness regarding the MGNREGS among the respondents.
2. To study the effect of MGNREGS on agriculture in the study area.
3. To find out whether MGNREGS helps to promote the infrastructure of the villages.
4. To find out the difference in the standard of living of the village people before and after implementation of MGNREGS.

Hypotheses

1. The educated people are likely to have a more awareness on the scheme when compare to illiterate people.
2. The agricultural works had more labourers before the implementation of MGNREGS than after the implementation of the scheme.
3. The involvement of women labourers in agriculture works has reduced after the implementation of MGNREGS than before.

Methodology

The area of study covers 27 panchayats in Pudukkottai district. The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. The data have been collected through direct interview method with detailed questionnaire during the year 2009. The statistical tool is percentage method. It is used for analysis to fulfill the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

Occupation

The impact of MGNREGS is the availability of labour in agriculture is shown in table-5. Before the implementation of the scheme 84 percent (90 respondents) of the respondents were engaged in agriculture works. After implementation of the scheme, it has reduced to around 30 percent (33 respondents). They are also involved in the scheme and majority of them are male. It is evident from the above that the availability of in less in post implementation of the scheme. Hence the hypothesis is accepted. Majority of the women laboures shifted agriculture works to MGNREGS.

Table – 1
Distribution of Respondents by their Occupation

S. No.	Type of Occupation	Before MGNREGS	Percentage	After MGNREGS	Percentage
1.	Agricultural Labourers	70	65.4	25	23.4
2.	Own agricultural	20	18.7	8	7.5
3.	Others works	17	15.9	-	-
4.	MGNREGS works	-	-	74	69.1
	Total	**107**	**100**	**107**	**100**

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Working Hours

The table-1 indicates that the working hours are more in the MGNREGS works (7 hour) when compared with agriculture works (5 hour). The wages for the male has reduced by 20 rupees whereas for the female it has increased by 30 rupees. There is equal wage for men and women in the MGNREGS works. The male workers get less wages in the MGNREGS works comparing to agricultural works. Some of the male workers are working both in agriculture work and MGNREGS. Whereas the female workers get more wages through MGNREGS comparing to agricultural works. Even though their number of working hour increased from 5 to 7 hours, the increased wage attracts the women laboures to participate in the scheme. The female workers benefit more from this scheme. It is an evident to accept the hypothesis that the women laboures in agriculture works has reduced after the implementation of the scheme.

Table – 2 Wage and Working Hours

S. No.	Type of Work	Working Hours		Wage (Rs)	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1.	Agricultural Works	5 Hours	5 Hours	100	50
2.	MGNREGS works	7 Hours	7 Hours	80	80

Employment Opportunity

The table-3 presents the employment opportunities in the scheme to the respondents. Before implementation of the scheme, 88 percent (94 respondents) of the respondents got employment opportunities up to 15 days in a month. After the implementation 90 percent of the respondents have employment more than 15 days in a month. The hypothesis is accepted that a higher employment opportunity is available through MGNREGS.

Table – 3 Employment Opportunity

S. No.	Employment Opportunity per month (In Days)	Before MGNREGS	Percentage	After MGNREGS	Percentage
1.	5 – 10	5	4.7	-	-
2.	10 – 15	89	83.2	10	9.3
3.	15 – 20	13	12.1	80	74.8
4.	20 – 25	-	-	17	15.9
	Total	**107**	**100**	**107**	**100**

Income

The annual income of the beneficiaries before and after implementation of the scheme is shown in Table-3. The maximum number of respondents (78) has stated that their annual income was Rs.12,000-Rs.14,000 before the implementation of scheme and 71 among 107 accepted that their annual income has increased to Rs.14,000-Rs.16,000 after the implementation of the scheme. Out of 107 respondents (73 percent) earned between Rs.12,000- Rs.14000 per year. Few of them received high income of Rs.16,000-18,000. After implemented of the scheme 88 percent (94 respondents) of the respondents has received income from Rs.14,000- Rs.18,000.

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Table – 4 Income Variation Before and After MGNREGS

S. No.	Annual Income of the Individual (Rs.)	Before MGNREGS	Percentage	After MGNREGS	Percentage
1.	10,000 – 12,000	7	6.6	-	-
2.	12,000 – 14,000	78	72.9	13	12.2
3.	14,000 – 16,000	18	16.8	71	66.4
4.	16,000 – 18,000	4	3.7	14	13.0
5.	Above – 18,000	-	-	9	8.4

Family Expenditure

The table-4 presents the details about the expenditure pattern of the respondents. The majority respondents (76.6 percent) spend on food item in range between Rs.5001-Rs.7500 per year. The maximum number of respondents (86 percent) spends below Rs.2000 on education. It shows that they are giving less importance to education. The awareness of importance of education is also created among the rural people who are involved in the scheme. It is evident from the analysis that the respondents are giving first priorities to food followed by cloth, education and healthcare.

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Table – 5 Family Expenditure

S. No.	Spending Per Year (Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	**Food**		
	Below – 5,000	21	19.6
	5,001 – 7,500	82	76.6
	7,501 – 10,000	04	3.8
	Above – 10,000	-	-
2.	**Clothes**		
	Below – 1,000	20	18.6
	1,001 – 2,000	62	58.0
	2,001 – 3,000	25	23.4
	3,001 – 4,000	-	-
3.	**Education**		
	Below – 1,000	40	37.4
	1,001 – 2,000	52	48.6
	Above – 2,000	15	14.0
4.	**Medicine**		
	Below – 1,000	48	44.8
	1,001 – 2,000	54	50.5
	2,001 – 3,000	05	4.7
	Above – 3,000	-	-

Savings and Debts

The saving habit of the respondents is shown in Table-5. Around 75 percent of the respondents have the habit of saving. Among them around 31 percent and 16 percent are saving that many through self help group and post office respectively. More than half (68.2 percent) of the respondents are having small debts. This scheme is also indirectly helping the saving habit of the people.

Table – 6 Savings and Debts

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	**Saving Habit**		
	Saving	80	74.8
	Not Saving	27	25.2
2.	**Saving Money Through**		
	Post Office	17	15.9
	Self Help Group (SHG)	33	30.9
	Others	30	28.0
3.	**Details of Debt**		
	Debt	73	68.2
	No Debt	34	31.8
	Total	**107**	**100**

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Conclusion

The present analysis concludes that the implementation of MGNREGS in rural areas makes positive impacts on employment opportunity, wages, saving habits, creating awareness and family expenditure system. But it makes a negative impact that the availability of workers to agricultural works is reduced because the people are getting high wage and good working environment in MGNREGS than agricultural labourer. This study suggests that MGNREGS works may be implemented during the unseason period without affecting the routine agricultural works.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT 'HALF-BAKED, STILL COOKING'

Introduction

Suddenly the MNREGA has become a buzz word. It stands vindicated by the mandate of the people in its most basic evaluation in a democracy — the general elections. Basking in the glory and security of post-electoral analysis, it is actually the best time for those who support the basic philosophy of the MGNREGA to focus on what it has done and what it has not, by its own parameters.

The first and the primary focus should be to examine its impact on the human resource base of rural India. Has it energised, mobilised, empowered, and delivered to India's poorest and most marginalised rural people? Secondly, has it provided those who were "not shining" a measure of dignity, tangible economic benefit, and a motivation to participate in local action? This is the crux, for, something as vast and ambitious as the MGNREGA can only succeed in bringing about change if millions of workers become its true advocates and monitors.

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Let us begin with the most persistent charges of endemic corruption. Notwithstanding negative propaganda and the prominent reportage of corruption, MGNREGA stands apart from employment and poverty alleviation programmes in significant ways. It is the first national programme of consequence which has woven transparency and accountability into the mundane fabric of daily interaction of people with government. The cases of reported corruption have shocked the intelligentsia. The rural worker might often be the victim but will still offer critical support, not only because it has provided wage income, but also for facilitating disclosure, which helps identify and fight pilferage. In fact, in many cases, scams have been exposed by the workers themselves. MGNREGA gives an opportunity to break the feudally enforced silence of its victims. Through transparency and social audit measures, it allows anyone, anywhere to be part of the monitoring of the delivery system. The other programmes appear to be clean only because no one knows what goes on! The MGNREGA gives a further opportunity to realise the Constitutional sovereignty, the power of the people. What the political establishment would do well to understand is that the vote was not a blind endorsement, but the expression of a fragile hope of a rational participatory relationship with the government.

New claims

The MGNREGA has opened up a unique legal space for the poor, with a consequent, legally-mandated obligation on the administration to deliver. In fact, implementation rests on the simple philosophy

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that ordinary people will go to great lengths to procure their entitlements, given the space to do so. Apart from systemic corruption, we are all aware of the chronic inefficiency, unwillingness and incapacities of the bureaucratic system to deliver entitlements for the poor. The persistent argument was that in this context implementation would be impossible. The MGNREGA sought to create real opportunities and legal spaces, with the belief that people will begin to push to overcome bureaucratic and political resistance. Does the rights-based approach really work?

Crucial accountability

The application for work and the dated receipt are crucial to trigger the demand for work. The receipt is also the basic record for claiming unemployment allowance if the work is not provided within 15 days. States like Rajasthan have fared well in providing Job Cards, and providing work within 15 days, but resistance to giving dated receipts has become a massive problem. No State has effectively activated this important mechanism. Nevertheless, it has worked when workers groups have got organised.

In the 30 years of existence of its precursor, the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Act, there is no recorded instance of payment of unemployment allowance. The MGNREGA has already recorded payment of unemployment allowance to large numbers of workers in chronically poorly-administered areas. The successful people's struggles for the payment of unemployment allowance — in Barwani District of Madhya Pradesh, Raichur of Karnataka, Bolangir, Navrangpur and Kalahandi of Orissa, Latehar in Jharkhand, Sitapur District of UP — has been a breakthrough in accountability, and an inspiration to other workers struggling for entitlements. The payment of unemployment allowance emanates from an administrative lapse, and is eventually deducted from the pocket of erring officials. It is not a freebie doled out of the government exchequer. Like the Right to Information Act (RTI), this has created an important mechanism for enforcing the right while holding the bureaucracy accountable.

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The wage under MGNREGA has been another trigger and indicator of its success. The wage rate, the measurement system, and the timely payment of wages have all become part of the entitlement package. Thanks to MGNREGA, minimum wages have, for the first time, become a real factor in determining the lower limit for market wages. There are many ongoing struggles for the payment of minimum wages; and adopting a transparent measurement system for every work-site is a management challenge that has thrown up many grassroots solutions.

Bottlenecks

Wage payments through MGNREGA have initiated the biggest "financial inclusion" drive, with the requirement that all wage payments be made through banks and post offices. The engineers, the accountants, and the post offices have been unable to cope, and late payments have begun to cripple the Act. Students and academics, working together with workers' organisations in Khunti District in Jharkhand, have operationalised the entitlement in the NREGA to get Rs. 2,000/- per worker paid to over 300 workers as compensation for delayed payment under the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act (**Venugopal, 2009**). The Khunti payment, made last month, has once again demonstrated that the solution to the

vexatious issue of late payments lies in the entitlement framework. The uneven implementation in different states has shown that where people's struggles have gained political and administrative respect, the MGNREGA has shown tangible results on a massive scale. It is that battleground of struggle that could well determine the future of the political discourse in this country.

The Government of India has transferred adequate money to the states and districts to make timely wage payments. Chronic delays in wage payments during the drought in Rajasthan became a political issue, and the delays were wiped out. Innovations and mechanisms respond to a bottom-up demand, but do so best when the political establishment puts pressure. The MGNREGA also assures an adequate, realistic provision for administrative expenses. At the current six per cent of total costs which has been allowed for administrative costs, there is no legitimacy in citing a shortage of staff or resources for bureaucratic delay.

Biggest contribution

Transparency and accountability to the poorest and the weakest is in fact the biggest potential contribution of the MGNREGA to the entire governance system. The MGNREGA is an outstanding example of how the RTI Act can be woven into the fabric of the delivery system and the whole legal and governance paradigm. The entire expenditure on works and workers — 94 per cent of the total amount — is required to be put on the website of the MGNREGA, with every transaction revealed in detail. This can easily be increased to 100 per cent (**Saurav, 2010**). Using this Management Information System (MIS), Vijaypura Gram Panchayat in Rajsamand District has begun to build a Janata Information System (JIS) painted on the walls of government buildings in the Gram Panchayat. The boards reveal the details of the number of days of work provided and payments made in the year to every Job Card holder in the Panchayat. Also painted on the walls are the list of works sanctioned, the expenditure on labour and material, and item-wise expenditure on material in each work in the Panchayat, including exactly how many bags of cement, sand and trolleys of stone were procured, and at what rate in the Gram Panchayat. This is like a web wall which reveals to every interested visitor all that they want to examine.

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What can be done in one Panchayat can be carried out in the 9,189 Panchayats of Rajasthan, and the hundreds of thousands of Panchayats in India. The walls in Vijaypura Panchayat provide details of 976 families given employment in 2008-09, where two thirds have completed 100 days, with an expenditure of 91 lakhs (**Jain, 2009**). The Sarpanch is a Dalit youth from a poor family, elected in a general seat, and the Panchayat is proof of how well an Employment Guarantee programme can be implemented, in terms of people's entitlements, transparency measures, worksite management, and many other innovations.

Larger impact

If the millions of financial transactions of the MGNREGA can go on their web site, there can be no justification for not following the example and putting almost every financial transaction of government —

receipt or expenditure — on the web sites of the relevant department or agency. Proactive disclosure is a requirement of the RTI Act, and is a good example of the larger potential impact of the MGNREGA on governance.

The MGNREGA is India's first law to codify development rights in a legal framework, and like the RTI, it has begun to set an example in a global context. Apart from the law, and a set of guidelines, there is a strong and immediate need to formulate rules to operationalise provisions in the Act; which includes guaranteeing grievance redressal in seven days, social audit twice a year, and mandatory transparency and proactive disclosure. Properly incorporated and enforced, a comprehensive set of operational rules could strengthen the entitlement framework, fixing responsibility at every level. Once again, it would enable bottom-up pressure for implementation, which should be matched by a strong political mandate. Today, the MGNREGA has millions of workers' unresolved and un-addressed grievances and problems to be dealt with. A response system could not only radically improve the MGNREGA, but can impact and transform the whole face of rural governance.

Conclusion

The political class would do well to understand that the most important solution is an assertion of its will to respond to people's voices. The many wise, creative, and innovative initiatives emerging from theory and practice have a future only if they are owned by the people and implemented with justice. The MGNREGA can give people an opportunity to make the entire system truly transparent and accountable. Properly supported, people's struggles for basic entitlements can, in turn, become the strongest political initiative to strengthen our democratic fabric.

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MGNREGA A 'VOICE OF THE VOICELESS

Introduction

This paper is a humble attempt to elucidate the relevance of MGNREGA in solving few aspects of migration problems. First it establishes how the rural-urban migration of unskilled workers considerably influencing the swell of total migration and consequently bringing the ill effects of urbanization. And next it attempts to highlight how the MGNREGA is theoretically and empirically effective in checking the rural-urban migration of unskilled workers. The paper winds up accepting the fact that success of any sound and useful policy or program requires an unblemished and responsible administration and execution for its success.

Hope of the hopeless

The rural people leave their places of birth and residence due to many reasons. They migrate predominantly hoping to overcome the pain of poverty due to unemployment, to get relatively regular secured job and higher wage unlike the agriculture sector, and to enjoy the better infrastructural facilities like health care and education.

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Being unskilled, the migrated workers in most cases do not get absorbed in the formal sector but in urban unorganized sector and hence they do not come under the purview of the labor laws or wage laws implemented by the governments at the national and state levels.

Moreover the migrated workforce may even fail to get employment in the unorganized sector as well. So, the hope getting employment remains a pie in the sky even after rural urban migration and that makes the life of unskilled workers bad to worse.

Besides this the rural urban unskilled labor migration lead to the problem of population explosion and result in scarcity of basic facilities in the urban area and thereby the slumps pop up here and there making the urban backdrop appear messy and unorganized and creating health and other problems to the slum

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dwellers. Even the marginal benefit accruing to individuals is at the cost of disturbing the rhythm of both the rural and urban areas, and a declining social welfare, through overcrowding and increased population in urban destination.

This implies that they continue to be deprived even after migration. In conclusion, it can be said that gainful employment opportunities in the rural and semi urban areas are expected to bring about some positive changes in this situation. It is obvious that anything that makes the availability of high productivity jobs in the rural areas could reduce in-migration to the urban areas. In this context one can have ample claim over the efficacy of the MGNREGA.

There are many other surveys and studies conducted to elucidate the effectiveness of MGNREGA. Some show positive and some show negative impact of the scheme.

The above mentioned survey shows that the migrant workers often spoke about the hardships associated with migration. In the cities, they live in deplorable conditions, with no access to basic facilities such as shelter, sanitation or even safe drinking water. In the case of men-only migration, women and children face material and psychological insecurity, and family relations often suffer.

However, it is also possible that the promise of local employment is luring workers to stay back and that if these hopes are dashed migration will resume. Delays in wage payments could intensify this potential "discouragement effect" and push people back into the web of migration.

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Conclusion

When the empirical evidence is explored the impact of MGNREGA is not that rosy. But it is theoretically a good measure to give hope to the hopeless. Most of the empirical studies basically highlight the problems related to the implementation of MGNREGA and not the logic or usefulness of the scheme. In other words they suggest areas where the scheme can be improved for the successful implementation. It is a sound and effective instrument – but the success of it depends on the 'masters' those who implement it.

AN ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GURANTEE PROGRAMME (NREGP) IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

Introduction

In India the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was passed in 2005 with two objectives in the backdrop for its implementation in the rural areas. Firstly, ensuring work for a hundred days (as a legal right) to rural household whoever is willing to work at a minimum wage rate with the focus of reducing the flow of rural to urban migration, second important objective of the act was to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions or PRIs in the rural areas so that the institutional delivery at the grassroots level would be stabilized to address both short term and long term measures to eradicate poverty, facilitate rural development and promote social equity in consultation with local people. Since April 2008, NREGA was implemented in all the districts of India.

MNREGA is an important socio- economic legislation. It has the potential not only to promote social security in India but also to strengthen community mobilization, ensure better responsiveness of local governments to community needs and priorities and most of all enhance governance outcomes.

Under the Act Gram Panchayats has a pivotal role in the implementation of the MNREGP (Mohanty; 2009). Gram Panchayats in addition to Gramsabha's are the responsible bodies for planning of works, registering households entitled to get work, issuing job cards, allocating employment, executing fifty percent of the works and monitoring the implementation of the program at the village level. The Gramsabha (village council) has legally given an active role in the planning, monitoring and supervisions of work execution under NREGA .

This analysis looks at the direct and the indirect effects that the NREGP has on employment generation and poverty reduction in Tuticorin District. For this, a detailed survey in the three villages were undertaken to highlight the impact of the NREGP.

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The Objectives of the present study are:

1. To analyze the socio economic conditions of the NREGS people.
2. To find out whether the income pattern of the people in the surveyed region has changed after and how so, if it has changed.
3. To analyze the impact of the NREGS in Tuticorin District.

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Methodology

Present study is empirical in nature and will be studied using primary data. Survey method was followed for this study. Three Villages from Tuticorin Viz, Puthukkottai, Mullakkadu and Attimarapatti were selected for this study. From Tuticorin District, 363 respondents were selected using simple random sampling. A pre-tested interview schedule covering all aspects of NREGS was administered among the respondents to elicit the needed information. Commensurate with the set objectives various analytical tools were employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Hypothesis

To carry out the research work, the researcher has set the following hypothesis.

The NREGS do not bring out over all improvement in the socio economic status of the workers.

Distribution of the NREGS workers

Name of the Village	Total workers	Percentage
Puthukkottai	184	51
Mullakkadu	126	35
Attimarapatti	53	14
Total	363	100

Source: Primary Data

In the study area, a total of 363 sample workers were selected for the study.

Occupation wise classification of the respondents

Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
Agricultural labour	274	75
Artisan	54	15
Service	23	7
Trader	8	2
Others	4	1
Total	**363**	**100**

Source: Primary data

As far as, the occupation of the respondents is concerned 75% of the respondents are farmers and15% were artisans.

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No. of days worked under NREGS

No. of days worked	No. of respondents	Percentage
Less than 6days	14	4
6-15 days	21	6
16-45 days	45	12
46-75 days	126	35
76-100 days	86	24
More than 100 days	71	19
Total	**363**	**100**

Source: Primary data

It is clear from the above table that, 19% households received more than 100 days of wage employment and 35% of households received 46-75 days of wage employment.

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Monthly Income of the NREGS workers

	Excluding Income from NREGS		Including Income from NREGS	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
500-1500	193	53	39	11
1500-2500	103	28	140	38
2500-3500	39	11	82	23
3500-4500	22	6	76	21
4500-5500	6	2	26	7
Total	**363**	**100**	**363**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

The NREGS workers are economically independent and contribute to increase their household income. The average monthly income excluding income from NREGS is Rs.1746.56 and the average monthly income including income from NREGS is Rs.2752.07.

Monthly Family Expenditure of the NREGS workers

	Excluding Expenditure from NREGS		Including Expenditure from NREGS	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
500-1500	81	22	53	15
1500-2500	46	13	80	22
2500-3500	193	53	166	46
3500-4500	26	7	41	11
4500- 5500	17	5	23	6
Total	**363**	**100**	**363**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it is clear that the average monthly expenditure excluding expenditure from NREGS is Rs.2592.29 and the average monthly expenditure including expenditure from NREGS is Rs.2727.27.

Monthly Family saving of the NREGS workers

	Excluding Saving from NREGS		Including Saving from NREGS	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
500-1500	285	79	13	3
1500-2500	39	11	27	7
2500-3500	14	4	198	55
3500-4500	19	5	97	27
4500-5500	6	1	28	8
Total	**363**	**100**	**363**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

When analyzed it is found that the average monthly saving excluding saving from NREGS is Rs.1407.71 and the average monthly saving including saving from NREGS is Rs.3275.48.

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Testing of Hypothesis

The NREGS workers are independent in bringing out over all improvement in the socio economic status. To test this hypothesis 3 factors have been taken in to account namely income, savings and expenditure. It is tested with the help of chi square test. The result is exhibited in the following table.

Overall Economic Condition

Factors	Increased	%	Not Increased	%	Total
Savings	104	86	17	14	121
Income	36	30	85	70	121
Expenditure	45	37	76	63	121
Total	**185**		**178**		**363**

Source: Primary Data

Applying Chi square test, since calculated value (90.25) is more than the table values at 5% level of significance (11.0705) the hypotheses is rejected. The NREGS workers are independent in bringing out over all improvement in the socio economic status. It means that the NREGS workers are bringing out overall improvement in the socio economic status.

Impact of the NREGS workers (N=363)

Impact	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage	No Idea	Percentage
Income and Employment	324	89	33	9	6	2
Reducing household indebtedness	301	83	48	13	14	4
Checking migration from rural to urban area	125	34	202	56	36	10
Soil conservation	76	21	93	26	194	53
Water conservation	283	78	54	15	26	7
Agricultural productivity	107	29	43	12	213	59
Overall development of the village	315	87	40	11	8	2

Source: Primary Data

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eral positive impacts have been noted in the sample villages. The scheme resulted in increasing income and employment (89%), checking migration (34%), reducing household indebtedness (83%), improving soil conservation (21%), water conservation (78%), and enhancing agricultural productivity (29%).

Impact on Economic Development

Economic development refers to increases in the standard of living of a nation's population associated with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high-income economy. Its scope includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political, and social well-being of its people. A large-scale public works programme like NREGA, creates purchasing power among workers. When those receiving tax breaks or working on NREGA sites spend this additional money, they create demand for commodities. The production of these commodities, in turn, creates demand for capital, raw materials and workers. The great thing about NREGA from this point of view is that it is putting money into the hands of those whose mpc is the highest. Those on the margins of existence are more likely to spend than save most of what they earn.

Apparently, demand in the economy is being sustained by rural buying, which has received a boost from NREGA incomes. In addition to this, it promises transformation of rural livelihoods. To understand how NREGA can deliver on this potential, we need to grasp a curious unrecognized fact about agricultural labour in the most backward regions. NREGA will really powerful when it helps rebuild this decimated productivity of small farms. Public investment in the programme incentivizes private investment by small farmers and gives them a chance to return to full-time farming.Rising incomes also improve capacity utilization and happier expectations act as incentives for more investment. Under NREGA, farmers have come back to land they long abandoned, as increased output, in an atmosphere of renewed hope, spurs further investment. Thus, the Act has indeed led to an economic development

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CONCLUSION

It is important to note that the Act is still in its infancy and it takes years to put in place the tools and instruments needed to actualize the right to employment through a scheme, even in the best of circumstances. And with the implementation of the above mentioned the fruits of the Act would be countless. As per the empirical data, introduction of NREGS resulted in shifting of priority from rural connectivity to long-term sustainability projects on land, water and bio-mass. Though the scheme got initiated relatively late in the district, it succeeded to provide 100 days of wage employment to number of households in Tuticorin district. Statistical analysis proved that NREGS turned to be a relatively better strategy to address poverty than its predecessor schemes.

A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME IN TAMILNADU

Fundamentally the problem of the underdeveloped countries is not merely that of low or unequal distribution of final also that of unequal participation in the process of economy activity.

Rural development aims at improving the economic and social conditions of people living in villages. The development programmes are concerned with the principal object of improving the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the villages absorbing excess labour force in gainful rural employment.

Tamil Nadu is India's fifth largest state economy with a Gross State Domestic Product of about $ 50 billion. It has the third highest Human Development Index (HDI) among India's states and is well on track to meet the major millennium development goals. Tamil Nadu combines high performing manufacturing hubs with a rapidly growing IT sector and is well poised to make the transition to a middle-income economy in the next five years.

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Tamil Nadu faces many development challenges such as high poverty incidence, and marked social, inter-district and rural/urban disparities. The state has among the highest unemployment rates in the country. Unemployment is a major cause of poverty. **Too many people are chasing too few jobs** now - a-days. It is having a corrosive effect on our economy. Unemployment means (if . unemployment at a high productivity) is a heavy loss of output for the society as a whole. Full employment of all resources is desirable for its output – raising effects. Unemployment leads to loss of income to the unemployed. It results in loss of status and sense of well –being caused by the bogey of unemployment, so its indeed a psychological one. Loss of production and income and personal status owing to open unemployment is also aggravated by the presence of underemployment, and disguised employment. Underemployment exists when a worker achieves less than potential productively. Underemployment means the utilization of workers at more menial and less skilled tasks than their training or abilities permit.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME TAMIL NADU

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted in September 2005. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched on 02.02.2006 and was initially implemented in six districts, viz., Cuddalore, Dindigul, Nagapattinam, Sivagangai, Tiruvannamalai and Villupuram from 02.02.2006 onwards and in four more districts viz. Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Tirunelveli and Karur from 01.04.2007 onwards. From 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme was extended to the remaining twenty districts of the State which are; 1. Ariyalur, 2. Dharmapuri, 3. Perambalur, 4. Pudukottai, 5. Ramanathapuram, 6. Namakkal, 7. Vellore, 8. Thoothu kudi, 9. Virudhunar 10. Salem, 11.Erode, 12. Tiruchirapalli, 13. Kancheepuram 14. Theni, 15. Tiruvallur, 16. Madurai, 17. The Nilgiris, 18. Kanniyakumari, 19. Coimbatore and 20. Krishnagiri and 21. Tiruppur.

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Objectives of the Programme

- ❖ It guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work.
- ❖ It is a step for right to work.
- ❖ It enhances people's livelihoods on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas.
- ❖ Payment of the statutory minimum wage and equal wages for men and women are the notable features of the scheme.

Funding Pattern

The cost of the scheme is shared between the Centre and the State in the ratio of 90:10. The Central Government will bear the following costs:

a) The entire cost of wages for unskilled manual workers.

b) 75 percent of the cost of material and wages for skilled and semi-skilled workers.

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c) Administrative expenses, which will include, inter alia, the salary and allowances of Programme Officers and their support staff and work site facilities.

d) Administrative expenses of the Central Employment guarantee Council.

Priority of works

Taking into account the field conditions in Tamil Nadu, the works are being taken up in Tamil Nadu in the following priority:

a) Formation of new ponds.

b) Renovation of existing Ponds, Kuttais, Kulams, Ooranies, Temple tanks etc.

c) Desilting of cannels.

d) Desilting and strengthening of bunds of irrigation tanks.

e) Formation of new roads.

f) Other water conservation/soil conservation measures/flood protection measures.

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S.No.	District	Cumulative Expenditure (Rs. in crores)	Mandays Generated (in crores)	No.of works Completed
PHASE I				
1	Cuddalore	381.99	4.04	4436.00
2	Villupuram	594.60	8.88	6138.00
3	Tiruvannamalai	369.04	4.74	8046.00
4	Nagapattinam	254.80	2.96	2623.00
5	Sivagangai	216.38	3.01	2604.00
6	Dindugul	241.63	2.91	4178.00

PHASE III				
11	Kancheepuram	167.10	2.25	2347.00
12	Thiruvallur	144.81	1.51	1648.00
13	Vellore	160.11	1.83	1652.00
14	Salem	147.25	2.03	1297.00
15	Namakkal	55.86	0.69	255.00
16	Dharmapuri	58.34	0.71	565.00
17	Krishnagiri	87.48	0.85	499.00
18	Erode	62.33	0.84	1187.00
19	Coimbatore	67.87	0.85	535.00
20	The Nilgiris	5.86	0.11	22
21	Tiruchy	129.56	1.80	1506.00
22	Perambalur	37.47	0.47	573.00
23	Ariyalur	72.19	0.89	1333.00
24	Pudukottai	145.62	2.23	3033.00
25	Madurai	125.85	1.57	804.00
26	Theni	33.66	0.47	515.00
27	Ramnad	119.99	1.66	1323.00
28	Virudhunagar	115.29	1.86	1615.00
29	Thoothukudi	78.97	0.99	1157.00
30	Kanniyakumari	23.39	0.26	201.00
31	Tiruppur	65.57	0.70	1102.00
	Total	**4383.50**	**56.08**	**56978.00**

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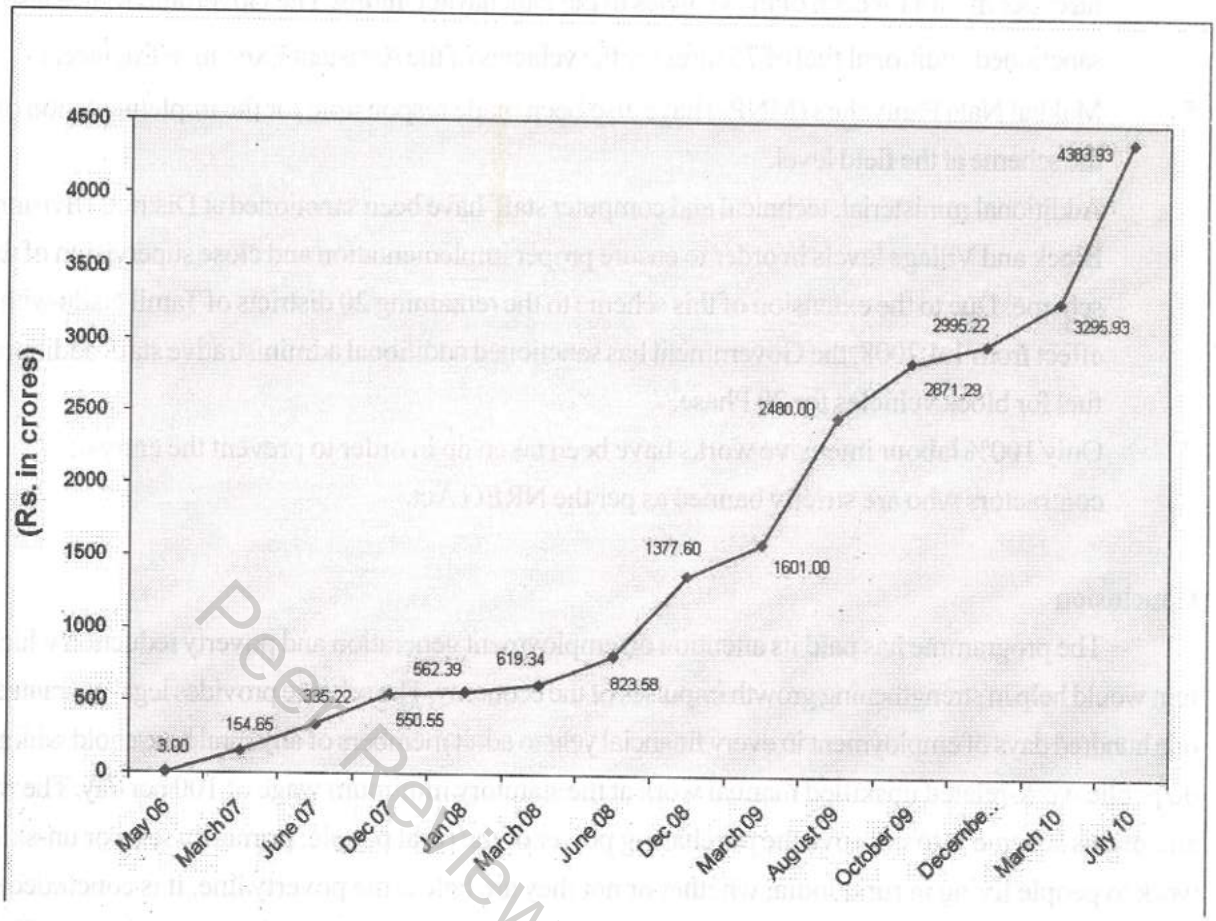
in TamilNadu
(Feb 2006 to July 2010)



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Special steps taken to ensure successful implementation of NREGS

1. The minimum wage under NREGS has been raised from Rs.80/- to Rs.100/. Every year a separate Rural Schedule of Rates is approved exclusively for this scheme to remove the major hurdle in getting the statutory minimum wage for eight hours of prescribed work. For 2009-10, the RSR have been issued by allowing 100% increase to the works other than single clearance and 150% increase to the single clearance works order and above the PWD Schedule of Rates.

2. A minimum of 30% registrations has been insisted upon in each Village Panchayat. The average percentage of registration in the Phase-I & II districts is over 70%. In the Phase-III districts, the average registration has crossed 57%, which indicates that there is widespread awareness about the scheme.

3. The existing formats of Job Cards and Nominal Muster Rolls have been revised to make these documents more transparent informative and difficult to manipulate in the process of scheme implementation.

4. Since the scheme requires intensive touring, the Government have sanctioned additional fuel of 50 litres per month for each of the vehicles in the Panchayat Unions. The Government have also sanctioned additional fuel of 75 litres for the vehicles of the Assistant Executive Engineers.
5. Makkal Nala Paniyalars (MNPs) have also been made responsible for the implementation of the scheme at the field level.
6. Additional ministerial, technical and computer staff have been sanctioned at District, Division, Block and Village levels in order to ensure proper implementation and close supervision of the scheme. Due to the extension of this scheme to the remaining 20 districts of Tamil Nadu with effect from 1.4.2008, the Government has sanctioned additional administrative staff, additional fuel for block vehicles for 20 Phase.
7. Only 100% labour intensive works have been taken up in order to prevent the entry of contractors who are strictly banned as per the NREG Act.

Conclusion

The programme has paid its attention on employment generation and poverty reduction which in turn would help in strengthening growth impulses of the economy. The scheme provides 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 100 per day. The main aim of this scheme is to improve 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. It is concluded that MGNREGS is important to small and marginal farmers as well as the landless who can not derive sufficient income in the agricultural sector and also find the sector to be an important safety net to rural households in times of agricultural distress.

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A STUDY ON MGNREGS IN VAHAVASAL PANCHAYAT OF PUDUKKOTTAI DISTRICT

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme 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 adult members of any rural household willing todo public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of 100 per day. The main aim of this scheme is to improve 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. It was initially called the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme but was renamed on 2 October 2009. This scheme was brought about by the UPA Coalition government supported by the left parties.

The scheme commenced on February 2, 2006 in 200 districts, was expanded to cover another 130 districts in 2007-2008 and eventually covered all 593 districts in India by April 1, 2008.

The outlay was Rs.110 billion in 2006-2007 and rose steeply to Rs.391 billion (140% increase in amount with respect to previous 2008-2009 budget) in 2009-2010. In 2010 – 2011, the central government outlay for scheme is 40,000 crs.

44,940,870 rural households were provided jobs under MGNREGS during 2008 – 2009. In 2010, 179, 43, 189 families in the country have been provided employment under MGNREGS.

Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, may apply for registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job card. Employment will be given within 15 days of application for work, if it is not then daily unemployment allowance as per the Act, has to be paid liability of payment of unemployment allowance is of the states. Work should ordinarily by provided within 5km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis, At least one – third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.

The MGNREGS achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGS stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as: water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection such as construction and repair of embankments etc. Digging of newtanks / ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also given importance. The employed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation etc.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the impact of Scheme on the household income and living standards.
2. To examine the works / Activities in the study area.
3. To study the level of job satisfaction among the beneficiaries.

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Methodology

The data for the research study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data included the information collected directly from the sample respondents through a prestructured questionnaire by personal interview method. The secondary data were gathered from the records and registers maintained by Block Development office, Pudukkottai.

Selection of the area

The researcher selected purposively vahavasal panchayat in Pudukkottai District where there are more number of beneficiaries. Besides the vahavasal Panchayat was familiar to the researcher and easily access to this area.

Sampling

In vahavasal Panchayat there are 16 villages. Among the 16 villages, in vahavasal village number of beneficiaries are more. So for the present study only this village has taken into consideration. The total sample is 100. The percentage analysis has done.

Findings

1. It is found that majority of the respondents (68%) are come under MGNREGS. They are coming for economic necessity and wish to make family life more comfortable.
2. 62% of the respondents said that this scheme is very helpful for poverty alleviation and promotion of livelihoods.
3. Under this scheme, beneficiaries are guaranteed to get employment for one hundred days in every year. They could not get employment above 100 days. This will make their family life incomfortable.
4. Under this scheme beneficiaries are able to get employment continuously for one week. But this is not so in the agriculture.
5. Digging of new tanks / ponds, construction and repair of embankments, land leveling are the main activities in the study area.
6. The level of job satisfaction is very low in the study area. The reason is that worksite facilities have not been provided.
7. This study reveal that the distance of workspot far away from the village. Beneficiaries particularly women prefer to work only nearer to their homes between 1km and 2kms.

Suggestions

1. Local Government should provide improved work places to the beneficiaries.
2. Government should increase the working days of employment from one hundred to Two hundered days.
3. MGNREGS activities should be undertaken during the off-season of Agriculture. If do so both agriculturist and MGNREGS beneficiaries are benefited. During the agriculture season, agriculturists suffer a lot due to lack of agricultural labourers .
4. There is a need for greater transparency in the administration side. The reason is that many problems come from the local Government.

Conclusion

From the present study it is concluded that MGNREGS is important to small and marginal farmers as well as the landless who can not derive sufficient income in the agricultural sector and also find the sector to be an important safety net to rural households in times of agricultural distress.

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MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MNREGA) AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, or NREGA, was brought into force by the Union government in February 2006. The Act is far-reaching in its intent and scope. It is the first nation-wide employment scheme that guarantees employment legally to India's rural population. Naturally, it has generated intense speculation and interest.

The NREGA is being implemented in 200 most backward districts of 27 states in the country — socio-economically, the most challenging areas in India (see Annexure I). It guarantees 100 days of unskilled jobs per rural household. More importantly, the Act aims at eradication of extreme poverty and at making villages self-sustaining through productive assets creation (such as water tanks and soil conservation works). This is meant to regenerate the rural natural resource base, which in turn will result in sustainable livelihoods for residents. The Act puts Panchayati Raj Institutions (the third tier of government in India i.e the village level) at the helm of affairs — beginning with identifying the eligible households to planning the works to be undertaken. The government has referred to it as an "Act of the people, by the people, and for the people". But is the Act living up to its scope and potential? In the last 10 months, 410,742 works have reportedly been implemented under the Act. According to the Union rural development ministry's figures, more than 1.36 crore people — above one percent of India's total population — have been given jobs under the Act. Encouraged by this initial response to the Act from rural areas, the Union government has initiated the process to expand its scope to other districts in the coming months. The NREGA has certainly come at a crucial time, when rural economy in the country is facing complete collapse due to myopic policies. Many studies on rural economy point to the erosion of livelihoods in Indian villages as the main driver behind rural unemployment. Efforts to salvage the situation through numerous poverty alleviation schemes have not helped. Thus, the NREGA faces a two-pronged challenge: the immediate one of addressing the skyrocketing unemployment crisis in rural areas, and a longer-term one of contributing to village economy in a sustained manner. Effective implementation of the Act would require planning labour-intensive works for the needy poor on a continuous and sustained basis. These works must build the right kind of assets to promote development of local/regional economy. To ensure that the impact of the Act is sustainable and lasts over the longer term, these assets must be managed well and in an equitable way to generate benefits for the poor, as well as to promote pro-poor economic growth. In this context, the NREGA should be

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seen more as a livelihood-generating programme than a wage-earning scheme. It also offers a unique opportunity to turn around rural development.

NREGA – HIGHLIGHTS

- The GoI is all set to pass the historic National Rural Employment Guarantee Bill 2004.
- NREGA promises wage employment to every rural *household*, in which adult members volunteer to do *unskilled* manual work.
- The minimum daily wage had been pegged at Rs 60.
- The Bill also provides for unemployment allowances if the job, under the scheme, is not provided in the rural households.
- Through this Bill the GoI, aims at removing poverty by assuring at least 100 days' employment to the target groups.
- The word 'poor household' was replaced by 'household' for guaranteeing jobs in every household for one person
- The original Bill had laid down that it would be applicable only to families living Below the Poverty Line.
- GOI in the Budget for 2005-06 had raised the allocation for the Rural Development Ministry to Rs 24,000 crore (Rs 240 billion).
- The NREGA will be implemented through State governments, Panchayati Raj institutions as well as NGOs.

Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram had stated that the National Food for Work (NFFW) Programme would be converted into the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme with an allocation of Rs 11,000 crore.

To begin with, as many as 200 districts, including 150 districts under the Food for Work Programme, would be covered under the Bill. It would be extended to all the 600 districts in the country within five years.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The NREGA promises from the perspective of women's empowerment as well. Most boldly, in a rural milieu marked by stark inequalities between men and women – in the opportunities for gainful employment afforded as well as wage rates – NREGA represents action on both these counts. The act stipulates that wages will be equal for men and women. It is also committed to ensuring that at least 33% of the workers shall be women. By generating employment for women at fair wages in the village, NREGA can play a

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substantial role in economically empowering women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-esteem. Government figures indicate an impressive participation of women in the NREGA (see Table 1). It is above 33 per cent in 15 states. Tamil Nadu, with 82 per cent, shows the highest participation with Kerala and Rajasthan also showing impressive figures(71 and 69 per cent respectively). At an all-India level, women's employment as a percentage of total employment in NREGA works was 40 per cent in 2007-08. The first four months of 2008-09 have already seen this figure go up to 50 per cent.

More women than men work under the national programme that guarantees employment to rural people. In the current fiscal till October, women availed of more than 50 per cent of employment created under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Their participation has been growing since the inception of the Act in 2006. This is remarkable given that only 28.7 per cent women form a part of the country's workforce, according to the National Sample Survey Organisation data of 2004-05, the latest such data available for the country.

In the past as well public wage programmes attracted more than expected participation from women. Between 1970 and 2005, India implemented 17 major programmes with focus on employment or self-employment. By 2000, employment programmes— like the National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and the Employment Assurance Scheme—saw women accounting for a fourth of the total employment created. Self-employment generation programmes, like the Integrated Rural Development Programme and the Training for Rural Youth in Self-employment, had more women beneficiaries; 45 per cent by 2000.

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Women's participation in MGNREGA points at some unique and often contradicting aspects. First, states not known for women's participation in workforce are reporting a high number of women joining the programme. Take Kerala, where women account for about 15 per cent of the workforce. Under the Act they take up 79 per cent of the employment created. Two other states, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan, with low share of women in workforce have 82 per cent and 69 per cent women workers under MGNREGA, respectively. Second, poor states with greater casual labour potential, like Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, report low women participation (22-33 per cent). This is contradictory to the assumption that poverty forces women to take up casual jobs. Third, it is believed that states with labour-intensive farming like paddy cultivation pull more women into workforce. The MGNREGA data shows the opposite in paddy-intensive Odisha and West Bengal.

Certain aspects of the Act must be contributing to the contradictory trends. Under the Act, a household is guaranteed 100 days of manual employment in a year. Adult members can share this guarantee and the wage is same for man and woman. This prompts household-level labour budgeting. While men migrate to towns and cities, women are left behind to work under MGNREGA. The Act increases household income since earlier women used to get less wages than men.

Women take up this opportunity as economic freedom. More than wage parity the Act focuses on water conservation. It allows members belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities to take up work in their own fields and get paid for that. Women participating in the programme are reviving their degraded farms or making provision for water through other works. In Tamil Nadu this trend

is pronounced as several local studies have pointed out. In the drought-hit Bundelkhand districts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, many households have adopted this strategy. More than 90 per cent of woman workers are farm labourers or cultivators. A substantial part of their work is unpaid because they work in their farms. MGNREGA has changed this. Now parts of women's non-paid jobs, like land levelling and digging a pond in their farms, are paid for. In drought-prone districts, like Warangal in Andhra Pradesh and Ahmednagar in Maharashtra, community members say this has attracted women to the programme.

In Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan, history of women mobilisation for schemes and campaigns seems to have contributed to their higher participation. In Rajasthan, the campaign for social audits, in which women play a major role, has contributed to enhanced awareness and increased participation under MGNREGA. The state's MGNREGA work sites have good facilities for children and women. In Kerala, ma nagement of work sites and other logistics for implementation is placed in the hands of women self-help groups under the poverty eradication mission Kudumbashree. So most members of self-help groups have joined the programme. Increasing women's participation in MGNREGA can be used for effective delivery of its core objective: local ecological revival. It is now mandatory to have 50 per cent woman panchayat representatives who have nodal roles in the programme's implementation, including preparing the village development plan. So if the supervisory roles in panchayats and the dominant presence as workers converge, it will be a win-win situation for the programme as well as villages.

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CONCLUTION:

NREGA is a programme that has begun to make a difference in the lives of women. Furthermore, it is popular among the workers, who routinely ask if more work could be made available to them under the NREGA. Clearly, there is a massive demand for NREGA work, and the administration should respond to it by increasing the scale of employment. Other challenges too remain. The timely payment of wages is a problem in most areas. As mentioned earlier, the low levels of awareness and lack of worksite facilities are also troubling. Nevertheless, the overall impact of NREGA on women's lives is quite positive in many ways, whether it is by enhancing their economic independence and self-confidence, contributing to food security, helping to reduce distress migration, or fostering better awareness (and wider enforcement) of minimum wages. The role of NREGA as a tool of women's empowerment deserves much more attention than it has received so far. Viewed in a wider perspective, NREGA signals a possible reshaping of state priorities in India through a democratic determination to provide real livelihood opportunities for the rural poor. Thus, as a progressive legislation for hitherto excluded groups - women, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, among others – NREGA can help to reclaim the lost faith in the possibility of pro-people governance.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT ON LABOUR ABSORPTION IN AGRICULTURAL SECTOR: A STUDY IN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Introduction and Background

The present paper deals with the economic impact of rural employment guarantee act on Indian agricultural sector. This study is a policy oriented study which specifically focuses on the positive side as well as the impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on agricultural sector. In Indian economy the problem of unemployment, under employment and poverty are the chronic economic problems. Indian government has been taking concerted effort through various poverty eradication programmmes viz., National Rural Employment Programme, Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, food for work Programme, Small Farmers Development Agency and so on. Finally, all these programmes were integrated into a single programme that is Integrated Rural Development Programme on October 1, 1980. After this programme Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was introduced in 1989 by subsuming all the Rural Wage Employment Programme in 1989. As a result of these programmes, the government could not yield the result at the desired level to the rural poor. In this context, the UPA government enacted National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in 2005 and it came into force in February 2006 covering 330 districts in India.

This programme ensures 100 days of employment to the less privilege rural poor who are deprived off the basic livelihood in rural areas. The features of this programme deviates from the earlier rural development programmes by providing entitlements to workers, eliminating the targeting errors and reducing corruption and malpractices which form an important weakness in earlier programmes. In view of these perspectives, the present study addresses the overall economic impact on National Rural Employment Programme and its specific impact on Indian agricultural sector.

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Objectives

- To examine the overall economic impact of national rural employment guarantee scheme in Indian economy.
- To bring out its impact on Indian agricultural sector.

Discussion on MGNREGA in Indian Economic Perspective

Discussion on the overall economic perspective of MGNREGA in Indian Economy

As discussed earlier, the main economic problems are poverty and unemployment. In order to over come these problems, this National Rural Employment Guarantee programme has been highly instrumental in terms of protecting rural house holds from poverty and hunger, reduction of rural and urban

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migration increasing opportunities of employment for rural women, creating useful assets in rural areas, in bringing economic equality at least at minimum level, empowering panchayat Raj and ultimately empowering rural women. Further, the important elements of this proramme is given focus on creating employment for unskilled workers by way of manual work improvement of land and water resources. In addition to this, this programme aims at improving water conservation, creation of water harvesting structures and drought proofing including afforestation and tree planting through the identification of public works. From social point of view, it may be observed that this programme provides employment security as well as job security.

This social dimension leads to the over all economic development in rural areas in terms of enabling the under employed and unemployed workers' earning. Further, it also results in overcoming deprivation of livelihood even when there is lack of employment opportunities in the agricultural sector during the slack season.

Discussion on the impact of MGNREGA on Indian agricultural sector

While referring about the impact on agriculture, the programme helps to agricultural development by water conservation, creation of water harvesting structures, drought proofing and desilting small water reservoirs in rural areas. But at the same time when the 100 days employment programme is provided during the peak agricultural season there arises the problem of labour scarcity for agricultural work intern the timely agricultural activities are affected namely plantation, weeding, fertilizing and harvesting. Further, the funds utilized under this programme for agricultural infrastructural development is subject to malpractice and corruption. As a result, the work aimed for agricultural development such as deepening canals, desilting water reservoirs are not done properly. Therefore, it may be said that though it has many positive impact on agriculture it has also adverse impact on agriculture sector.

Conclusion

- The National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is a wholistic flagship for over all rural development especially the rural poor.
- This programme has been instrumental for protecting rural households from poverty, hunger, reduction of rural urban migration.
- Through this programme asset creation is taking place in all over the rural India.
- Finally, it could be concluded that though this programme is helpful for agricultural development, the hundred days employment should not be provided during busy agricultural season.
- In the name of agricultural infrastructural development the allotted fund should not be malpracticed.

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MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS:- ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA

India as an independent and sovereign country enshrined the principle of justice in the preamble of its constitution emphasises to secure for every citizen justice in social, economic and political spheres. India has committed to attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015. In the developmental context, they constitute the most widely- accepted yardstick of efforts made and policies implemented. Unfortunately, there is little understanding of whether India will be able to attain all of the MDGs. There are very large disparities across different states and regions of India in terms of their performance on MDGs. Inter-state and intra-state disparities have important implications for targeting of interventions. It can also be seen that there are geographical concentration in MDGs, Gender disparities, caste and tribal disparities. There remains a substantial and persistent disparity of opportunity, particularly in education, health and economic prospects of women and other vulnerable groups. A growing gulf has emerged as well in growth between the richer and poorer states within the country. Poverty is increasingly geographically concentrated. Almost half of India's poor live in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. These states have the highest infant and child mortality and U P shows the lowest primary school enrolment rate. Over three quarters of poor lives in rural areas. It can be said that India occupies two worlds simultaneously. The first, where economic reform and social changes have begun to take hold and where growth has had an impact on people's lives and opportunities. On the other, where citizens appear almost completely left behind by public services, employment opportunities and brighter prospects. While poverty declined over the decades, the rate of progress has been greater in the richer countries. The poorer states lagged behind in social indicators. (World Bank 2004). There are historical, political and other factors responsible for the disparities and inequalities. It has been argued that attention has not been paid adequately to development of social sector- like basic education; health care etc. It is important to investigate whether insufficient social sector expenditure has hampered India's human capital formation. According to WHR 2005, per capita health expenditure in India (Rs. 96) is much lower than that of others countries like China, US (Rs. 261 and Rs. 5274 respectively) and others. In fact, share of expenditure on health and education in total social sector expenditure by all states fell from 16% and 52.2% during 1990-91, to 11.7% and 45.8% in 2006-07 respectively. (Reserve Bank's report of State Finances: A Study of Budgets of 2007-08). Interstate analysis shows that there exists an inequality among the states also in terms of per capita social sector expenditure. Per capita expenditure of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra are much higher than that of Bihar, MP and UP.

The analysis of MDG targets covered some of the studies. Mainly such studies are undertaken by the World Bank as part of the evaluation of UN MDG programme. Some studies are undertaken on the HDI not exclusively on MDGs.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) broadly set forth objectivity to the quantification and measurability of progress in the fight against poverty, hunger, illiteracy, gender inequality, diseases and environmental degradation. For a country of the area and population size as big as India's, the challenges

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in achieving comprehensive or exhaustive compatibility with the MDG framework of indicators lie mostly in the statistical reformation of the existing data sets, if not in the usage of alternative indicators that can adequately reflect the proximity or distance from the time bound targets. The goals and the targets are global while their relevance and degree of transformation burden is country specific. There are 48 indicators prescribed in the MDG framework and standard definitions for these indicators have also been enunciated. In the context of India they pose a challenge of input mixing for reproducing the measures with what the system is set to produce.

The Government of India has launched various new countrywide programmes for extending the benefits of its policy initiatives and demonstrated its commitment by significant enhancement of allocations for these programmes in the recent budgets. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (Education for all), the National Rural Health Mission, the Expanded Midday Meal Scheme and the Integrated Child Development Mission, Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana are the main programmes targeted to achieve goals akin to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These programmes along with other concomitant action plans have their own instruments of assessing the impacts on the ground.

Even though it has been implementing various programmes to attain the MDG the Economic activity is increasingly concentrated in regions. This concentration has been accompanied by sizeable spatial disparities in living standards and welfare. There remains a substantial and persistent disparity of opportunity, particularly in education, health and economic prospects of women and other vulnerable groups such as SC/ST population. A growing gulf has emerged as well in growth between the richer and poorer states within the country. In the Index of 2007-08, India ranked a dismal 128. Now it is at 132. The HDI figures since 2002 signal a steady decline in the nation's conversion of wealth into human development, even as the numbers of its billionaires and millionaires doubled and trebled. Now the billionaires have shrunk in number, but not the slum dogs. There are at least 836 million Indians living on less than Rs. 20 a day. Rural-urban disparity, gender disparity and uneven human development across the States in the region are quite significant.

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While other factors are equally as important in attaining MDG, education is a significant contributor to economic prosperity. If more education leads to faster economic growth, then investments in education could pay for themselves in the long run, and could also play a role in reducing poverty. Such reasoning could be crucial in bolstering political support for education investments and ensuring their sustainability.

There exist inter-group disparities of multiple natures. The disparities between (a) rural and urban (2) Inter-State (2) Inter-caste (3) Inter-religion (4) Male-female (5) occupation group (6) and Poor and non–poor in respect of opportunities, facilities and access. The prime focus of attaining MDG should be the education. While ensuring universal primary education by providing proper infrastructure the provision, accessibility and excellence of higher education also be guaranteed.

The supreme goals of MDG can be attained only by the significant improvement in the poorest states. The programs and fund allocation should be channelized into the poor states and regions. It could be seen that much emphasis should be given on the education.

It is expected that India will be the economic power of the next decade. Having good potential of the human capital is attainable goal. MDG will be a guiding signal for that if properly implemented. The year 2015 is the targeted time to achieve the MDG. This is the time to make corrective actions and final checkups.

EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE, CIVIL SOCIETY AND INDIAN DEMOCRACY

Introduction

Great celebrations have marked the 60th year of India's independence. And so they should. For the very survival of democracy in India over this long period is a truly remarkable achievement. As recently as 2003-04, even in the remote hinterlands where I live, people have voted with their feet, to remove governments, both in the states and at the centre, that they felt had failed to deliver. Clearly people still have hope and retain the conviction that their voice matters, that their vote can bring about change.

But we must also recognise that many of these same people are fast running out of patience. So deep is their cynicism that in nearly a third of India's 600 districts, many thousands are either taking to the gun or committing suicide. An overview of some basic facets of India's recent development experience and the conditions of life in these regions is sufficient to understand the desperation of these people.

Civil Society and NREGA

The enactment of the NREGA is a classic success story of civil society action in India. The campaign for the right to work was involved at every stage of NREGA formulation. And the intense pressure it was able to create played a significant part in the Act being passed by Parliament. Now when we are considering reforms in NREGA, once again civil society has to play the key role. If a somewhat different one though. If thus far the challenge was to pressure the government to enact the law, working in a campaign mode, now the task is to try and make NREGA work on the ground.

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The large NGOs need to prepare themselves mentally to soil their hands in the truly difficult task of reforming NREGA implementation. Because it is hard to imagine the voluntary sector being able to upscale operations at the requisite level but even more importantly because of questions of accountability in a democratic polity. Civil society needs to see its primary role as that of ensuring transparency and accountability of state institutions and of empowering the panchayats, in close partnership with them. What NGOs must recognise is that NREGA provides an unprecedented opportunity for transformation of rural India, for the government is committed to meeting whatever demand there is for work in the village. This must be capitalised upon. Since NREGA gives highest priority to watershed development activities, its funds can help restore catchments and build basic water infrastructure. Within a few years, this infrastructure can become the foundation for a range of income generating livelihoods such as improved dryland agriculture, dairy development, smaller ruminant development, fisheries, agro-processing, NTFP processing etc.

The most important feature of NREGA could either make or break its programmes — the fact that Gram Panchayats (GPs) have been designated the chief implementing agency. This raises hopes that there will greater transparency and people's ownership of NREGA schemes. The PRIs are the enduring face of Indian democracy at the grass-roots. With all their teething problems and the corruption inflicted by entrenched vested interests upon their functioning, it is these institutions of local self-governance that need to be empowered if democracy has to survive in India. If the rights of the weakest have to be protected and

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fortified. Thus far, a major weakness of PRIs in India has stemmed from inadequate financial devolution.

But there remains a real issue of the lack of implementation capability among PRIs. The support structure to enable GPs to implement NREGA is utterly inadequate. Most states only provide for a Gram Rozgar Sewak. It is highly unlikely that this one functionary can effectively implement such an ambitious programme, with all its demanding requirements. Again, it is in the open assembly of the Gram Sabha that NREGA plans will have to be presented, explained, and approved. As the approved plan goes into implementation, it has to be social-audited by the Gram Sabha at each stage. In many parts of India, this vital institution is still in its infancy. Elsewhere it has gone into deep decay. Either place, it has to be resuscitated.

This is where grass-roots civil society organisations (CSOs) have such an important role. To build the requisite capacities in PRIs for them to become the institutions of governance they need to be for participatory democracy to take roots in India. CSOs need to work closely with PRIs to empower them. But this needs a major shift in the mindset of the voluntary sector in India that has tended to regard GPs as competitors or worse as antagonists. It has been the experience of many CSOs (including SPS) that PRIs have often been hostile to their interventions. This is because historically the leadership of PRIs has tended to emerge from the structures of power that lorded over rural India for decades, if not centuries. These vested interests resist the winds of change brought in by CSOs, whether in the direction of equity or transparency. But my plea is that all this is beginning to change. In many cases, precisely because of enlightened CSO action in building a new cadre that has provided dynamic leadership to PRIs. This enables strong CSO-PRI partnerships to develop.

The model of partnerships built within the voluntary sector, the striking absence of which has been one of our biggest weaknesses. These partnerships must be based on openness to learning from each other, an attitude of genuine humility. Where no one knowledge is valorised over another. A framework of mutual accountability where decisions are made through a dialogue between self-respecting partners who also respect each other. Solutions emerge in an iterative process of interdisciplinary exchange and stakeholder involvement at each stage. This is a vision of "cascading redundancy" where, as the people and their institutions grow, we become less and less important over time. Rather our role continuously changes as we climb the ladder of redundancy. Increasingly redundant in certain respects, even as we move on to other responsibilities.

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Conclusion

If India's reformers want flexible labour markets, they must also put in place policies which ensure that job-losers will be supported during their transition to a new job or location, as also the necessary training for those taking up new work. If our planners want to build big dams, they must at least follow the principle of "free, informed, prior consent" of the displaced that has been proposed by the pro-dam World Commission on Dams. And ensure that they get land in the command area of the dam. Consensus can be built only when both sides are sensitive to each others' needs. Especially when those in power carefully listen to those in distress. A democracy will thrive only to the extent there is room for expression and redressal of the legitimate grievances of those who still suffer. Restraint needs also to be exercised by intellectuals and professionals who often claim knowledge with a degree of certainty not warranted by the state of science. Their claims ossify into dogmas which polarize positions in society in a way that makes conflicts impossible to resolve. Self-critical openness to dialogue with those of a contrary viewpoint is the hallmark of any democracy, paradoxically often lacking in the purveyors of knowledge.

RURAL EMPOWERMENT THROUGH MGNREGA : A MICRO STUDY

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is unique and first Indian job guarantee scheme which 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 of Rs.100 per day. The Central government outlay for scheme is Rs. 39,100 crores ($8 billion) in FY 2009-10.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 the poverty line. Around one-third of the stipulated work force is women. In independent India, never had been such a program which ensures employment in the poor hand. Under the MGNREGA the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers.

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Goal

a. Strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing a fall-back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce of inadequate

b. Growth engine for sustainable development of an agricultural economy. Though the process of providing employment on works that address causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion, the Act seeks to strength the natural resource base of rural livelihood and create durable assets in rural areas. Effectively implemented, NREGA has the potential to transform the geography of poverty

c. Empowerment of rural poor through the processes of a rights-based Law

d. New ways of doing business, as a model of government reform anchored on the principles of transparency and grass root democracy

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Women empowerment

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) provides at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. A quick look at the achievements and consolidation of the program showcases its strength:

- ***Maximizing Work Opportunities*:** Livelihood Security: Under the NREGA, in 2008-09, 4.5 crore households were provided employment and 216.01 crore person days were generated. In FY 2009-10 up to July, 2.53 crore households have been provided work and 87.09 crore person days have been generated.

- ***Inclusive Growth*:** NREGA has provided employment particularly for marginalized groups. The participation percentages were 55% (SC/ST) in 2008-09 and 53% (SC/ST) up to July 2009. Women workforce participation has also surpassed the statutory minimum requirement of 33 percent. In FY 08-09, women participation was 48%, which has increased to 52% up to in 2009-10 (up to July, 09).

- ***Augmenting household income, savings and investment*:** Post-NREGA, there has been a revision of minimum wages across the country in last three years, and the average daily wage rate has increased from Rs. 75 to Rs 87 in 2009-10 (up to July, 2009).

- ***Financial Inclusion*:** Over 7.33 crore NREGA bank and post office accounts have been opened so far. These accounts have helped bring the rural poor under the organized banking sector. Besides the agencies for wage payment are being separated from implementing agencies through accounts-based wage payment. This will not only infuse integrity in wage payment, but also bring the most vulnerable people in rural India into formal banking and credit system. Workers under NREGA are provided medical and health cover insurance. Innovative experiments in the form of use of smart cards and biometric signatures for wage payment to NREGA workers in remote villages are being supported.

- ***Regenerating Natural Resources*:** Under NREGA water and soil conservations, plantation and forestation has been given priority. Works relating to drought proofing and flood protection are aimed to provide resistance to climate shocks and natural disasters. Thus, NREGA can actually be seen moving towards its objective of food and livelihood security and long term sustainable development through ecological regeneration. In 2008-09, 27.20 lakhs works were undertaken, of which 46% constituted water conservation. During the current year up to July-09, 21.76 lakhs works have been undertaken, of which 51% relate to water conservation.

- ***Drought mitigation*:** Advisories were issued to all 11 droughts affected states to ensure that adequate funds and shelf of project have been made available to the Districts.

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- ***ICT as a growth trigger for rural development***: NREGA has used technology effectively for inclusion. Web enabled Management Information System (MIS) (www.nrega.nic.in), one of the largest data base of rural households, makes transparency intrinsic to NREGA by placing all critical parameters such as wage payments, number of days of employment provided and works under execution online for easy public access. 2.04 crore Muster Rolls and 7.88 crore Job Cards have been uploaded so far.

Summary

Any person who is above the age of 18 and resides in rural areas is entitled to apply for work. Any applicant is entitled to work within 15 days, for as many days as he/she has applied, subject to a limit of 100 days per household per year. Work is to be provided within a radius of 5 kilometers of the applicant's residence if possible and in any case within the Block. If work is provided beyond 5 kilometers, travel allowances have to be paid. Workers are entitled to the statutory minimum wage applicable to agricultural labourers in the state, unless and until the Central Government "notifies" a different wage rate. If the Central Government notifies, the wage rate is subject to a minimum of Rs 60/- per day. Workers are to be paid weekly, or in any case not later than a fortnight. Payment of wages is to be made directly to the person concerned in the presence of independent persons of the community on pre-announced dates. If work is not provided within 15 days, applicants are entitled to an unemployment allowance: one third of the wage rate for the first thirty days, and one half thereafter.Labourers are entitled to various facilities at the worksite such as clean drinking water, shade for periods of rest, emergency health care, and child-minding.

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WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMM

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee now Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was introduced in February 2006 to begin with in 200 districts, in April 2007 it was extended to another 130 districts and from April 2008 to all rural areas in the country.As the scheme is implemented throughout the country and as works begin everywhere, the magnitude of lives that will be touched by it will inevitably be massive. The scheme was intended to create wage work during the lean agricultural season through a public works programme available on demand as guaranteed by the Act. In addition to being a safety net, providing a minimum income when no other work is available, it was hoped that distress migration would be checked, village assets created, a process of sustainable development initiated, and women empowered. The rural employment guarantee legally enshrines the right to work for 100 days, is demand driven, now has national coverage, in-built mechanisms for accountability and shows a measure of gender sensitivity in its design. For example, it allows for crèche facilities to be provided on worksites and requires that 1/3rd of all beneficiaries be women. Wages paid cannot discriminate between the sexes. Other entitlements include mandatory participation of women in the monitoring and management of the scheme.

Selection of Works

The NREGS is also meant to create durable assets through labour-intensive works and to stop distress migration in the lean seasons. There are four concerns with regard to the works under the NREGS. The first is the vital issue of the permissible list of works under the Scheme, which have been prioritized and listed in Schedule I of the Act.

The focus of the Scheme shall be on the following works in their order of priority:—

(i). water conservation and water harvesting;
(ii). drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation);
(iii). irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
(iv). provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana of the Government of India;
(v). renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks;
(vi). land development;
(vii). flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas;
(viii). rural connectivity to provide all-weather access; and
(ix). any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government."

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Women and NREGA

Women dominate EGA worksites in all States. Women mostly do the NREGS work since the wages are exceedingly low and men prefer to go out of the village for work, while women need to remain closer home to fulfill their household responsibilities. Most women at the NREGS worksites earned a wage of Rs. 25 to 50 per day, paid in cash. A majority of them had got work for 4-10 days, which was inadequate. They earned far less than promised due to the shortfall in measurement. The NREGS has the potential of addressing women's practical needs through wage employment and the creation of assets that address basic needs of food, water, fuel, fodder, etc. It can also address their strategic needs by improving their status and structured involvement in local area development and better intra-family division of work. For this, community based women's groups such as SHGs play a very important role. This can help in the more confident and effective expression of needs and affect the selection of works. The greater status brought about through income can combine with the self-confidence brought about by collectives and interaction to undermine social barriers.

There were several suggestions of women friendly economic activities and projects such as afforestation, civic services, soil conservation, social forestry, horticulture, floriculture, etc. There were also several requests for training and literacy programmes converging with the NREGS and labour costs coming from it. Physical infrastructure for social development such as anganwadis, health centers, crèches in the village, ration shops, were also priorities. However, for all this, apart from the labour:material cost ratio, the list of permissible works will have to change. Within the NREGS, there are certain basic issues pertaining to women's work and working conditions that must be addressed. These include individual cards, the wage rate, equal wages for men and women, individual payment of wages to women workers, part payment in grain, worksite facilities like childcare, drinking water, shade, rest, convenient timings, first aid facilities, etc.

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Conclusion

A unique and radical programme of this kind that marks a fundamental departure from previous approaches requires time to be fully or even substantially streamlined. Unfortunately, there is a sense of nervousness in the bureaucracy fostered by the prevailing climate of 'fiscal downsizing' that has resulted in a narrow and parsimonious Scheme, which might ultimately squeeze the life out of it. This is due to high productivity norms resulting in low wages, low coverage and reduced per capita entitlements through the adoption of a broad all-encompassing definition of household and absence of systems to engender application-driven implementation. Combined with fiscal conservatism, this has led to extremely low utilisation of funds and aggregate expenditure. The administrative message that has gone down is zero tolerance for wrongdoing in this Scheme, the Centre is watching. This has stifled initiative where it was possible, and given rise to the tendency to do the minimum, erring on the side of conservatism. We must understand that NREGA cannot be a long-term solution to the unemployment problem of rural India. A comprehensive and a more sustainable solution that creates large-scale self-employment opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors in the rural areas, stimulates demand and last but not the least, increases rural productivity still need to be found.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME – A STUDY

Introduction

The Government of India passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (Central Act No.42 of 2005). This Act gives legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work. The Act is applicable in the Districts notified by the Government of India.

And whereas, the objective of the Act is to enhance the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by generating wage employment. The choice of works suggested addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion. Effectively implemented, the employment generated under the Act has the potential to transform the geography of rural poverty.

Objectives

Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme shall have the following objectives:

(1) The primary objective of the Scheme is to provide livelihood security to the households in rural areas of the aforesaid 13 (thirteen) notified districts by providing not less than 100 (one hundred) days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work.

(2) Creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of rural poor.

Rights and Entitlements

(1) Every adult member whose name appears in the Job Card shall be entitled to apply for unskilled manual work.

(2) All persons belonging to a household and registered shall be entitled to employment under the Scheme for as many days as each applicant may request, subject to a maximum of one hundred days per household in a given financial year.

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(3) If an applicant is not provided with such employment within fifteen days of receipt of his/ her application seeking employment or from the date on which the employment has been sought in the case of an advance application whichever is later, he/ she shall be entitled to a daily unemployment allowance subject to the entitlement of the household at the rate which shall not be less than one fourth of the wage rate for the first 30 (thirty) days of the financial year and not less than one half of the wage rate for the remaining period of financial year .

(4) As far as possible the applicant shall be provided work within the village. If an applicant is provided employment outside a radius of five kilometers of the village where he/ she resides at the time of applying he/ she should be paid an extra 10% of the prevailing wage rate to meet additional transportation and living expenses.

(5) Priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least one-third of the wage seekers shall be women who have registered and requested for work.

(6) In case the payment of wages is not made within a fortnight, the workers shall be entitled to receive payment of compensation as per the provisions of the Payment of Wages Act 1936(4 of 1936).

(7) There shall be no discrimination solely on the ground of gender and the provisions of the Equal Remuneration Act. 1976 (25 of 1976) shall be complied with.

(8) Workers are entitled for work site facilities like safe drinking water, shade for children and periods of rest, first-aid box with adequate material for emergency treatment of minor injuries and other health hazards connected with the work.

(9) If the number of children below the age of six years accompanying the women, working at any site is five or more, one woman worker shall be engaged to look after the children and she shall be paid wage rate.

(10) Any injury caused to a person employed under the Scheme by accident arising out of and in the course of his/her employment, such person is entitled to medical treatment free of charge.

(11) Where hospitalization of the injured worker at the worksite is necessary, such arrangements shall be made including accommodation, treatment and medicines. The injured worker shall be paid a daily allowance not less than half of the wage rate required to be paid had the injured been engaged in the work.

(12) If the person employed dies or becomes permanently disabled by accident arising out of and in the course of employment, he/ she shall be paid an ex-gratia at the rate of Rs. 25,000 or

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such amount as may be notified by the Central Government, and the amount shall be paid to the disabled or legal heirs of the deceased, as the case may be.

(13) Any personal injury caused by accident to a child accompanying any person employed under the Scheme, such person is entitled to free of charge medical treatment for the child and in case of death or disablement, an ex-gratia as determined by the Government.

Conclusion

Individual/ Group of wage-seekers having Job Cards shall give individual or group application, (Forms 4 and 5) as the case may be, on a plain paper or in a printed form. Advance application giving details of the specific period of employment sought in the year may also be submitted. Same person/ group can submit multiple applications provided that the corresponding periods for which employment is sought do not overlap. The Secretary shall accept the applications for work. The applications shall be valid if the wage employment sought by a household is at least for fourteen days and the aggregate employment provided to the household is not more than hundred days. List of all such applications shall be maintained in the 'Applications for Work Register' The Gram Panchayat shall direct the applicant or group of applicants in writing in Form 7, to work in any ongoing work or by starting a new work, within fifteen days of receiving applications seeking work or from the date of work being sought in case of advance application, whichever is later. He/She shall make necessary entries in the 'Applications for Work Register'.

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PERFORMANCE OF NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME (NREGA) IN SOUTH INDIAN STATES

Introduction:

Unemployment is a perennial problem of the Indian Economy. Rural Employment grew at the annual rate of 0.58 percent which was far below the rate of growth of Rural population[1]. The sectors like Agriculture, Mining and Quarrying and Electricity including Gas and Water supply have even recorded Negative rate of growth of employment in the 1990's (pulak Mishra and Bhagirath Behera 2008) About 15 percent of workforce in the organized Manufacturing Sector lost their jobs between 1995-96 and 2000-01 and their losses have been widespread across major states and industry groups(Pulak Mishra and Bhagirath Behera 2008).The deceleration in growth of employment had further worsened the unemployment scenario in the country in the 1990's.The National Rural Employment Programme(NREP),Jawahar Rozgar Yojana(JRY),Sampoorna Grama Rozgar Yojana(SGRY) are some of the Employment Generation Program of Indian Government to generate the Employment in Rural Areas. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is the Latest in the List of Employment Generation Programme of Indian Government. This paper focuses about the performance of NREGA in South Indian States like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

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Objectives of the Study:

1. To Find out the Performance of NREGA in South Indian States on the basis of usage of Funds.
2. To analyze the Participation of women workers in NREGA in South Indian States.

Methodology and Source of Data:

The whole study is based on Secondary Data. For this study four south Indian states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu were selected. The Secondary Data were extracted from Ministry of Rural Development and NREGA Websites.

I. Performance of NREGA:

One of the objectives of this study is to find out the performance of NREGA in South Indian States. For that first; the Data related to coverage of Districts among four states were collected.

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1. Coverage of Districts:

Table 1: Number of Districts covered under NREGA:

STATES	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Andhra Pradesh	13	19	22
Karnataka	5	11	29
Kerala	2	4	14
Tamil Nadu	6	10	31

Source: NREGA Website (http://nrega.nic.in)

From the above table we can infer that, for the first 2006-07 and 2007-08 coverage of Districts higher in Andhra Pradesh compared to other states but during 2008-09 there is a tremendous improvement in Tamil Nadu in terms of District coverage. This shows the state Government interest towards NREGA.

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2. Job Cards:

Job Cards are very important Document .On the basis of the Job Card only the Employment opportunity will be provided by the Gram Panchayath.

Usage of Funds:

Usage of Funds means how this State Government uses the available funds. If the state government uses maximum available fund means, the involvement of state government is really good otherwise the government has to improve its involvement towards NREGA.

Table: 2: Usage of Funds :(Amount in crores)

States	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09	
	Available fund (Rs.Crore)	Actual Expenditure (Rs.Crore)	Available fund (Rs.Crore)	Actual Expenditure (Rs.Crore)	Available fund (Rs.Crore)	Actual Expenditure (Rs.Crore)
AP	1142.2	680.2	2293.2	2083.7	2727.3	1743.3
Karnataka	161.7	119	436	236.5	468.1	120
Kerala	48.2	27.9	99.7	83.4	151.3	64.7
Tamil Nadu	252.1	151.6	701.1	516.4	1131.8	591.2

Source: NREGA Website (http://nrega.nic.in)

II. Participation of Women Workers:

Participation of Women Workers analyzed on the basis of Women Participation in total man days and Income generated by the Women Workers under NREGA.

2. Total Income Generated Through NREGA:

Income generation is determined on the basis of the women participation. In which state women participation is higher, the income generated by them is also higher.

Table: 5: Total Income Generated Through NREGA:

Income Generated by gender wise in 2009-20(in lakhs)

Income Generated by gender wise in 2009-20(in lakhs)		
States	Men	Women
AP	8228.046(45.13)	10003.14(54.87)
Karnataka	93049(54.98)	76185.46(45.02)
Kerala	4567.37(11.70)	34453.79(88.30)
Tamil Nadu	23577.04794(19.85)	95169.13(80.15)

Source: NREGA Website (http://nrega.nic.in)

It is clear that in Tamil Nadu and Kerala Income generated women is higher than other states .The reason is Women participation is higher in these states .They are willing to do Work under NREGA.

Findings and Conclusion:

Performance is decided on the basis of the usage of funds is one of the objectives of this study. On the basis of this condition Performance of Andhra Pradesh is good in terms of District Coverage's and utilization of Funds .Even Tamil Nadu cover more number of states in the year 2008-09 over all coverage for the continuous three year is good in Andhra Pradesh. Again utilization of Funds and Allotment of higher amount of funds is higher in Andhra Pradesh.

In case of Women Participation, Kerala is well known for women Education and Freedom, Naturally Kerala women are playing leading role in NREGA. Kerala women are aware about this NREGA through Kudumbasree[2] and in Tamil Nadu it is through Self-Helping Groups.

NREGA is provided good and guaranteed employment opportunity to the rural labourers. The type of works undertaken under NREGA is really good. It prevents migration of workers from rural areas to urban areas.

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A METHOD TO IDENTIFY POOR

Identifying the poor correctly is important to know the ugly faces of poverty and to introduce scheme like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme for removal of it. The approaches* to identify the poor can be grouped under three broad categories. A) Means testing or income criterion b) indicator criterion and c) self criterion.

Information on income or consumption is generally used as a means test that shows whether a household income is below the cutoff point. But because of informational and administrative constraints, means testing may not be perfect and may induce costly leakage's and create adverse effects.

Indicator criterion can be divided in to two types. The first one is similar to means testing and uses some characteristics of households. Under this criterion instead of information on income or consumption, information on variables like, landholding, ownership of consumer durables, type of house, social class etc., used for identifying poor. The second type of indicator, known as geographical indicator, uses the place of residence as a poverty indicator (e.g) slum area.

Self – criterion is one where a programme is available to all but it is designed such a way to discourage the non- poor from participating. For example, participants can be required to do manual work, as in public employment programmes. It acts as an effective measure to discourage higher income groups.

A survey was undertaken by Ms.P.Ananthalakshmi (An old student ,for her projet)in Mela Authoor village of Thoothukudi district to identify the poor through indicator method. Two out of 7 streets of the village were randomly selected. The two streets had around 117 households. By applying lottery method of sampling 60 households were selected for survey. The scores of the household were presented in table No.1. As per the table- 1 out of 60 household 38 (68%) were poor.

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Table 1 SCORING

Household number	Score	Category
1	6/14	Poor
2	0/14	Poor
3	8/14	Non-poor
4	3/14	Poor
5	7/14	Poor
6	5/14	poor
7	10/14	Non-poor
8	8/14	Non-poor
9	3/14	Poor
10	0/14	Poor
11	9/14	Non-poor
12	9/14	Non-poor
13	0/14	Poor
14	11/14	Non-poor
15	10/14	Non-poor
16	4/14	Poor
17	5/14	Poor
18	2/14	Poor
19	9/14	Non-poor
20	9/14	Non-poor
21	3/14	Poor
22	2/14	Poor
23	2/14	Poor
24	6/14	Poor
25	6/14	Poor
26	12/14	Non-poor
27	13/14	Non-poor
28	2/14	Poor
29	3/14	Poor
30	8/14	Non-poor
31	14/14	Non-poor
32	13/14	Non-poor
33	2/14	Poor
34	5/14	Poor
35	10/14	Non-poor
36	2/14	Poor
37	3/14	Poor
38	5/14	Poor
39	2/14	Poor
40	8/14	Non-poor
41	12/14	Non-poor
42	7/14	Poor
43	0/14	Poor
44	9/14	Non-poor
45	1/14	Poor
46	1/14	Poor
47	3/14	Poor
48	9/14	Non-poor
49	5/14	Poor
50	3/14	Poor
51	2/14	Poor
52	11/14	Non-poor
53	0/14	Poor
54	10/14	Non-poor
55	3/14	Poor
56	5/14	Poor
57	12/14	Non-poor
58	3/14	Poor
59	2/14	Poor
60	7/14	Poor

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It is obvious that poverty alleviation programmes must target these type of poor households.

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN INDIA AND THE NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (NREGA)

Introduction

Public works schemes have long been an important measure in poverty alleviation worldwide but have been criticised for providing relief in the absence of sustainable and productive employment creation. The mutually reinforcing nature of the relationship between social security and enhancement of economic growth needs to be recognized and promoted.

The issue of social protection started to gain political prominence in Asia after the financial crisis of the late 1990s, when it became apparent that globalisation and its economic and financial repercussions can have adverse consequences for certain groups and sectors, and that new measures and mechanisms were required in response. This paper reviews experience with social protection policies and programmes in India in recent years, and looks particularly at NREGA, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

Main findings

Prior to 1990, 'social protection' policies and programmes in India were narrowly defined and had very limited outreach. Measures usually consisted of, for instance, social security designed for workers employed on a regular basis in the organised sector, or social welfare interventions to assist the destitute. Since the 1990s, however, there have been efforts to expand both the concept.

Economic growth can only be sustained if the working conditions and productivity of the workforce are improved and safety nets are provided.

Outreach of social protection, in the realization that economic growth can only be sustained if the working conditions and productivity of the workforce are improved and safety nets are provided. To this end, many new social security legislation measures and programmes have been initiated, particularly social insurance and micro credit schemes and the national programme designed to cover maternity, old age and health needs.

Nevertheless, it is estimated that current social protection measures still only cover 5–6 per cent of workers, which means that in practice many people still rely on traditional mechanisms of support. Also, workers in the informal sectors remain largely excluded from these schemes. In response to these concerns, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was passed in late 2005, and implemented in 200 districts, at least one in each state.

The Act has diverse objectives that include improving labour market outcomes through providing guaranteed employment.

Conclusion

Under the social protection umbrella, public works have probably had the largest outreach. But these have been criticized because they often fail to generate employment through the creation of productive assets and, without this, they cannot contribute to the generation of sustainable and productive employment. NREGA in India is an example of a public works programme with diverse social protection objectives that include providing a minimum income alongside stimulating local development, and operating in a gender-sensitive manner. It can serve as a model and provide lessons for the development of similar social protection initiatives in developing countries.

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IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME

Introduction

IT IS from September 2005, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is being implemented. Within these four years of implementation, there are stories of success and failures. There are instances of corruption and efforts made to maintain transparency as well as conducting social audits. There were amendments in the act, issuance of government orders, studies both by the civil society organizations and government. All these are being done in order to ensure hundred days of work for them, for whom the act is actually made.

Women laborers

Let's start with the figures of inclusion of women laborers in NREGA. Women are the half of the whole workforce. As per the national level consolidated figure, during the financial year of 2008-09, out of the total laborers, 47% were women. During the year of 2009-10 (six months) the percentage of women participation is 51%. That means the involvement of women in NREGA is moving upward, if seen in a national perspective.

However, State wise, it varies and in some states inclusion of the women is a matter of concern. For instance during the year of 2008-2009, in the states like Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, the percentage of women participations was either 30% or less than that. It should be noted here that these are the states where there is a good number of share of women in the total rural workforce. In addition to this there are also states like Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir where it is less than thirty percent or just touched it. I

In current financial year of 2009-10, till date Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir again remained in the same list where women participation is less than 30%. Even though in the states like Jharkhand (32%) and West Bengal (37%), in the current year the participation has increased but it is very minimal in comparison to the previous year. In terms of inclusion

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of women laborers the southern states have performed well. In the current year, Kerala stands on the top where, percentage of women participation is more than 83%.

Among other south Indian states, Tamil Nadu (78%), Andhra Pradesh (58%) and Karnataka (45%) performed well. It is clear here that even though the national percentage looks fine, but much needs to be done at the state level. The state governments like Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal needs to give much focus on this aspect to ensure the participation of more number of women laborers in NREGA. The inclusion of women in NREGA should be looked from a social, as well as political perspective and not merely an economic one.

Laborers from the scheduled castes

Next in the inclusion ladders are the laborers from the scheduled castes and scheduled tribe communities. In India as per the 2001 census, the share of the scheduled caste population in total population is 16.2%. This is the community which have either no or less access to land. They depend on caste based occupation as well as on the daily labour activities. Therefore the rural employment guarantee act becomes a vital source of income for these communities. The national consolidated figure for the financial year 2008-2009, proves that the participation of different scheduled caste communities in NREGA is somehow fair, if compared to the share of the community in the total population.

In the said year, percentage of SC participation in NREGA was around 29% nationally. In the states like Punjab (74%), Tamil Nadu (60%), Haryana (53%), Bihar (50%), it was more than fifty percent. However in the states like Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa etc. the participation of SCs in NREGA is higher than their share in the states total population but it is not very much encouraging.

It is because the participation of SC laborers in NREGA was less than 30%. In the year of 2009-10, nationally the participation has only increased by one percent. In the current year, the states like Orissa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan needs to be more proactive in ensuring the participation of laborers from these communities.

Conclusion

NREGA has come with the objective of providing hundred days of employment to the rural laborers. But it should not be seen as a government welfare programme as like others. It might have a welfaristic approach but more of that it gives rights to the people to demand, work and earn wages to live their life. In this context it becomes important where the most deprived, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, women and the disables included in the programme and got maximum benefit out of it. The state governments who are responsible for the purpose of implementing this flagship programme needs to keep it in mind. Although NREGA is a demand driven programme and the supply of work depends on the demand made by the laborers, but it is the duty of the government to carry out awareness programmes in such a way, so that the most deprived gets maximum benefit of the scheme.

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MGNREGS IN GENERATING SUSTAIBABLE ASSETS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - A CASE STUDY OF TEN PANCHAYAT IN TAMILNADU

Introduction:

"India lives in its villages" – Mahatma Gandhi.

Literally and from the social, economic and political perspectives the statement is valid even today. Around 65 percent of the states population is living in rural areas. There are cascading effects of poverty, unemployment and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas on urban centers causing slums and consequential social and economic tensions manifesting in economic deprivation. The government policy and programmes have laid emphasis on poverty alleviation, generation of employment and income opportunities and provision of infrastructure and basic facilities to meet the needs of rural poor for realizing these objectives, self-employment and wage employment programmes continued to pervade in one form or other.

NREP (National Rural Employment Programme) a centrally sponsored scheme is being implemented in Tamil Nadu from October 1980 onwards. The objectives of the scheme are generation of additional gainful employment for the unemployed and under employed persons both men and women and creation of durable community assets in the rural areas and improving the nutritional status and living standards of rural poor. This programme has been continued in the Seventh Plan as a major programme for providing rural landless agricultural labour and marginal farmers with employment in the lean seasons. An outlay of Rs.10, 250 lakhs for the plan period as the state share and Rs.1,21,875 man days of employment been generated.

In Tamil Nadu this scheme was initially implemented in six notified (phase I) districts viz., Cuddalore, Villupuram, tiruvannamalai, Nagapattinam, Dindgul and Sivagangai districts from 002.02.2006. In the Second phase, it was extended to Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Karur and Tirunelveli districts with effect from 01.04.2007. form 01.04.2008 onwards, the scheme has been extended to all the remaining 20 districts (phase II) of Tamil Nadu viz., Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur, Vellore, Salem, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Erode, Coimbatore, Nilgiris, Trichy, Perambalur, Ariyalur, Pudukottai, Madurai, Theni, Ramanathapuram, Viruthynagar, Tuticorin and Kanniya Kumari.

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Table: 1
Implementation of MGNREGS in Tamil Nadu

Year	No.of individual who sought work (Rs. In Lakhs)	Person days of Employment generated (RS. In Crores)	Households completing 100 days of works	Expenditure (RS. In Crores)
2006- 07	9.70	1.48	1,824	151.64
2007 - 08	22.66	6.43	77,053	516.64
2008 – 09	32.56	12.04	2,81,000	1,005.15
2009 – 10	40.04	20.96	8,84,367	1,676.37
Total	104.96	40.91	12,44,244	3,352.58

Source: Transforming Rural Tamil Nadu Four – Year Achievements (2006 -07 to 2009 – 10)

Objective of the Study:

The objective of the study is to explain the role of MGNREGS in generating sustainable assets and employment opportunities in Ten Panchayats of Tamil Nadu.

Methodology:

Ten panchayat from two blocks in two districts have been chosen to study the effectiveness of MGNREGS programme. In Gudiyattam block in Vellore District Seevor, Kondasamudram, Agraharam, Paradaram and Modikuppam panchayats. In Pollachi North blocks in Coimbatore district, Achipatti,Devampadi, Puraipalayam, Ramapattinam and Thipampatti are the five panchayats were taken for study.

From each panchayat three villages were randomly chosen and Ten household samples from each village altogether 300 household samples were collected.

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Table: 2 Performance of MGNREGS at Panchayat level

S.No	Panchayat	MGNREGS Implemented	Asset (Projects)	Cost (Lakhs)	Beneficiaries (Percent)	Remarks
1.	Seevor	2008-09	4	13,500	75	Nil
2.	Kondasamudram	2008-09	5	N.A	70	Nil
3.	Agraharam	2007-08	N.A	19	N.A	Nil
4.	Paradaram	2008-09	N.A	14	70	Need of factories
5.	Modikuppam	2008-09	N.A	N.A	N.A	Nil

6.	Ramapattinam	2008-09	9	6	70	Need for more wages
7.	Purvaipalayam	2005-06	2	14	75	No social Audit
8.	Achi patti	2008-09	2	1,50,000	70	Nil
9.	Devam padi	2005-06	3	9	75	No social audit
10.	Thippampatti	2008-09	N.A	4	70	Nil

Source: Panchayats of Gudiyattam block, Panchayat of Pollachi North block

N.A: Not Available

Table 2 gives the picture of implementation of this programme in each panchayat and the projects works carried out so far at the estimated cost and the beneficiaries of this scheme and recommendations have been made. Thus the overall picture shows in most of the panchayat this scheme has been implemented by 2008 – 09 except Purraipalayam panchayat in the year 2007-08. And the project carried out in panchayat Ramapattinam which is a big panchayat and 5 projects in Kondasamudram and rest of the panchayat takes up 2 to 4 projects at random. The cost estimation of Rs.19 lakhs been carried out in Agraharam but information of project is not available it is a clear indication of Mall practice and even percentage of beneficiaries is also not clearly pointed out. In Modikuppam panchayat there is no maintenance of any records. In Thippampatti panchayat cost estimation of Rs.4 lakhs for projects but number of projects undertaken is not available whereas in Kondasamudram project undertaken was 5 projects but cost estimation is not available. The beneficiaries in almost all the panchayat range from 70 to 75 percent with the field observation. In Paradarani panchayat the people felt there is a need for factories or small industries with which their working days and monthly income will be fixed safely. So that they can have livelihood security in NREGS programme there is no assurance of working days and income per month and moreover there is no household which received 100 days of work in a year. in Ramapattinam panchayat people except revision in wages and in Purraipalayam and Devampadi panchayat social audit is not been carried out because of which allocation of estimated cost and the amount of wage paid to the workers is not known.

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Conclusion:

No doubt this MGNREGS feeds most of the rural people especially those who are in chronic poverty. The main feature of this scheme is to create asset and generate employment, generating employment is successful to some extent but creation of assets especially in TamilNadu is weak because of natural calamities which destroys nature of work. Therefore it is recommended to take up some lifelong assured employment and in income to the rural chronic poor people. So that long run achievement can be made rather than short run achievement.

MGNREGA – A MEANS TO INCLUSIVE GROWTH – AN INTER-DISTRICT ANALYSIS

Despite the various welfare measures taken from time to time, poverty remains one of the formidable challenges in India. Government of India being a party to the 'Millennium Declaration' in September 2000, which calls for the eradication of extreme poverty, still facing this uphill task. Eradication of poverty became the legitimate policy commitment on the part of Government of India. Further, the Common Minimum Programme of the United Progressive Alliance Government also strive to eradicate poverty with much vigour since its inception. These commitments were recognised by the Planning Commission which also strive to mobilize resources for its implementation. It is widely recognised that generation of employment is the surest way to eradicate poverty. Keeping this provision into action, Government of India passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in September 2005.

The law implemented in 200 poorest districts in India in the initial phase, which came into force on February 2, 2006. It covered another 130 districts while this act entered into the second phase in the year 2007. It has been estimated to cover all the 600 districts in the country while it entered into its third phase in the year 2008. It has been renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 2nd October, 2009. It is to provide a legal guarantee of 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. He/she will get the minimum wage rate notified for agricultural labour in the state until the central Government notifies a minimum wage rate, which in any case shall not be less than Rs.60 per day.

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Features of the Act

* Wages to be paid every week not later than a fortnight.
* In case of any delay in the payment of wages, labourers entitled to compensation as per the payment of wages act.
* No gender bias permitted.

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* Provisions made for compensation and treatment in case of injury and for on-site safe drinking water, care of small children.
* Contractors and labour displacing machines banned.
* At least 60 per cent of the expenditure under any project to be on wages.
* A programme officer be responsible for the implementation of the employment guarantee programme at the block level.

Type of work given under the Act

Creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor shall be an important objective of the scheme. Work through contractors is not permissible. The kinds of works permissible according to priority are :

i) Water conservation and water harvesting.
ii) Drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation).
iii) Irrigation canals including micro and major irrigation works.
iv) Provision of irrigation facility to hand owned by households belonging to the SCs and STs or that of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana.
v) Renovation of traditional water bodies including desitting of tanks.
vi) Land development.
vii) Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas.
viii) Rural connectivity to provide all weather access.
ix) Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Governments.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this piece of work is to evaluate the current status of implementation of MGNREGA in all districts of Tamil Nadu during 2008-09 to 2009-10. Apart from this general objective, the present study has the following specific objectives.

1. To review the performance of MGNREGA with an inter-district comparison in Tamil Nadu during the reference period.
2. To find the per capita of cumulative number of household issued job cards in the districts of Tamil Nadu during the study period.
3. To calculate the per capita of households provided with employment under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in all the districts of Tamil Nadu from 2008-09 to 2009-10.

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4. To identify the per capita of Central Sanctioned (Release) funds in the districts of Tamil Nadu during the reference period.
5. To know about the magnitude of expenditure incurred under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in the districts of Tamil Nadu.
6. To calculate the percentage of completed works under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in all the districts of Tamil Nadu.
7. To know the overall impact of this Act by ranking the indictors.

Statement of the Problem

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act under the "Ministry of Rural Development" strives for the enhancement of rural livelihood by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. In the year 2006-07, a total budget of Rs.11300 crores was set aside to implement the programme in 200 districts of 27 states. In April 2007, 13 new districts have been added in the programme and the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act allocation has been increased to Rs.12000 crores for the year 2007-08.[1] But in almost all the selected districts where National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has been implemented have not been able to utilize the financial allotment made for the purpose. Not only this, none of the districts could have realised the target of providing 100 days of employment to the job card holders, even though funds for the provision of 100 days of employment had not been achieved in many of the states. Regional variations were there in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. The inter-district variations in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act are common in Tamil Nadu also. The present study is a small-step in this direction to verify the inter-district variation if any in the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in all the districts of Tamil Nadu.

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Methodology

The study made use of secondary data to analyse the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in all the districts of Tamil Nadu. Data had been collected from the report of Rural Development Department submitted to Government of India and the Tamil Nadu Census 2001. The Act has been implemented only in 6 districts of Tamil Nadu during the financial year 2006-07. It implemented only in 10 districts of Tamil Nadu during the year 2007-08. So, the comparison NREGP of this 2 years with other years are meaningless. Hence, these two years had been deleted from the present study. The data pertaining to the financial year 2010-11 covers upto July, 2010. It is also not comparable with other financial year. Therefore, the period of two years (2008-09 to 2009-10) has been chosen to assess the implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in all districts of Tamil Nadu.

Appropriate statistical tools have been used according to the requirements of the study. In order to find the per capita number of households issued job cards, per capita households provided with employment, per capita central sanctioned funds and per capita expenditure incurred under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, were obtained with the population and other data.

In order to know the percentage of completed works under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, percentages had been used in the present study.

To arrive a conclusion of the performance of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, we ranked all the indicators and summed them up. Again we rank the total values to identify the performance of this Act regionally.

Employment Provided under MGNREGA

Unemployment is a major problem in many countries. According to NSS data (19th Round), the committee on unemployment estimated that 8.5 million persons in rural areas and 1.2 million persons in urban areas were working less than 14 hours per week. A person working 8 hours a day for 273 days of the year is regarded as employed on a standard person year basis. During the last 40 year period, i.e., 1961-2000, statistics reveal that the proportion of workers to the total population had actually declined from 45.7% to 44.9%, though there was an upward trend between 1981 and 2001, from 41.7% to 44.8%. Government enacted the MGNREGA to provide a legal guarantee for at least 100 days of employment to unskilled workers in rural area. One of the most important aspects of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is that the villagers can rightfully demand employment. The Government is bound to provide employment in response to the demand or provide unemployment allowance in case it is unable to do so. In order to understand the effectiveness of the Act, it is necessary to look at the response of the Government in providing employment.[2] The following table shows the per capita number of households provided with employment from 2008-09 to 2009-10.

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A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS)

Introduction

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) had been passed by the Government of India in September 2005. Later, the Act has been renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Wage employment to the rural poor through public works is what has been a continuous effort of the government through launching various employments. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 was notified on February 2, 2006 by launching schemes for wage employment in 200 (Phase I) most backward districts of the country. After inclusion of several more districts in the financial year 2007 – 08, NREGS became functional in 330 (Phase II) districts of the country. Currently the scheme is operational in all districts (Phase III) of the country. State governments have launched employment guarantee schemes for providing employment under

Women Workers Participation in MGNREGS

Women have availed of the paid employment op-portunity under MGNREGS in large numbers. Women workers had a national average share of 40.65% of total NREGS person-days in 2006-07, 42.52% in 2007-08, and 47.88% in 2008-09, exceeding expectations and the stipulated 33% share. Interestingly, this occurred largely spontaneously. Women's participation under MGNREGS, measured in person-days also exceeded their participa-tion in erstwhile employment generation programmes.

Women participation in the MGNREGS, however, varies across re-gions. The share of women in total person-days was relatively high (exceeding 50%) in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, and Tripura in all the three years, that is, 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 (except in Tripura where it was less than 50% in 2007-08). It exceeded the national average (47.88%) in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karna-taka, Rajasthan, and Tripura in all the three years. On the other hand, the share of women in total person-days was less than the national average in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh (HP), Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Uttarakhand (except in 2007-08), West Bengal and most of the north-eastern states. Further, there is a gap of about 80 percentage points between the states with the highest and lowest participation rates, that is, Kerala (85.01%) and Jammu and Kashmir (5.76%). Even if we consider Jammu and Kashmir as outliers, there is still a gap of about 67 percentage points between Kerala and UP (18.11%). Moreover, there are pronounced regional north-south variations. The four southern states, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu with relatively better human and gender development indi-ces have ensured high participation of women in all the three years (as a share in total person-days), although

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average person-days are low in Kerala. Rajasthan, with its high women's participa-tion is the exception among the north Indian states.

In contrast to the high participation of women in the pro-gramme as workers, their participation in processes like work se-lection, social audit, mobilization of civil society, and share in the control and management of assets created is not encouraging. This being the case, in some places, women's participation in the gram saba has still increased, and there is even an increase in the number of women who speak in the gram saba. In MP, women form part of vigilance committees, and it is reported that women are the most local among the members of the vigilance committee in some places (Khera and Nayak 2009).

There are various explanations for the varying participation of women workers under the MGNREGS. Factors that have encouraged women workers' participation include the nature of the job not requiring special knowledge and skill (Krishnaraj et al., 2004); out migration of male family members (Bhatty 2006; Mehrotra 2008; alukdar 2008); the employment opportunity being available at the doorstep (Bhatty 2006; Khera and Nayak 2009); a tradition of rural women working in other fields (Narayanan 2008); the provision of equal, non-discriminatory wages (Sudarshan 2008; Khera and Nayak 2009); and innovative experiments in implementation like the female mate system in Rajasthan (Khera 2008), synergisation of MGNREGS with Kudumbashree in Kerala (Vijayakumar and Thomas 2008), and in Bihar, gender differential tasks for uniform (minimum) wages (Pankaj 2008).

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Women Employment for MGNREGS

Many female workers under the MGNREGS opened up a new opportunity for them. The wider acceptability of MGNREGS work derives from several factors: it is locally available, being government work there is regularity and predictability of working hours, less chance of work conditions being exploitative and work is considered socially acceptable and "dignified". Last (but not the least); it is better paid than other work.

The coverage of MGNREGS is an ambitious one as it talks about two things; one to create local employment opportunities for the rural poor and second to invest on building rural sustainable assets through variants of works such as water conservation, irrigation facilities, rural connectivity, land improvement on land owned by STs / SCs, etc. The MGNREGS is unique in the sense that it is sensitive in working conditions of workers, especially women as it advocates for providing accessible worksite (within five kilometer of the workers residence), crèches etc. for women with children below six, at least one third of work opportunities must go to women and gender parity of wages, etc. Besides this, there are strong provisions to pre-empt corruption, regular and transparent maintenance of all MGNREGS documents especially muster rolls, job cards, utilization certificate, etc and their display at the respective Panchayat Offices. The Act further requires the maintenance of employment and wage details in the workers' job cards, to enable workers to monitor and verify their employment records themselves. Contractors are banned too in the whole implementation of the MGNREGS.

Impact of migration

Another impact expected from MGNREGS successful implementation is a reduction in distress migration from the villages. Although some households or individuals may migrate long distances to other states, the dominant type of migration observed was short distance migration to neighboring urban or per urban areas. Migration for longer duration of work at higher wages is not likely to be affected. There are instances where men continue to migrate seasonally or for longer periods for work which fetches them wages much higher than NREGS wages, while women of such households are drawn into MGNREGS works since it fetches them wages higher than earlier.

Impact of Bank Payments

The some one another area of concern relates to the bank payments of MGNREGS wages since September 2008. This is a relatively recent "administrative innovation", which is perceived by the government as a "magic pill" for ending corruption. The introduction of bank payment could benefit women in several ways. The main reasons in favour of bank payments include the perception that payment through banks will increase the possibility of saving and a reduction in the possibility of being cheated by those who distribute wages in the village. Other reasons why people want bank payments include the perception that this will lead to a reduction in delays (in payments), that a lump sum of money will be available in one installment. Interestingly, for women, it is also seen as an effective tool for increasing their control over the use of this money. Women have their own accounts and they are able to operate these accounts, then the introduction of wage payments through banks/post offices may turn out to be a good development for women.

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MGNREGA and Gender Equality

MGNREGA has the potential to have a wider impact on gender relations. This can happen in several ways. For instance, MGNREGA employment can enhance women's economic independence by providing them access to cash earnings. Related, MGNREGA earnings can bring about a sense of equality fostered by earning, for the first time, the same wage as men. There will also be an impact on gender relations through the effect of MGNREGA on gender division of labour. This could happen because women are seen to be contributing "actively" to the economy and their contribution to economic activity becomes more directly visible. Further, in keeping with similar provisions under panchayati raj legislation, the MGNREGA guidelines have provisions for female participation in vigilance committees under the MGNREGA. Over time, it is hoped that women will be able to take advantage of such provisions, making their own space in public and social life (more on this below).

The effective participation by women, it is important for the MGNREGA to go beyond the initial gender-related provisions such as fixing the minimum share of women workers and equal wages. A more comprehensive perspective on gender equality needs to be built in all aspects of the Act. One of the first steps in this direction is to move from the household entitlement of 100 days to individual entitlements,

which will assure women 100 days of work in their own right, without having to negotiate within the household.

Conclusion

The benefits from the MGNREGA for women: work is available at the statutory minimum wage, allowing workers to get work in their village, as a result of which migration and hazardous work can now be avoided by many. These benefits should be adequately recognized and efforts should be made to strengthen these gains. Ensuring the establishment of crèches for women workers, abolition of contractors, effective implementation of transparency mechanisms and the establishment of a schedule of rates more favourable to women will go a long way in removing the short-term barriers to women's participation in MGNREGA. For the longer term goals of gender equality to be realized, attention also needs to be paid for ensuring greater participation of women at all levels (e.g, as labourers, in MGNREGA worksite management and staff appointments) and in all spheres (e.g, participatory planning through participation in gram sabas, social audits). These measures can simultaneously impact gender relations and improve the implementation of MGNREGA.

Women as a community, however, have been slowed in realizing the potential benefits of the scheme. Nevertheless, their increased presence in the gram saba, the increasing number of women speaking out in the gram saba, frequent interactions with government officials and panchayat raj institution (PRI) representatives, and access to banks and post offices are new developments.

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A STUDY ON SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS OF COIR WORKERS IN TENKASI TALUK, TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

Introduction

Coir, popularly known as the " golden fibre" is a natural fibre extracted from fibrous husk of the coconut shell and is used to make a wide range of products such as ropes, mats, mattresses, baskets, brushes, brooms etc. Husks are used as-fuel, as surface and seeding pit mulch and for burying in coconut gardens as fertilizer due to the high content of potash. But the most important commercial utilization of husk is for the manufacture of coir. There are eighteen varieties of coconut palms, but the husks from only three varieties are suitable for coir production.

Objectives

1. To analyze the production of coir and coir products in India
2. To assess the export position of coir and coir products and
3. To study about the social and economic status of the in Tenkasi taluk (Tirunelveli District) The Coir - workers)

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Methodology

Both primary and secondary data used for this present study. The primary data collected for journals, books, articles and research Coir board office, research centre in Tenkasi. the secondary data collected from the coir workers tenkasi taluk was selected for the present sutdy 100 samples respondents selected on the basis. of random sampling method selected method viz, Fibre workers, recordicater workers Dharpha workers, feeding workers, curling workers, bale workers and fitter workers. The statistical tools used for this study percentage method only.

Production of Coir india

The coir industry is divided into two major segment viz., white fibre and brown fibre. White fibre also known as retted fibre is extracted from the husk of matured coconut after a process known as rettings, which is more suited for spinning coir yarn. It if further processed to get products like doormats, matting, carpets : geo - textiles. Etc.

Brown fibre is also extracted from the coconut husk and is soaked in water for a number of days, by mechanical means. It is further processed to get finished products like rubberized coir curled, curried coir, etc.

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Exports of coir and coir products

A wide range of coir and coir products are exported from the country. These inter alia include coir yarn, coir pith, coir fibre, rubberized coir, curled coir, coir rope, coir geotextiles, coir rugs, handloom mats, handloom matting, power loom mats and coir other sorts. Coir products are exported to more than 75 countries all over the world. The USA remains the largest imported with 23 per cent of coir from India. Table shows the exports of coir and coir products from India.

Findings and Suggestions

Age

The age of the coir-workers ranges from 10 to 60 years the maximum number of coir - workers belongs to the age group 20 to 40.

Average of days

The average number of working days of the coir - workers ranges from 240 to 312 days.

Communal Status

The majority 45% of the coir - workers belongs to S.C. Community.

Annual Income 74% of the coir - workers have an Annual Expenditure of Rs. 15000 to 20000

Extent of Indebtedness

5% of the coir - workers have and extent of indebtedness of Rs.15,000 to 20,000.

Montly expenditure of the Respondents

58% of the monthly expenditure was spent for food.

Model of Savings

56% of the coir-workers have the mode of savings in post office.

Conclusion

Tenkasi Taluk is filled with coir - industry than other industry. But no one is maintained or established by Government. All the industry was fully established by the private sectors. So that some contradictory problems arises without public awareness for example stomach, Asthma Respiratory problems and pollution. Due to avoid these problems the Government has to enact rules and take care of the public health. Incase if the government could take responsible in the coir industry it will get more foreign exchange. On the other hand the working time will be regulated by the Government which is annoying the present situation.

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STATUS OF SCHEDULED TRIBES IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

Introduction

India has a tribal population of over 84 million which constitutes 8.2 percent of its total population. according to the Census of India, 2001.

After Independence, various measures were taken through constitutional safegrards, planning commissions, tribal welfare departments of different states and NGOs for overcoming their problems and elevating their status in society.

Scheduled Tribes anre those communties who are outside the caste system of our society. They live in hills, forest and coastal and desert areas, and even on islands. They have their own cluture and social organization. The traditional economy of tribals is characterized by gathering, hunting, fishing, shifting cultivation and agriculture.

According to the census 2001. the total population of the district is 28.01.194,

Out of this total population, the St population of is 8358.

This paper will focus on the various aspects of status of scheduled Tribes in Tirunelveli district.

The total tribal population of this district is 8,358 according to the Census of India 2001. Out of the total ST population, 38.31 percent lives in rural areas and 61.69 percent lives in urban areas.

The majority of the tribal people in this district live in either one or two dwelling room houses, i.e. 34.77 percent in urban areas and 32.13 percent in rural areas are having on dwelling room and 31.3 percent in urban areas and 36.73 percent in rural areas are having two dwelling rooms. As compared to the urban tribal people, the rural area tribal people are having more dwelling rooms in their houses.

Out of the total number of households, 78.99 percent are having electricity facility in rural areas and 76.92 percent in urban areas. At the same time, 21.01 percent households in rural areas and 23.08 percent households in urban areas are not having electricity facilities.

Only 16.89 percent of houses in rural areas and 41.54 percent of house in urban areas are having Latrine facility. Majority of the tribal households are not having the latrine facility, i.e. 83.1 percent of houses in rural areas and 58.46 percent of houses in urban areas are not having proper latrine facility. The tribal people who are living in rural areas are making use of the open lands for lavatory purposes. So that they are thinking they did not feel about the need of having latrine facility.

Health Conditions of Tribals in Tirunelveli District

Tribals living in remote areas have better overall status and eat a more balanced diet that tribals living in less remote, forest - free - areas. Water - borne communicable disease like gastrointestinal disorders

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including acute diarrhea are responsible for a higher morbidity and mortality due to poor sanitation, unhygienic conditions and lack of safe drinking water in the tribal areas.

Plants have been used by the tribals in Tirunelveli district as traditional medicine for several thousand years. Tribal, even today, depend on wild plants and animals for their livelihood.

The ethnomedicinal survey held on tribal doctors suggest they use 70 species. The present population has little knowledge about the medicinal plants of the area because most of the knowledgeable, oledr persons have passed away and the younger ones are not as informed of traditional methods. However, as in the past, some empirical knowledge of medicinal plants among the tribes continues to be developed and transmitted orally from one generation to the next.

The wide spread Poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, absence of safe drinking water and sanitary conditions, poor maternal and child health services, ineffective coverage of national health and nutritional services, etc. have been found, as possible contributing factors of dismal health condition prevailing amongst the tribal communities in Tirunelveli district.

The following are the main problems of Scheduled Tribes in Tirunelveli district.

1. Economic activites of tribals like foof gathering, hunting, shifting cultivations have been affected due to thechange of forest policies and regulations, and they have snatched away traditional rights of the tribes over forest.
2. Ban on hunting and gathering has resulted in malnutrition and undernourishment.
3. The tribal live in remote areas. So they have to face a great problem of communication. As a reault, they are not aware of their rights and of development programs.

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Conclusion :

Better health facilities along with family planning programs are necessary to equip tribal women with the knowledge and resources to take care of themselves and their children. It is observed that government should provide electricity to all house both in the rural and urban areas through long- term plans and also introduce renewable source of the energy system like solar lambs in the interior tribal settlements.

AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF TANK IRRIGATION IN MUDUKULATHUR BLOCK, RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT, TAMILNADU.

Introduction

Tank irrigation is one of the major sources of irrigation in Tamilnadu as well as in Ramanathapuram district. Several studies indicated that tank irrigation plays pivotal role for increasing the yield of agricultural sector. The state has about 4.22 lakhs tanks. In Ramanathapuram districtd 80.02 per cent of area under tank irrigation. the importance of tank irriogation has been reconized all over the world. It was rightly pointed ou by Dhawan (1991) the growth of crop depended on various sources of irrigation. It helps to create more employment opportunities to the rural people.

Tank irrigation is not a perennial source of irrigation. The farmers cultivate the crop only during the rainy seasons. As a result. As a the cropping intensity is low which cause low level of income. The tank management association could not follow proper utilization of water for income. and drinking purposes.

1. To Know the characteristics of sample farmers under tank irrigation.
2. To analyse the cropping pattern and cost of cultivation in the study area.
3. To suggest various measures should undertake to government.

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Methodology

The sample respondents were selected using the multi - stage random sampling technique. The primary data requried for the study were collected through a survey of 100 famers three villages spread across the Mudhukulathur block of the Ramanathauram district during the agricultural year 2006 - 2007. The sample farmers further divided into the three categories as those (i) Small farmers, (ii) Medium farmers and (iii) Large farmers under tank irrigation.

The production function & Lows that fertilizers (0.4612) followed by human labour (0.3180) have a significant and positive influence while pesticides (-0.1072) has a significant but negative influence in crops on Ragi under tank irrigation. The negative influence of pesticides in crops on Ragi under tank irrigation also indicated their excess use. The production elasiticities of other variable were positive but their influence on productivity was not significant.

Further, the variable included in the functions exhibited constant returns to scale in the crops on paddy under tank irrigation and increasing return to scale in the crops on Ragi under tank irrigation.

Conclusion

The estimated farm level production response functions have been significant and a good fit has been found for both crops on Paddy and Ragi under tank irrigation. The production function analysis indicates that the fertilizers (0.4612) and human labour (0.3180) have a significant and positive influence while pesticides (-0.1072) has significant and negative influence in crops on Ragi under tank irrigation. The negative influence pesticides in crops on Ragi under tank irrigation also indicated their excess uses. The production elasticities of other variables were positive but their influence on productivity was not significant.

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AN OVERVIEW OF VARIOUS EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON THE IMPACT OF MGNREGP

Introduction

India is one of the second biggest populated countries in this world. Here, number of people are having unemployment or seasonal employment especially village side of the country, because most of the people are depending on agriculture sector. The World Bank's said, one - third of the worl's poor are Indians and most of them inhabit the rural areas. There is no any mode of employment opportunity except agriculture in the rural economy so they are needed some protection or security to them livelihood.

We have had many employments programme in the past like RMPW, CSRE, PIREP, FFWP, NREP, RLEGP, JRY, JGSY, SGRY, EAS etc., NREGP Programme is the recent addition to such programme. NREGP is set to be one of the best programmes for reducing poverty though generation of employment.

Now almots four years are over after implmentation, though this is a very short period to study empirically its impact many researchers have tried to find out the impact of the scheme with reference to its broad objective. This paper makes an overview of few empirical researchers in this area. The following findings are given by the empirical studies. Certain limitations have also been pointed out by these empirical studies.

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Raghbendra et.al (2008) reviewed the impact of NREGP in Rjasthan. Out of 340 households, one-third participated in NREGP. A vast majority of the participants belonged to " others" (about 90 per cent) and the remaining were equally divided among the SC and ST within each caste / ethnic group, the highest proportion of participants was among the ST, followed by "Others")

Reethika Khera (2008) has studied the Empowerment Guarantee Act in Badwani district, Madhya Pradesh. The successful implementation of the NREGA in the pati block goes beyond the ability of its residents to claim their rights. This is brough out by the high levels of engangement with the programme in terms of planning implemenaion and monitoring.

K.Kanumantha Rao et.al (2008) have evaluated the rural poveryt Alleviation in India SC & ST households were represented very well in NREGS expect in J & K. The share of landless is very varied across the states. It was as low as 3.4% in Sikkim and as high as 100% in Bihar. Three - fourths of the poor are agriculture dependent households.

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Nidheeshl. K.B (2009) evaluated implementation of the NREGS scheme in Wayanad district of Kerala state. Ensuring of high quality education of tribal students pre- primary education and residential education will be strengthened further, High priority for the completion of pre-metric hostels and improving of their infrastructure facilities and revision of mess charge etc.,

Reetika Khera and Nandini Nayak (2009) have evaluated the women workers and perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in six north Indian sates. The Survey has been aimed at understanding the impact NREGA has had in the lives of workers who are curently working under the programme.

Barna Maulick (2009) has evaluated the implications of NREGA in Barabanki District of Uttar Pradesh. Majority of the beneficiary workers were in the age group of 18 - 35 years. The beneficiaries came from scheduled castes households. The beneficiaries came from scheduled castes households.

V. **Sankari and C.Siva Murugan** (2009) have evaluated that impact in Udangudi Panchayat Union,Tamilnadu. The study reveals that there is increase in living and economic conditions of the people. Capacity building of the village panchayat and the gram sabha is required for the plannig and effective implementation of NREGP.

Dr.Subhabrata Dutta (2009) has studied NREGA in west Bengal The NREGA scheme has increased man - days, employments, created durable assets and strengthened infrastructure. A distress migration has reduced. Many innovative projects, afforestation, road - construction, digging of ponds, renovation of water tanks and many other labour oriented schemes have been undertaken.

Gundeti Ramesh and Dr.T.Krishna Kumar (2009) have studied the fact of Ruual Women Empowerment A study in Karmnagar district in Andrapradesh. It is found that the income levels of the workers have increased substantially, and daily wage income has increased two folds.

Prem Chand et.al (2010) studied the Impact of NREG scheme on Agriculture sector. The amount of employment provided by the scheme is limited in the agricul tural sector and would not be able to provide sustainable income security for the poor, as the present regulations of NREGA do not have any provision for water conservation works and land development activities on private land.

Kareemulla et.al (2010) studied the impact of in four states, viz., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Maharastra. The employment beneficiaries are both landless and farmers indicating that the resource poor farmers are also willing to get employed in public schemes to agument their livelihood services.

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Ashok Pankraj and Rumini Tankha (2010) have studied NREGP in four states viz., Gaya (Bihar), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Dungapur (Rajasthan) and Kangra (HP). The overall effects of these have translated into and increased say for women household affairs.

P. Jeyashree et.al (2010) made an Economic Analysis of Mahatma Ganthi NREGS in Thevarkulam Panchayat, Sivakasi taluk. A separate staff should be appointed at the district as well as at the union level for the effective implementation of the programme.

G.Venkata Naidu (2010) have evaluated the Impact of NREGA on the Living condition of rural poor in Ananthapur District in AP.NREGA programme is a boon to the people who are living below poverty line.

Subhasish Dey and Arjun Bedi (2010) have examined that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Birbhum. The study suggests that during the non - lean season, given the level of the NREGS wage, the scheme is unlikely to crowd out private empolyment.

Dr.P.Anandharaja Kumar and Sri. Well Haorei (2010) have studied that impact Assessment of MGNREGS on Rural Migration in Dindigual District of Tamil Nadu. In Ntham Block (MDG) there is a mixed result on the impact of the scheme on migration.

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Conclusion

The above mentioned empirical studies on MGNREGS have highlighted many positive impact of the scheme, especially on increasing the standard of living of rural poor, on reducing rural out migration, on women empowerment etc. The Studies have also pointed out certain limitation on the scheme like swindling of money, roll of agencies, the timing of the work etc. If these few limitations ared removed definitely the scheme will be a boom for the rural poor and downtrodden.

NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT - SOME REFLECTIONS

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 the poverty line. Around one-third of the stipulated work force is women. The law was initially called the **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act** (NREGA) but was renamed on 2 October 2009.
This Act was brought about by the UPA coalition government supported by the left parties. The promise of this project is considered by many to be one of the major reasons for the re-election of the UPA in the Indian general election, 2009

Dr. Jean Drèze, a Belgian born economist, at the Delhi School of Economics, has been a major influence on this project. A variety of people movements and organisations actively campaigned for this act.

The Act directs state governments to implement MGNREGA "schemes". Under the MGNREGA the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers.

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Provisions under NREGA

- Adult members of a rural household, willing to do unskilled manual work, are required to make registration in writing or orally to the local Gram Panchayat.
- The Gram Panchayat after due verification will issue a Job Card. The Job Card will bear the photograph of all adult members of the household willing to work under NREGA and is free of cost.
- The Job Card should be issued within 15 days of application.
- A Job Card holder may submit a written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat, stating the time and duration for which work is sought. The minimum days of employment have to be at least fourteen.
- Work should ordinarily be provided within 5 km radius of the village. In case work is provided beyond 5 km, extra wages of 10% are payable to meet additional transportation and living expenses

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- Wages are to be paid according to the Minimum Wages Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the State, unless the Centre notices a wage rate which will not be less than Rs.60 (US$1.22) per day. Equal wages will be provided to both men and women.

Implementation

- Wages are to be paid according to piece rate or daily rate. Disbursement of wages has to be done on weekly basis and not beyond a fortnight in any case.
- At least one-third beneficiaries shall be women who have registered and requested work under the scheme.
- Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade have to be provided
- The shelf of projects for a village will be recommended by the gram sabha and approved by the zilla panchayat.
- At least 50% of works will be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution
- Permissible works predominantly include water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development works
- A 60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained. No contractors and machinery is allowed
- The Central Govt. bears the 100 percent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost including the wages of skilled and semi skilled workers
- Social Audit has to be done by the Gram Sabha
- Grievance redressal mechanisms have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process
- All accounts and records relating to the Scheme should be available for public scrutiny

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The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India, in its performance audit of the implementation of MGNREGA has found "significant deficiencies" in the implementation of the act. The plan was launched in February 2006 in 200 districts and eventually extended to cover 593 districts. 44,940,870 rural households were provided jobs under NREGA during 2008-09, with an national average of 48 working days per household. In recent times, nrega workers have faced problems due to delays in payment of wages, some of which have been pending for months.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT

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 adult members of any rural household willing to do public work-related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of ₹120 (US$2.43) per day in 2009 prices. The Central government outlay for scheme is 40,000 crore (US$8.11 billion) in FY 2010-11.

The Act directs state governments to implement MGNREGA "schemes". Under the MGNREGA the Central Government meets the cost towards the payment of wage, 3/4 of material cost and some percentage of administrative cost. State Governments meet the cost of unemployment allowance, 1/4 of material cost and administrative cost of State council. Since the State Governments pay the unemployment allowance, they are heavily incentivized to offer employment to workers.

However, it is up to the State Government to decide the amount of unemployment allowance, subject to the stipulation that it not be less than 1/4 the minimum wage for the first 30 days, and not less than 1/2 the minimum wage thereafter. 100 days of employment (or unemployment allowance) per household must be provided to able and willing workers every financial year.

MNREGA was launched on February 2, 2006 from Anantapur in Andhra Pradesh and initially covered 200 "poorest" districts of the country. The Act was implemented in phased manner - 130 districts were added in 2007-08. With its spread over 625 districts across the country, the flagship program of the UPA Government has the potential to increase the purchasing power of rural poor, reduce distress migration and to create useful assets in rural India. Also, it can foster social and gender equality as 23% workers under the scheme are Scheduled Castes, 17% Scheduled Tribes and 50% women. In 2010-11, 41 million households were employed on NREGA worksites.

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Expenditure pattern

MNREGA started with an initial outlay of $2.5bn(Rs 11300cr) in year 2006-07.The funding has considerably been increased as shown in the table below:

Year	Total Outlay(TO)	Wage Expenditure(Percent of TO)
2006-07	$2.5bn	66
2007-08	$2.6bn	68
2008-09	$6.6bn	67
2009-10	$8.68bn	70
2010-11	$8.91bn	71

Pitfalls in the Act

Many criticisms have been leveled at the programme, which has been argued to be no more effective than other poverty reduction programmes in India, with key exceptions such as Rajasthan.

The first criticism is financial. The MGNREGA is one of the largest initiatives of its kind in the world. The national budget for the financial year 2006-2007 was Rs 113 billion (about US$2.5bn and almost 0.3% of GDP) and now fully operational, it costs Rs. 391 billion in financial year 2009-2010. Funding was argued by Jean Dreze and others to be possible through improved tax administration and reforms, yet the tax-GDP ratio has actually been falling. There are fears the programme will end up costing 5% of GDP.

Another important criticism is that the public works schemes' completed product (e.g. water conservation, land development, afforestation, provision of irrigation systems, construction of roads, or flood control) is vulnerable to being taken by over wealthier sections of society. A monitoring study of NREGA in Madhya Pradesh showed the types of activities undertaken were more or less standardised across villages, suggesting little local consultation.

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Further concerns include the fact that local government corruption leads to the exclusion of specific sections of society. Local governments have also been found to claim more people have received job cards than people who actual work in order to generate more funds than needed, to be then embezzled by local officials. Bribes as high Rs 50 are paid in order to receive the job cards.

A multi-crore fraud has also been suspected where many people has been issued the NREGA card who is either employed with another Government Job and who are not even aware that they have a Job Card. In Gujarat, a scam of Rs 10 million has taken place.

The productivity of laborers involved under NREGA is considered to be lower because of the fact that laborers consider it as a better alternative to working under major projects. There is criticism from construction companies that NREGA has affected the availability of labor as laborers prefer to working under NREGA to working under construction projects.

It is also widely criticized that NREGS has contributed to farm labour shortage. In July 2011, the government has advised the states to suspend the NREGS programme during peak farming periods.

The National Advisory Committee (NAC) advocated the government for NREGA wages linkage with statutory minimum wages which is under Minimum wages act as NREGA workers get only Rs100 per day.

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MUSLIM WOMEN AND WORK:

A CASE STUDY OF UNORGANISED WORKERS IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

Introduction

This study aims to investigate Muslim women work participation in India based on population census in 2001, as the results have indicated that Muslim constitute 13.4 per cent of the country. Indeed, India has the second largest Muslim population in the world. Sex ratio among Muslim population at national level is 936, illiterate rate of Muslim women is high and they have not been able to take full advantage in society. There also exists a wide gap between the works participation rate of male and females. In addition, a significant part of Muslim women are recorded as unskilled work sources in the country.

Muslim Women and Work: Some Issues

Women contribute to economic activity in several ways. As home-makers and mothers who provide unremunerated services towards caring for their family, they contribute indirectly to the work productivity of family earners. They are always oppressed and exploited. Their jobs are to manage the house and rear the children (Urmila, 1988). Education is an indispensable means for helping the Muslim women out of their economic misery because economic dependency is another factor contributing to the low status of women. Illiteracy plays as a major barrier to participation in economic activities of the elementary level (Sen, 2007).

Muslim Women and Work in Unorganized Sector in Tirunelveli District

In Tirunelveli district, Melapalayam of Tirunelveli town and Mukkudal in the rural Ambasamudram taluk are the oldest centres of the beedi industry. The system of making beedies in the factories or workshops is totally non-existent in the district instead; the system of manufacturing beedies through contractors and subcontractors employing home-based workers is prevalent. At present, there are more than 40 such trade mark holding companies and around 1,100 contractors and subcontractors operating in Tirunelveli. The contract system became prevalent because of the stringent labour offence meant imprisonment. So we put the responsibility on the contractor. He deals directly with the workers as regards to remuneration and all other benefits.

The trademark holding company provides raw material to contractors, who in turn issue the tobacco and tendu leaves to the workers at the village level and collect the finished product and deliver it to the company. Companies of brands such as Kajah Beedi, Seyadu Beedi and King Beedi belong to this category. For instance Kaja Beedi's trade mark holding company is called Rajavelly and company. It has 47 contractors managing its production in Tirunelveli. The shops managed by the contractors at the village are known as 'company shops'. Then the company provides the raw material to main contractor, who in turn

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hands over the raw material to the numerous subcontractors who maintain links with the workers issuing them raw material and collecting the finished product from them.

Pattamadai village in Tirunelveli district Tamil Nadu is famous for one thing i.e what comes in one's mind at the mention of the name of the village is its exquisite silky mat known as Pattamadai Pai. Mat weaving has been the traditional occupation of our family in Pattamadai for generations. The making of the mat runs into 140-count mat is super fine enough to be folder and kept in a coat pocket. The mats are produced in various sizes and shapes to serve different purposes such as hanging on walls, worshipping, covering the floor, sleeping, etc. Excellent fancy items like bags, purses, baskets, and hand – fans are also made from Korai grass. The natural dye yielding plants used for korai mat dyeing of, Tirunelveli district have been collected and documented. The village is mostly surrounded by paddy fields and people are totally relied on agriculture. They also worked as labourers in construction work, Beedi rolling, Korai mat weaving, etc. More than 5000 people are living in this village and about 43 percent of them are educated.

The mat making process of creating the mat is pains taking and time consuming. Korai grass (Cyperus corymbosus Rottb.) of family cyperaceous grows abundantly along the banks of the river Tamirabarani in Tamil Nadu in South India. The process of creating a mat is quite complex. The green grass normally grows to a height of 90-120 cm and is cut finely while it is still green. The grass is harvested in the months of September/October and February/March. The outer part of the stem is used for weaving while the inside of the stem is removed with a sharp-edged knife. The counts of the mat depend on how many strips the grass is cut into. The strips of grass are then dried in the hot sun and core is taken. The grass is not exposed to humidity as they tend to turn black with the exposure. As the dried grass strips turn a yellowish green colour they are boiled in a pot of water and then dried again. The dried grass is made up into bundles and then soaked in running water, so that the grass remains just below the surface of the water for three to six days.

The weaving is done on a floor loom the process is slow and follows a basket weave pattern. The weft of the Patamadai mats of reed depends upon the quality required. Four stands of the 100 count are taken together to produce a single thread of great strength. For weaving one end of this wet grass is inserted in a hole of a long line stick, which can be compared to a huge needle. With the help of the stick, the grass is passed into the loom. Afterwards the stick and the grass is hold on both sides by both hands and is slightly twisted to give uniform roundness and strength. Then the reed is placed against it several times to keep it in position. Once the weaving is complete, the mat is dried in the sun for a short while. It is then finished with a polishing stone. The cost of korai mats depends on the quality and the number of counts. The korai mats in the 140 counts regarded are superior. The cost of this quality mats is high up to Rs 5000/- while the cost of korai mats with 120 counts ranges from Rs 2000 – 3500 and the cost of 100 counts korai mats ranges from Rs 1000 – 1500.

Beedi workers in the district struck work on Tuesday in protest against the ban on smoking in public places and demanding the Government to jointly create alternative employment opportunities for the one crore-odd families involved in beedi rolling and allied industries across the country. The protestors, who staged a demonstration at Melapalayam, said that though the ban would be a right decision, it should

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have been enforced after ensuring alternative employment opportunities for every family associated with beedi rolling. Moreover, the Centre's directive to legibly print skeleton on the label of the beedi bundles would badly affect the sale of the tobacco product, they said. Similar protests were held at Tenkasi, Mukkodal, Ambasamudram, Alangulam, Shencottai and Puilyangudi, also.

Summary and Suggestions

The unorganized sector in recent years acted as a potent instrument for alleviating rural poverty and providing employment opportunities. Ninety four percent of the women workers are engaged in the unorganized sector of the economy. It is noted that a significant part of Muslim women are recorded as unskilled work force in the country. Unorganized Muslim women workers in Tirunelveli district are mostly engaged in home - based work. The home - based workers especially Muslim women workers are more involved in the rolling works of beedi industry. Beedi industry is able to gain tremendous profit by way of using limited inputs. Infrastructure and comprehensive benefits to labour in beedi industry is the serious question. This district is also known for Pattamadai mat. Mat weaving is also an important traditional handicraft of Tirunelveli district (Tamil Nadu) and it is famous for its Kovai -dry -grass mats. Men and Women of Muslim labbai community weave these famous mats only in these village areas of Tirunelveli district. This paper have following suggestions mainly to improve the status and conditions of Muslim women workers who are engaged in beedi and mat works of unorganized sectors and develop unorganized Muslim women workers. This process will help to achieve gender and religion based rural development in India.

- ✓ The roles of various institutions and organization have to be clearly demarcated and the areas of partnership among them – such as co – operatives and corporate, NGOS and cooperatives – need to be supported.
- ✓ The state must work in close partnership with the private sector. The partnership is more important in technology dissemination quality enhancement, standard setting and skill development
- ✓ There should be effective coordination among a wide range of promotional agencies which must have a focused strategy of intervention
- ✓ Basic infrastructure facilities must be made available to all the areas
- ✓ There is a need for working out all integrated strategy to micro-finance the rural non – form as well as the farm sector.
- ✓ Skill development of Muslim women workers is fundamental both to employment generation and improving productivity.
- ✓ There is need for proper and effective implementation inclusive programmes in relation to improve and to increase awareness level of Muslim women workers. It is also essential to implement legislation that protects Muslim women's rights.

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An Economic Study of Women Workers of Non-farm Sector in Thoothukudi District of Tamil Nadu

Introduction

In view of the increasing population pressure on agriculture, diminishing land frontiers, declining employment elasticity in agricultural and organized manufactured sector in urban areas, higher unemployment, poverty and excess supply of labour force, non-agricultural activities play an important role in combating the problem of rural unemployment during the post-reform period. It is since 1970s that the rural economy has been diversifying away from agriculture to non-agriculture absorbing the bulk of rural labour force from agriculture.

The non-farm sector is a significant sector in reducing the pressure on farm sector and also substantial increase in farm productivity. The non-farm activities are based on agricultural processing and manufacturing of goods and services of all kinds. The landless labourers, agricultural workers, artisans, traders etc are usually involved in producing consumer's goods and services for local market.

Problem Focus

Women worker is an important segment of the total workforce in India. More than 90 per cent of the working women in our country are engaged as wage workers in the unorganized sector. Women's work is also charecterised by lower wages. Their earnings are found to be comparatively lower than those of men, event at times for the same work. Such is the situation when workers in the unorganized sector have to provide security of employment against sickness, accident, maternity benefits, old age and the dependence in case of death of the employee. This would affect their moral thereby production and productivity.

In Thoothukudi district is concerned, beedi rolling, match making, tailoring, call centres and construction work are the major unorganized industries. Most of the women are working in these activities. It is very important to strengthen their morale and make them to be empowered. So the empowerment of these women workers is necessary. In this situation, the need to be analyse the economic study of women workers in unorganized sector of Thoothukudi district is felt and hence the present study have to be undertaken.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the important objectives of this study.

1. to study the socio-economic background of the selected sample women non-farm workers;

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2. to assess the impact of the earnings of the sample women non-farm workers on household income and savings;
3. to understand the working conditions and problems faced by the women non-farm workers; and
4. to give suggestions to improve their socio economic status.

Methodology

This proposed study is based on primary data. The primary data is collected from the women workers of the unorganized sectors in Thoothukudi district by using the structured interview schedule method and also observation technique.

Kovilpatti, Karunkulam, Srivaikundam, Thoothukudi and Ottapidaram block have to be chosen as a study area which is located in Thoothukudi district. In Thoothukudi district, the highest numbers of match factories are concentrated in Kovilpatti block, beedi rolling in Karunkulam block, construction workers in Srivaikundam block, call centre in Thoothukudi block and tailoring in Ottapidaram block. For the purpose of primary data collection, 125 samples women workers, 25 each from five blocks are randomly selected. The total number of 125 sample women is selected by using simple random sampling technique.

The present study is a cross-sectional one, mainly based on primary data. The data pertaining to the year January 2010 to December 2010 have to be taken for study.

Various statistical tools like chi-square test, Lorenz curve, Gini concentration ratio, simple linear regression, and descriptive statistics were used.

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Results and Discussion

1. Wage Particulars

Computer workers earn a daily wage of Rs.100/- and the payment of wages is made monthly basis. On the other hand tailoring unit's workers have a daily wage of Rs.100-150 depending on the nature of work. They also get increment every year and experienced workers can earn upto Rs.200/- per day. The construction labourers get their salary every fortnight.

Table: 1 - Wage Particulars

Wage Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	22	17.60
Weekly	41	32.80
Fortnightly	38	30.40
Monthly	24	19.20
Total	**125**	**100.00**

From the above table, it is keenly observed that 17.60 percentage of workers are getting wages daily, 32.80 percentage are getting wages weekly, 30.40 percentage are getting fortnightly and 19.20 percentage of them are getting monthly. Hence, majority of the workers are getting weekly wages. This shows the fact that the non-farm working community living is based on their daily wages and weekly wages.

2. Income of the Women Non-farm Worker Households

The annual income of the women non-farm workers is an important indicator of their economic condition. In this study area the main source of income is from tailoring and beedi rolling units. Income level reveals the economic status of the family. As the hours of work increase, the income also increases. Distribution of sample households in different income groups is presented in Table 2.

Table: 2 - Income of the Women Non-farm Worker Households

Household Income (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 30,000	19	15.20
30,000 - 40,000	28	22.40
40,000 - 50,000	36	28.80
50,000 - 60,000	16	12.80
60,000 - 70,000	12	9.60
Above 70,000	14	11.20
Total	**125**	**100.00**

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All the women non-farm workers households are grouped under six income classes according to their annual total income. A perusal of the table reveals that a majority of the households are concentrated in the size of below Rs.40,000 – 50,000. Only 11.20 per cent households have annual income above Rs.70,000. The variation in the income levels is due to the differences in the sources of income.

Income inequality among six groups of women non-farm workers household was examined by taking the annual total income of the households. Lorenz curve was drawn to find out the degree of inequality in the distribution of income. The Lorenz curve is presented in Figure 1.

3. Expenditure Pattern

The women non-farm workers expenditure mainly consists of food, clothing, rent, fuel and lighting, education, medicine, social and religious ceremony, entertainment smoking and drinking and savings or payment of interest to money lenders. The amount they spend on food varies from 50 - 60 per cent of their earnings. Majority of them do not spend on rent because they stay in their own houses. The mode of consumption is presented in the table3.

Table: 3 - Mode of Consumption

Items of Consumption	Amount	Average Household Expenditure	Per capita Expenditure	Percentage
Food	2554667	12773.33	3041.27	61.58
Clothing	402000	2010.00	478.57	9.69
Rent	23867	119.33	28.41	0.58
Fuel and Lighting	58333	291.67	69.44	1.41
Education	105333	526.67	125.40	2.54
Medicine	130000	650.00	154.76	3.13
Ceremonies	68667	343.33	81.75	1.66
Entertainment	565333	2826.67	673.02	13.63
Smoking and Drinking	121333	606.67	144.44	2.92
Miscellaneous	119333	596.67	142.06	2.88
Total	**4148867**	**20744.33**	**4939.13**	**100.00**

The above table shows that 61.58 percentage of the total income is spent on food items, where as clothing accounts for 9.69 percentage of their total income. The major share of their income, nearly 71 per cent, goes to these items. Next expenditure on smoking and drinking receives 13.63 per cent of their total income. Expenditure on education receives a meagre amount, 1.41 per cent of their total income. The other expenditures towards rent, fuel and lighting, ceremonies, medicine, entertainment and others constitute 16.69 percentage of their total income.

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5. Suggestions for the Betterment

Arrays of open-minded suggestions expressed by the respondents regarding the improvement of their standard of living are presented in the following table.

Table: 12 - Suggestions for the Betterment

Suggestion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Reduce Loan Procedure	54	43.20
Low Rate of Interest	24	19.20
Alternate Employment	32	25.60
Proper Training	15	12.00
Total	**125**	**100.00**

About 43.20 per cent of the non-farm women workers are of opinion that the bankers should reduce the loan procedures which will improve their business. Alternate employment is expected to improve their business according to 25.60 per cent of non-farm women workers. About 19.20 per cent of non-farm women workers feel that loan facilities with low rate of interest are the next suggestion. Others feel that frequent and proper training will lead to a better business and living spectrum.

Findings

- In the present study higher percentage of the respondents belongs to tailoring works. The reason may be that the small investors can get loan easily than others.
- Majority of the workers are getting weekly wages.
- This study also revels that there is no significant difference between education of the non-farm women workers and income.
- The major share of the total income (61.58%) is spent on food items, where as clothing accounts for 9.69 percentage of their total income. On an average, every women non-farm workers family spends about Rs.20,744.33 on household expenses per month.

Suggestions

- ❖ The central as well as the state governments have to formulate new policies for making an effective use of unutilized and under utilized manpower and also available other resources.
- ❖ Banks and other financial institutions should be instructed to lend liberally for projects in the rural areas by considering employment generation potentials as a criteria for availing loan.
- ❖ Even though, so many development measurers are taken from time to time, and the government is responsible for it. More facilities must be provided to start self-employment schemes by rural people.
- ❖ In unorganized sector provision of equal work for equal pay should be implemented. Government was taken a number of steps like providing financial assistance to the autonomous bodies for undertaking action oriented opportunities.

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SOCIAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT- A COMPARISON WITH THE STATE OF TAMILNADU

With the rise of the concept of human development and the publication of the first Human Development Report (HRD) in 1990, a paradigm shifts has occurred in interpreting the content and composition of economic development . Presently economic development means much more than economic performance in physical terms. The Human Development Index (HDI) focuses on the kind of life that people live. Economic growth is looked upon not as an end in itself but as a means to enhance the well being of people.

The HRD identifies these choices that are central to human well being. The choice to lead a long and healthy life, indicated by life expectancy. The choice to be educated indicated by literacy rate and the access to basic resources indicated by the purchasing power of income. These are necessary for any other choice to be attained.

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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX – INTER – DISTRICT VARIATION

HDI has been conducted for 30 districts in Tamilnadu using the UNDP methodology. The HDI for the state is 0.657 and for the district it ranges between 0.757 to 0.584. Chennai district takes the top position while Dharmapuri is placed at the bottom. Eleven districts have HDI value above the state HDI value, the districts are Chennai, Kancheepuram, Vellore, Nilgiris, Trichy, Madurai, Coimbatore, Thoothukudi, Thirunelveli Erode and Kanniyakumari.

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TOP AND BOTTOM FIVE DISTRICTS IN HDI

DISTRICT	HDI VALUE	HDI RANK	GDI RANK
Chennai	0.757	1	1
Kancheepuram	0.712	2	2
Kanniyakumari	0.711	3	3
Thoothukudi	0.703	4	4
Coimbatore	0.699	5	5
Pudukottai	0.618	25	25
Thirunelveli	0.612	26	26
Perambalur	0.596	27	27
Villupuram	0.587	28	28
Dharmapuri	0.584	29	29

Chennai is the only district which tops all the indicators of HDI except in literacy, it ranks 2nd and first is occupied by kanniyakumari. Thoothukudi tops only in literacy and enrolement ratio. Dharmapuri ranks the lowest in literacy rate, longevity and Villupuram in per capita income.

Thoothukudi district ranked 4th in the HDI and also 4th in Gender Development Index(GDI). The sex ratio of the district is 1050 as against the state average of 985. The HDI and GDI value for the district is 0.703 whereas state average is 0.657(HDI) and 0.654(GDI).

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OBJECTIVE

- To analyse and compare the social indicators of development of the district with Tamilnadu state.

HYPOTHESES

- There exists an association between Female Literacy Rate and Total Fertility Rate.
- There exists relationship between Literacy Rate and Life Expectancy.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

LITERACY RATE

Literacy rate tells the percentage of literates to the total population age 7yrs and above and gender gap in literacy shows the extent of gap between male and female literacy rate. In terms of gender parity Tamilnadu performance is second only to Kerala.

LITERACY RATE

District/State	Literacy Rate (2001 %)			
	Total	Male	Female	Gender Gap
Thoothukudi	81.5	88.3	75.1	13.2
Tamilnadu	73.5	82.4	64.4	18

The above table clearly depicts that Thoothukudi's educational basement is good when compared to state as a whole.

HEALTH AND OTHER PROFILE (2004)

Usually the district/state health profile is drawn up with the help of Birth Rate, Death Rate and IMR. IMR stands for infant mortality rate which tells number of infant deaths under one year per 1000 live births. Birth rate refers to number of live births per 1000 population. Death rate means number of deaths per 1000 population. Life Expectancy tells average number of living years of an individual, When compare to the State health profile, the district profile is satisfactory.

Districts	IMR	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Life Expectancy
Thoothukodi	36.1	17.4	6.5	68.3
Tamilnadu	43.00	17.8	6.9	66.7

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CONCLUSION

The performance of Thoothukudi district with respect to social development is far satisfactory. In terms of major social indicators like literacy rate, female literacy rate, life expectancy, infant morality rate, sex ratio, birth rate it is ahead of State, so only it has occupied the 4th rank in terms of HDI and GDI.

Marketing Practices of Tourism Industry in Kanniyakumari

Introduction

Tourism promotes Magnanimity and fosters individuality. Tourism provides employment to youth, opportunity to artists, protection to monuments, commerce to traders, facilities to public, foreign exchange to Government and fraternity between states- Dr.Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi .

Tourism is the sum of the relations and services connected with a temporary and voluntary change of residence for non commercial or non professional reasons. Tourism today has come to be equated with a world wide service industry and is ranked as the second highest revenue generating industry next only to the oil industry (Patil, 2004). It brings prosperity to the host nation by creating employment opportunities, generating income, foreign exchange earnings and improvement in overall quality of life (Bisht & Mustafa, 2002). Tourism is more concerned with the satisfaction of individual rather than with the scientific and technological achievements. It is also an inseparable combination of economic and socio cultural issues and developmental options.

Tourism Marketing

Like any other product, tourism product also needs marketing. In fact marketing for tourism is more important than for manufactured products because tourism products are highly perishable (Ratandeep Sing, 2004). Marketing links the supply of tourism products to demand for the same and thus facilitates the capturing value. Tourism marketing includes identification of target market, creating awareness of the destinations and specific sites, disseminating information to the target customers to facilitate itinerary planning and promoting tourism demand through various means (Sheaba Rani, 2007).

Marketing in tourism signifies the systematic and co-ordinated execution of a tourism of business policy by tourist undertakings, whether private or state owned at local, regional, national or international levels, to achieve the optimal satisfaction of the needs of tourists and in doing so, achieve an appropriate returns (Kripendorf, 1971) .

In India various tourism marketing efforts implemented both by the government and private sector organizations for promoting tourism has proved successful in attracting international and national tourists to the country's cultural, historic centres and scenic spots of tourists' interests.

In India, Tamilnadu has abundance tourist wealth and multifarious tourist attractions – religious centres, wildlife, beaches, culture, etc.,. The tourists appreciate the cultural heritage of the state. Now Tamilnadu is ranked 3rd in attracting both domestic and foreign tourists. By properly exploiting the full potential Tamilnadu can become the number one state in India (Saradha, 2004).

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Kanniyakumari - locale of the study

The India's land's end, Kanniyakumari or Cape Comorin is a beautiful place in the state of Tamilnadu. It is unique in being surrounded by Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. Hence the confluence is called "Thiriveni Sangamam". Here one can get a breath taking view of the sun rise and sun set at their best. The multi coloured sand is yet another unique feature of the beach here. There is a light house from where one can get a panoramic view. The Government museum offers a good collection of sculptural art grafts of Tamilnadu. It is one of the most popular tourist spot in the state and indeed in the country.

Objectives of the Study

This study is carried out with the following objectives

1. To identify important tourist spots
2. To study the flow and pattern of tourists in the study area
3. To chalk out the attitudes of tourists towards the supporting services
4. To offer suitable suggestions for improvement of tourism

Methodology and Sampling

For this study, sixty sample respondents comprising both foreign and domestic tourists were selected by using Convenient Sampling technique. Of these 60 sample respondents 30 were foreign tourists and 30 were domestic tourists.

Primary data was collected from these sample respondents by using interview schedule. Secondary data was collected from journals, related books and from world wide web resources. The data for the present study had been collected during the period, January- March 2010.

Statistical Tools

The collected data have been analyzed with the help of suitable statistical tools such as percentage and Garrett ranking.

Garrett ranking

To find out the most significant sites which are preferred by the respondents Garrett's ranking technique is used. As per this method, respondent have been asked to assign the rank for all the sites and outcome of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of the following formula.

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 \times (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$$

Where R_{ij} is the rank given for the i^{th} factor by the j^{th} respondent and N_j is the number of factors ranked by the j^{th} respondent

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Results and Discussion

Sex Ratio

Among the foreign tourists, the male-female sex ratio was 3:2, while among the domestic tourists it was 19:11

Age Groups

The largest age group in both the foreign and domestic tourists was 21-35 years of age followed by 36-45 years of age.

Education.

Among the foreign tourists 37% was post graduates, 27% was undergraduates and only 6% was with formal school education. In the case of domestic tourists 40% was undergraduates, 37% was postgraduates, and 10% was professionals.

Occupation

Majority of the foreign tourists (38%) was employed followed by business people (27%). The low level (6%) of respondents was students. Among the domestic respondents 33% was employed and 27% was professionals. Only 7% was students.

Income

It was pointless to ask foreign tourists about their monthly family income: each would have quote a figure in different currency and which any case would not have been comparable with the Indian situation (Patil, 2004). So data in this regard was collected from domestic tourists only. It was found that 39% of domestic tourists had a monthly income between Rs.15000-20000 and 10% had a monthly income of Rs.25000 and above.

Accommodation

Even among the foreign tourists, only 7% of them preferred to stay exclusively in star hotels and 58% of them looked for good and comfortable accommodation with a reasonable price. The preference of the majority of the domestic tourists (63%) was for good accommodation with an affordable price rather than luxury and 23% of them preferred TTDC hotel.

Means of travel

Invariably majority of the foreign tourists (63%) and domestic tourists (56%) opted to travel by train. 13% of the foreign tourists hired private cars. In the case of domestic tourists only 4% hired private cars.

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Expenditure pattern

Majority of the foreign tourists (34%) spent more amount on travel followed by accommodation, food and beverages and shopping. 36% of the domestic tourists spent more on accommodation followed by travel.

Knowledge of tourists about Kanniyakumari

Invariably, majority of the foreign tourists (37%) and domestic tourists (57%) got information about the tourist sites in Kanniyakumari through their friends and relatives. 30% foreign tourists got information from websites followed by travel agencies. Among the domestic tourists 17% of them got information through advertisement followed by travel agencies.

Findings

- Most of the tourists were male, between the age group of 21-35 years , well educated and employed.
- Majority of the foreign and domestic tourists looked for good and comfortable accommodation at an affordable price rather than luxury.
- Many of them preferred to travel by train.
- Majority of the foreign tourists spent more amount on travel followed by accommodation.
- In the case of domestic tourists they spent more amount on accommodation followed by transportation.
- Word of mouth communication is very good because most of the tourists came to know about Kanniyakumari through their friends and relatives.
- Considerable percentage of foreign tourists got information about Kanniyakumari through World wide web resources.
- Regarding supporting services most of the tourists were satisfied with them and only few percent of them were dissatisfied with the same.
- Most of the sample respondents gave priority to more attractive and easily accessible sites.

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Suggestions

- Cleanliness, hygienic conditions and satisfactory catering should exist at every place of tourist interest. Department of Tourism and local bodies should give importance to it.
- Tourists gave preference for accommodation with affordable price, hence the hoteliers should concentrate on clean, pleasant and satisfactory accommodation without any irritants.
- Efforts should be taken both by government and private tourism sectors to improve transport and communication facilities.
- Special training should be given to the persons who come in direct contact with the visitors.
- To sell lesser attractive sites proper promotional efforts should be taken by tourists undertakings.

- For the convenience of the tourists, Department of Tourism should put up a map with details at all tourist spots.
- Local people should aware of the value of the tourists and their attitude towards them should be cordial.

Conclusion

Marketing of tourism is different from other products since tourism product is a composite product consisting of attraction of destination, transportation, accommodation and other facilities. While designing a new tourist product or enriching an existing tourist product the seven A's such as Attraction, Accessibility, Accommodation, Amenities, Attendance, Alertness and Accord should be considered. Tourist undertakings whether private or state owned in Kanniyakumari should consider these things while planning their marketing policies. If the tourist products are properly marketed then the tourism industry in Kanniyakumari will be improved with increased flow of tourists which will generate more employment opportunities to the local people and improve their socio economic status.

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Self-Help Groups and Marginalised communities in Tirunelveli District, Tamilnadu

Introduction

The evolution and conceptualization of Marginalization of the society into various groups is not a new phenomenon. It has been in existence and practiced in varied degrees since time immemorial. The earliest discrimination or division could be from the time when men started to live in heterogeneous groups. It is a practice that refers to the overt or covert tendencies and practices developed within several groups of societies. Marginalized persons can also be described as a group of the level or degree of marginalization varies from state to state and from community to community. It is apparently clear that marginalized persons belongs to a distinctive social group and who have their own characteristic features and then they are singled out or victimized by the more numerically dominant members of the society. This act by the members of the society leads to social discrimination and is followed by social ostracism of individual or family or the entire community.

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The Marginalized Group

The present study primarily focuses on the impact of Self Help Groups (SHGs) on the socio-economic characteristics of marginalized communities and in this process two major social groups have been identified and these are Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). In Tirunelveli district there are 11 Taluks. Four Taluks namely Palayamkottai, Alangulam, Sankarankovil and Tirunelveli Taluk were randomly selected from 11 Taluks. Twenty SC/ST women SHG members from each Taluk were randomly selected. Thus total sample size is 80 respondents. A pre-tested and well structured interview schedule has been used to collect the primary data from the sample respondents. For analyzing the primary data, percentage analysis has been used.

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TABLE 1

RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATION: SOCIAL GROUP - WISE

Education level	SC		ST		TOTAL	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Illiterate	23	32	4	45	27	34
Literate	26	37	2	22	28	35
Primary	11	15	3	33	14	18
Middle	7	10	0	0	7	9
High School	2	3	0	0	2	2
Higher secondary	2	3	0	0	2	2
Graduate & above	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	71	100	9	100	80	100

It can be seen from the table that 34 per cent of the respondents were illiterate; the rate of illiteracy was highest among ST community where 45 per cent were illiterate. 35 per cent were literate, 18 per cent completed primary level education, 9 per cent completed middle school level education, 2 per cent completed high school and another 2 per cent completed higher secondary level education. College level education seems to be a dream for SC community women and even middle school level education seems to be a dream for ST community women.

Marriage and family are two stable and recognized institutions. India has rich traditional family values and respect for elders and women can be seen in urban as well as in rural areas. Marriage is considered to be important and its percentage is very high in rural areas. The following tables 4,5 and 6 give the details of marital status and family size of the respondents.

TABLE 2

RESPONDENTS HAVING LAND

Name of the Block	YES		NO		TOTAL	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Alangulam	6	30	14	70	20	100
Palayamkottai	9	45	11	55	20	100
Sankarankoil	5	25	15	75	20	100
Tirunelveli	7	35	13	65	20	100
Total	27	34	53	66	80	100

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The overall percentage of the respondents who possesses land was just 34 per cent from all the four Taluks. This is an indication that the majority of the respondents belonged to the socio-economically backward section of the society and were devoid of any property in terms of land and cash etc. The affects of modernization can be seen in this area where the land has already started shrinking and very few families possessed land for their personal usage. The overall scenario of the land distribution shows that there is unequal percentage of land holding by individual persons of the village.

There are varied rural occupations and most of the people get their choice of work. Both men and women contribute equally for running the family. Needless to add here that women's contribution is much more than males. Women's contribution in the entire economic process is treated as secondary earning rather than co-contributor. Following table shows the occupation of the sample respondents.

TABLE 3

RESPONDENTS OCCUPATION: SOCIAL GROUP-WISE

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Name of the Occupation	SC		ST		TOTAL	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture Labour	29	91	3	9	32	40
Beedi Roller	13	100	0	0	13	16
Government Service	5	83	1	17	6	8
Private Service	8	89	1	11	9	11
Business	16	80	4	20	20	25
Total	71	89	9	11	80	100

Out of total 80 sample respondents interviewed for the study, 40 per cent have stated that they are agriculture labourers, followed by 16 per cent were involving in beedi rolling activity, 25 per cent were involved in family business like shop keeping, tailoring etc, 11 per cent were in private service and only 8 per cent were in government service. It can be seen that there is change taking place in the rural areas in terms of economic independence among SC and ST women. They are no longer tied to the threshold of the house. A new world is waiting for them with the beginning of SHGs movement.

TABLE 4

MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS: SOCIAL GROUP-WISE

Social group	Income category						TOTAL	
	Upto Rs.1000		Rs.1001 tors.2000		Rs.2001 & above			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
SC	24	34	33	46	14	20	71	89
ST	5	56	4	44	0	0	9	11
Total	29	36	37	46	14	18	80	100

It can be seen from the above table, monthly income of the majority SC women (46 per cent) fall in the category of Rs.1001 to Rs.2000. Thirty four per cent of SC women fall in the category of income upto Rs.1000. Only 20 per cent of the sample SC women can able to earn more than Rs.2000 per month. In the case of ST women, monthly income of 44 per cent of them, fall in the category of Rs.1001 to Rs.2000, and remaining 56 per cent were in the category of income upto Rs.1000.

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Findings

- Majority of the sample respondents were in the age group of 30 years to 40 years, followed by 20 years to 30 years.
- 34 per sent of the respondents were illiterate and 35 per cent were just literate. No one respondent went to college for study.
- 85 per cent of the respondents had more than two children. It shows that the family planning method used were ineffective.
- A large number of (44 per cent) respondents were living as joint family.
- 66 per cent of the respondents did not have any land.
- Only 6 per cent of the respondents were in government service and 32 per cent were agriculture labourer.
- Monthly income of the large number of respondents falls in the category of Rs.1001 to Rs.2000.

Conclusion

One of the most important programmmes initiated by the Government of India in the last one decade's time is the Self-Help Groups run by women as credit giving agency and also to take up small activities which can be linked to micro-enterprises, for promoting small and medium level entrepreneurs in raising their socio-economic status. The SHG programme has support from various levels and it is perhaps the best conceived programme of the Government of India which provides empowerment to women from all sections of the society.

An Economic Study of Tribal People in Tirunelveli District

Introduction

India is house of huge population with great heterogeneity. The tribals are one of the important intrinsic groups. A tripe or an ethnic community is defined as a group of families that have a general name, whose members speak a common dialect, reside in a common territory and they have well developed reciprocal exchange aptitude. According to Charls winick 's discovered of Anthropology, ethnic has been referred to as the group of people have common cultural distinct characteristics. They have rich tribal heritage of several racial strains, varying in dialects, social organizations, religious and levels of economic and technological development.

The tribe is distinguished in term of their territory, language culture tradition and development of reciprocity and mutually of obligations there has a total of 4635 communities, and 190 religions that include 3742 castes and 427 scheduled tribes spread over 26 states and six union territories.

Out of the 36 Scheduled Tribe communities in the State, six tribal communities (i.e.) Toda, Kurumbas, Irula, Paniyan and Kattunaikan have be identified as Primitive Tribal Groups. The other Tribals living in scattered areas are classified as Dispersed Tribes.

Kattunayakkan Tribes in Tirunelveli

District	Total			Rural			Urban		
	P	M	F	P	M	F	P	M	F
Tirunelveli	3804	1866	1938	2377	1144	1233	1427	722	705

Education

Tribal people very illiterate 5% percent people is elementary school and 3% people is middle school and 2 % high school and 1 percent people in higher secondary school and 1% higher education and 1 % professional education in this study area of Tirunelveli district.

Central Plans

- Educational and Training Centres.
- Scholarships Higher Classes.
- Hostels.
- Scheduled Tribes Research Centres.
- Scholarships of Study abroad.

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Socio-Economic Conditions of Tribals

They are Hindus by religion, having their own customs and social life and they earn their livelihood mostly from agriculture and animal husbandry. Tribal people have low income and most of the people are illiterate. They are fishing, wood cutting, honey collecting, ayurvedic medicinal plants, odumbu pidithal, tapioca cultivation, goat farming, and food gathering. Their appearance and dress prove that they belong to the dravidian culture. They raise crops like ragi, cumbu, cholam, thenai, semi, horsegram and beans. They take non-vegetarian and vegetarian food including pulses, and rice. They are busy in agriculture as well as agriculture labour. They are engaged in honey collection and basketry. They celebrate Diwali, Holi and Akhateej with much pomp and show. Inheritance is by the male member. The eldest son is the main successor after the death of his father. The mother, who is widow, depends up on one of her sons. The village council decides cases when there is any kind of social violation of prevalent laws.

Agricultural operation by the tribes

Agriculture is the most important economic activity of almost all the tribes residing in Tirunelveli district. "where cultural landscapes are dominated by features of natural Instead of this, a few tribal families are having own agricultural operations start after the Ugadi festival. They can start with the Honneru (plough by bullocks) during the first rainfall of monsoon. Tribes they are classified rainfall as mungaru mansoon and hingaru (retreating mansoon).

Income

Tribal people income in various way of the settlement ship , coat; cow maintenance milk produce aurvadic madition and food gathering honey collecting hunting odumpu pidithat, and agricultural production and panana cultivation and fishing.

Expenditure

The tribal people in tirunelveli district men beedi seecarate wine tobacco and food cloth very poor expenditure and tribal women cloth food ornaments of bangles.

Communication

The tribal are poor. They have struggle hand to maintain their existence. That is why they are rarely in a position buy radio and T.V. set to great information from distance places. Radio needs battery to run. Even in remote areas of tribals radio can be seen in very numbers. As a result, tribals have to miss the news of their importance national importance and international importance. They to not have money to avail the facilities of telephone services. Tribals of remote areas are completely cut of from the electronic media.

Conclusion

The study is concluded that standard of living in tribal people training and awareness of tribal settlements. Primary education secondary education and higher education is training improvement of the students. Government's schemes help for the tribal development to reach the tribal villages. These tribal people either have no education or low education so government must compel the people to send their children to attend the school and increase the education status.

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ECONOMY OF TIRUNELVELI – AN OVERVIEW

Introduction

The economy of Tirunelveli district is chiefly agrarian in nature and people are engaged in the cultivation of cumbu, ragi, pulses, groundnut, gingelly, coconut, chillies, indigo and cotton. It is rich in mineral resources of limestone, sulphides and ilmenite - garnet sands.

The city of Tirunelveli has a quite a number of industries in its area like cement factories, cotton textile mills, spinning and weaving mills, beedi companies, steel products and so on. A large number of small scale industries supported by NELSIA (Nellai Small Scale Industries Association) are active. Tannery industries in small scale are also found in this town. In addition to these industries, a few smallscale units of brick kilns and oil mills exist in the industrial area of this town.

Recently Tata groups have signed a significant project of Titanium dioxide plant for Rs 2,500 crore in Tirunelveli and Tuticorin districts. The project will create job opportunity for 1,000 person directly and 3,000 indirectly. The living cost of the city is less when comparing with other cities.

Tirunelveli district [1] is the penultimate southern most district of Tamilnadu in India. It is described as a microcosm of the state. The district has diverse geographical and physical features like lofty mountains, low plains, rivers and cascades, sea coast and thick inland and mountain forest, sandy soil and fertile alluvium, a variety of flora, fauna and protected wild life.

'Tirunelveli' () is a Municipal Corporation, sixth largest city in Tamil Nadu and the district headquarter of Tirunelveli district. The city is considered as one of the oldest city in Indian subcontinent around 3,000 years old located on the west bank of the perennial Thamirabarani River in the state of Tamil Nadu in Southern India.

Tirunelveli is culturally very old city. To add on evidence of its oldness, in the outskirts of the city in Adichanallur, the archaeologist unearthed urns[1]containing human skull, skeleton and bones with some Tamil Brahmi script on it[2]. Along with skeleton, they found husks, grains of rice, charred rice and Neolithic Celts. By this the archaeologists authentically confirmed it as 2800 years old of Neolithic period[3][4]. The same has been published in The Hindu English daily on May 26, 2004. This assured that Tirunelveli has been the abode for human habituation from Neolithic period around 3,000 years old. Now, Adhichanallur has been announced as an archaeological site for further excavation and studies[5].

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Education

The Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is located in Nellai, on the Tenkasi road, about 11 km from junction. The university is named after a famed poet who was the author of ''Tamil Thai Vazhthu'' (Praise to Mother Tamil), which is the official state song.

In the view to improve the quality of Education in the southern parts of Tamil Nadu, the Finance ministry has stated in the budgetory note that one more Anna University is to be created in the city of Tirunelveli.

The city has many prestigeous old government and private colleges in the medical, legal, engineering, arts, pharmacy, and physiotherapy fields. Tirunelveli Medical College[27] and the Government College of Engineering Tirunelveli[28] are professional colleges run by the government of Tamil Nadu. St. Xaviers College run by Jesuits, St. Johns College and Sarah Tucker College run by CSI Diocease, M.D.T. Hindu College and Sadakathulla Appa College are well-known arts colleges.

Students from the city's schools have been consistently performing well in the state examinations.

Tirunelveli District has an area of 6,838 km². It is bounded by Virudhunagar District to the north, Thoothukudi District to the east, the Indian Ocean to the south, Kanyakumari District to the southwest, and Kerala state to the west. The chief towns, in addition to Tirunelveli, are Courtallam (also called Kuttalam), Sankarankoil and Tenkasi. Tirunelveli district has s substantial population of people who follow the Ayyavazhi belief system.

The famous Courtallam waterfalls are located in Tirunelveli District along such rivers as the Chittar River. It is said that a dip in any of the nine waterfalls rejuvenates the body and the mind. The water is supposed to have healing properties due to the herbs which grow in the area. The waterfalls are often dry and August is considered to be the best time to go. Thamira Sabhai is located in Courtallam. Special fruits like ''Mongostaan'' and ''Ramtaan'' are available only in Courtallam.

Many of India's freedom fighters have originated from this land. Veera Pandiya Kattabomman, V.O. Chidambaram Pillai and Bharathiar are from Thoothukudi District, which was a part of Tirunelveli District before 1990.

The great Tamil poet Subramanya Bharathy is from Ettayapuram in the erstwhile Tirunelveli District. He composed poems foreseeing India's freedom and wrote articles on a variety of subjects emphasizing the unity of India despite its variety in languages, religions, and cultures. Mukkudal village, located in the Tirunelveli District, is famous for its beedi (tobacco) industry. Some of the famous textile showrooms of Tamil Nadu are also in Tirunelveli.

SEZ

The state and Central government has agreed a bid to set up an Information Technology park in the view to develop this district. Time has now ripened for the development part in the lower part of Tamil Nadu..The government of India has approved Naguneri, a town which is 28 km away from the city as Special Economic Zone (SEZ, previously known as Hi-tech Industrial Park[35])

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for the promotion of Electronic/Telecom/Computer Hardware manufactures, Manufacture of white goods/entertainment electronics, Software development, Agro based Industries, Food Processing and Precision Engineering Industries. The promoter for this project are M/s. INFAC India Group, USA., and Axes Technologies Inc., USA. The estimated cost of this project is around Rs 7000 million. More than 25 km² of lands were earmarked for this project; 90% of the land had already be acquired. Utilities viz Water at 6.77 Million Gallons per Day from the river Tamiraparani and Uninterrupted Power supply assured by TNEB by stalling a dedicated sub-station in the vicinity, are tied up for this project. Further Tirunelveli is having better rail link, road link and air link compare to the past. Moreover best higher education institutions including professional education is situated in Tirunelveli. The skilled labour is cheaper and its availability is in abundance. Nearest Port at Thoothukudi will be a boon for export / import. Kudankulam Power Project is also a boon. Industrialist and entrepreneurs must invite foreign direct investment by inviting them to Tirunelveli. A company viz. ATMAC Ltd was incorporated to implement the project. It is reported that JTC, Singapore has prepared the Master Plan. Jurong International, Singapore, has submitted its conceptual master plan, according to which the industrial sector would include ready built factories, custom built factories, units of multi-national corporations, science, business and hi-tech or information technology parks.

The final hurdle for establishing a hi-tech park in the proposed Nanguneri Special Economic Zone (SEZ), transfer of of land by the Department of Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments to the promoter, was cleared on Wednesday. With the transfer, the minimum area of land required for establishing an SEZ – 10 km² – has been achieved.

This has revived hopes of people here that work on the Rs. 14,000-crore project may take off soon. Once the IT park is in full-fledged operation, it is expected to provide a colossal opportunity for about 100 thousand jobs directly and 200 thousand indirectly in Tirunelveli district and the adjoining districts such as Tuticorin, Nagarcoil,

Conclusion

Scarcity refers to the limited resources in an economy. Macroeconomics is the study of the economy as a whole. Microeconomics analyzes the individual people and companies that make up the greater economy. The Production Possibility Frontier (PPF) allows us to determine how an economy can allocate its resources in order to achieve optimal output. Knowing this will lead countries to specialize and trade products amongst each other rather than each producing all the products it needs. Demand and supply refer to the relationship price has with the quantity consumers demand and the quantity supplied by producers. As price increases, quantity demanded decreases and quantity supplied increases. Elasticity tells us how much quantity demanded or supplied changes when there is a change in price. The more the quantity changes, the more elastic the good or service. Products whose quantity supplied or demanded does not change much with a change in price are considered inelastic.

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AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF WOMEN FISH VENDORS IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT - PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction

Fisheries play an important role in the national economy, providing full time or part time employment to 5.96 million people. It has been recognized as a powerful income and employment generator as it stimulator growth of a number of subsidiary industries and is a source of cheap and nutrious food besides being a foreign exchange earner India is the third largest producer of fish and second largest producer of inland fish in the world.

Women play a critical role in fisheries, particularly in the pre and post harvest sectors. According to the marine fisheries census, loos, the total marine fisher flok population of nine coastal states and two union territories in mainland India is 3, 59,116. Notably, of the 756, 391 fisher folk involved in fishing related activities, 365, 463 are women with 152, 692 of them engaged in marketing of fish, compared to 54, 670 men. Women are thus the primary player's n processing, marketing and selling the catch. India is one of the largest fish producing countries in the world. In the two decades after 1950, there was a rapid growth in marine fishing. The reason for the rapid growth was the growth in the world economy in general. Indian, with a long coastline of over 8000Kms around 2 million 59.Kms of Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), including 0.5 million 59.Knm of continental shelf and around 4000 fishing villages, and 1.2 million hectares of brackish water bodies, offers vast potential for development of fisheries.

There are 13 maritime districts in Tamil Nadu starting from the extreme north. They are Chennai Tiruvakur, Kancheepuram, Villupuram, Cudalore, Nagapattinam, Thanjvour, Pudukkottai, Ramanthapuram, Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, and Kanyakumari. The numbers of fishing villages along the coast of Tamil Nadu have been in increased from 233 in 1948-49 to 591 in 2000.

The fishing community has been affected due to over exploitation of the fisheries. Hence fishing activities has been banned for 45 days ever year during the breeding period. The presence study attempts to study the problems and prospects of women fish vendors. Hence the present research attempted to study the problems and prospects of women fisher vendors in Thoothukudi.

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The present study attempts to analyze the problems and prospects of women fish vendors in Thoothukudi District.

Objectives of Study:

1. To study the nature and problems of the women fish vendors in India.
2. To analysis the market activities of women fish vendors
3. To find out the problems faced by the women fish vendors interms of fishing activities

Methodology

In the study Thoothukudi District of Tamil Nadu has been selected. The study is across sectional one, and the field investigation has been done during the period from April 2009 to March 2010, which is the normal period. Structured interview schedule was prepared for the collection of data. Taking into Consideration the limitations of time and logistics. The sample size of 75 was selected based on random sampling procedures. Primary and secondary sources used for this study. Primary data related to the age, education, family size, income and expenditure pattern, assets and savings and also the status of fisherwomen have been collected from the sample respondents of the study area. The secondary data are obtained from the directorates of economics and statistics, CMFRI and office of the Assistant Director of fisheries in Thoothukudi.

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Result and discussion

Fish vending is a traditional occupation that has been a means of lives hood for thousands in India, with the majority of fish vendors being women. Fish vendors engage in their trade in various ways: they procure their fish directly from landing centres, where they participate in daily occasions of the catch: they busy from traders and merchants: or they buy from the wholesale markets for resale at retail / local markets. Vendors also carry out value addition by sorting, grading, cleaning and icing the fish. A number of socio-economic contrite limit their work productivity and role in employment and income generating activities. They have the potential to play an active and some times dominant role in fishing related activities.

Problems faced by women fish vendors in Thoothukudi District

The nature of the product handled by women fish vendors causes a certain stigma that fishermen themselves do not generally face. Unlike men, whose labour is largely confined to the sea, river or lake, fish vendors hare to travel with their product to market places. They have to interact with the public and the law. In the process, they are often forced to deal with inbred prejudices and problems of various kinds. The following are some of the key problems they face:

1. Distance and lack of basic facilities at harbors and landing centres.
2. Poor access to credit, Exorbitant Interest rates
3. Lack of public Transport to markets
4. Lack of Ice and proper storage facilities.
5. Problems at market place.
6. Poor market infrastructure.

Suggestions

The literacy level of women fish vendors in this region is very low. The fishing villages in the interior part have only primary school and for middle or high schools they have to go to the nearby towns either by walk or by bus. In many cases it is not possible for the women fish vendors to spend on education. This results in dropouts from school and a low literacy level, which is only about 21.5. Non-formal education must be provided in these area and voluntary social workers can be involved in these programmes. Majority of the women fish vendors of the District changed. Housing schemes for fishermen, which are now in existence, are not all adequate. Considering the needs of small-scale and poor fishermen, more housing schemes must be implemented. The women fish vendors household should be provided with proper sanitation, latrines and other essential requirements.

Fishing being a seasonal occupation with highly fluctuating incomes, the women fish vendors have little money even to meet their normal food requirements. Hence the fisherwomen may be encouraged in rearing goats, chicken or growing vegetables in their houses, to supplement their family income. The seasonal nature of fishing and the risks and uncertainties associated with it, often push the women fish vendors into poverty. Alternate employment opportunities are very few and opportunity cost of fisherfolk in general. A most effective step will be generation of employment for fishermen. Audio-visual programmes based on all these suggestions be made and must be telecast/broadcast in all the fishing villages. For this the help of the information and Broadcasting Department may be sought. Alternative and supplemented employment opportunities are to be created to overcome the hardship experienced by the fisher people during the ban period. They should organize themselves an association in an effective manner so that they can maintain their income. The price fluctuations affect the women fish vendors. So the government should control the price in an effective way. Government should help the women fish vendors to get loan facilities with low rate of interest from bank easily.

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CONCLUSIONS

The women fish vendors of the artisanal fisheries belong to one of the poorest groups in the coastal rural areas. They are in all fronts affected by many socio-economic factors, which determine the degree of their labour participation. This is turn decides their economic status. Thus, there seems to be a vicious circle in the coastal region. Fishing and fishery related activities require much of physical labour and the fisherwomen are almost involved in all fishery related activities in the study area. They contribute significantly towards the development of marine fishery sector and towards their family income. But still they remain backward. Therefore, the society and the government should take measures to remove these obstacles, which affect the life of the women fish vendors especially during the ban period.

SWOT Analysis of SSIs in Tuticorin District

Introduction

Small is beauty, but beauty is not small. The Small Scale Industries (SSIs) is a beauty of Indian economy. It plays a vital role in the country's economy despite the phenomenal growth in the large-scale sector. In fact, the small-scale sector is playing a vital role in the growth of national economies the world over and is considered to be the engine of growth in most countries. It is produced product at low capital, use indigenous raw materials, utilizing local skills, widen entrepreneurial base, maintaining the balanced regional growth and preventing the migration of labour from rural areas to urban areas. The SSIs generates mass employment opportunity next to agriculture sector.

The growth of SSIs holds the key role to resolve the problems of poverty and unemployment. That is why every country gives importance to the development of different types of SSIs. The growth of SSIs is a precondition for the economic development of any nation, particularly developing country like India. The over all credit of developing this sector goes primarily to the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of free India, who proposed and implemented the development of core industry and a supporting sector in the form of SSIs. In the words of our honorable Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, "the key to our success in employment lies in the success of manufacturing in the small scale sector". The SSI sector is important not only for its contribution to GDP but also for its stellar performance in exports.

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Industrial Profile of the Tuticorin District

Tuticorin is also known as Thoothukudi. Also popularly known as 'Pearl City', Tuticorin is a seaport that serves South Tamil Nadu, as well as the inland cities of Coimbatore, Madurai and Tirunelveli. The city, which lies about 540 km South West of Madras in the Gulf of Mannar, has a tropical climate with hot and humid environ round the year. Tuticorin has a long maritime history and also is one of the flourishing ports in recent times. It is well connected to various trade and production centres within Tamil Nadu and the neighboring states via road, rail, water and air. In and around Tuticorin city is the major salt producer in the state and contributes 30 per cent of the total salt production in Tamil Nadu. The main occupation of the Tuticorin district is agriculture and allied activities. A majority (70 per cent) of people depends upon agricultural activities for their livelihood. But the recent boom in the new industries like Sterlite, South

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Indian Petrochemical Industrial Corporation (SPIC) Limited, Tuticorin Alkali Chemicals (TAC) and Fertilizers Limited, Heavy Water Plant (HWP), port and related service and Tuticorin Thermal Power Station (TTPS) have put the district predominantly in the industrial map of the country. Hundreds of ancillary units have also sprung up. Textile and matchbox are other important industries located in the purview of this district.

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is an important pillar of strategic management. And also a SWOT analysis is a tool, used in management and strategy formulation. It can help to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of a particular company. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors that create value or destroy value. They can include assets, skills, or resources that a company has at its disposal, compared to its competitors. They can be measured using internal assessments or external benchmarking. Opportunities and threats are external factors that create value or destroy value. A company cannot control them. But they emerge from either the competitive dynamics of the industry / market or from demographic, economic, political, technical, social, legal or cultural factors (PEST).

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Strengths of Tuticorin district SSIs

- Thoothukudi district has the possibilities of cluster development many industries such as Salt industry, Readymade garments, and Handmade matches.
- Thoothukudi is the 10th major and first ISO 9001 certified port of the country, functioning with nine cargo berths and three bulk jetties. The infrastructure facilities available are pave way for export and import of industrial products and commodities for economic development of the district.
- The district occupies the first place in salt production in the state. There is a good scope for development for salt based marine chemical industries namely bromine from sea bittern, free flow iodized salt, sodium chloride (analytical and pharmaceutical), magnesium sulphate.
- Tuticorin district SSI sector has used to cost effective technology
- The area under cashew nut based industries, which have good export demand
- Knowledge based, low- cost manpower in science & technology
- Concentration of vast maritime resourced industries
- Area under cashew cultivation is increased over the years
- Easy availability of more labour force
- Comfortable availability of minerals and other raw materials in this region.
- Marine Chemical Resources is more favour on the salt industries in Tuticorin district
- Ideal Place, conducive for development of salt based industries.
- Has a good infrastructure facility, well connected by road, rail, water and air.

- Availability of viable land for salt industries
- Exporter-friendly government policies.
- More tax incentives on machinery given by the government.
- More contribution of countries economic growth
- Regional development
- Total number of units in engaged in salt production 2208
- Export of salt from Thoothukudi (in 000 tones) 402.20, value (in Rs Lakhs) 3620.50
- Total area covered under salt (in acres) both licensed and non licensed 15,700
- SIPCOT Industrial Complex in Thoothukudi has been functioning from 1984, total area developed 1083.59 acres, total number of units functioning 67, areas allotted 595.98 acres and major activities HDPE bags Iodized salt, Sea food processing, Herbal processing and White ice bar etc.

Weakness of Tuticorin district SSIs

- No specialized banks for SSI Sector
- Less number of industrial estates
- Backwardness one of the main problems
- Lack of Entrepreneurship
- Low level of modernization and upgradation of technology, and the integration of developed technology are very slow.
- Low level of labour productivity due to inadequate formal training / unskilled labour.
- Horizontal growth of SSI sector
- Less number of organized product manufacturers.
- Lack of Funds
- Lack of Marketing Skill
- Lack of Information.
- Poor adaptability to changing trade trends.
- Non-availability of technically trained human resources.
- Lack of management skills.
- Lack of access to technological
- Marine food production in recent years has shown downward trend

Opportunities of Tuticorin district SSIs

- Farming SSI sector, Poultry, Dairy and Goat farming have immense scope in this district

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- ❖ Seafood industry, Floriculture, Readymade garments, meat processing industry offer good Investment opportunities.
- ❖ Agriculture has become a costly activity therefore the most of persons involved in the industrial activities.
- ❖ Lime stone deposits in the district pave way for starting a mini cement plant
- ❖ Immense Scope for Salt Based Industries.
- ❖ Immense Scope for Fly Ash Bricks Industries.
- ❖ More availability of unskilled labour
- ❖ Scope for investment in refined salt units.
- ❖ Facilities of Thoothukudi port can be utilized for exporting the products.
- ❖ Growing international and domestic markets in salt.

Threats of Tuticorin district SSIs

- Without much profit
- Textile industry passing through worst crisis
- Concentration of more chemical industries may pose health environmental pollution.

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Conclusion

Small scale industrial sector is an important pillar of Tamil Nadu state economy as well as in Tuticorin district. In this district, small scale industries are holding lot of strengths and weaknesses and also seize opportunities and threats in the external environments. The SSI sector has given mass employment opportunity in this district. However, the sector has containing lot of weaknesses and threats especially for poor infrastructural facilities and mass environmental pollution problems due to illiteracy and poor concentration of government policies in this district. So, the government must take necessary actions for the increase infrastructural facilities and also remove the all weaknesses and threats of SSIs in Tuticorin district.

Socio-Economic Condition of Fishermen in Thoothukudi District

Introduction

Along with farming, fishing is one of the oldest occupations of humankind. Fishing provides a rich and easily available source of protein and plays a vital role in improving the dietary standards. India is one of the seven fish producing countries of the world. In India, Tamil nadu is one of the important Maritime States with rich Inland and Marine resources. It has a Coast line of **1000 K. Ms**. and accounts for 15per cent of the total fish landings in India. Roughly one fourth of all Marine exports from the country is from Tamil nadu.

OBJECTIVES

1. The overall development of fisheries and welfare of fishermen community
2. To generate direct and indirect employment opportunities for fishers sectors.
3. To uplift the socio-economic condition of the fishing community

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Marine exports to double by 2012: Govt

India is aiming at doubling marine exports including that of tuna fish to four billion dollar by 2012, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Jairam Ramesh informed the Rajya Sabha

Fishermen Welfare Schemes

Welfare of fishermen is a priority item in the agenda of the State Government. The Government will take all the steps to improve the socio-economic status of fishermen community. The following important schemes are being implemented by this Government. Ma, Singaravelar Memorial Fishermen Free Housing Scheme Fishermen Group Insurance Scheme Fisher folk Accident Group Insurance Scheme Savings-cum-Relief Scheme Reimbursement of Central Excise Duty on HSD oil Kerosene/diesel subsidy for fishermen using traditional crafts Ma. Singaravelar Memorial Fishermen Free Housing Scheme Under the "Sindanai Sirpi" Ma. Singaravelar Memorial Fishermen Free Housing Scheme, 16,000 houses have been sanctioned up to 1999-2000. Of this 12,603 houses have been completed so far. The unit cost of each house which was Rs.32, 000/- in 1997-98 has been raised to Rs.37, 000/- during 1998-99 keeping in view of the escalation in the cost of construction materials. The scheme will be continued during 2000-2001 for construction of another 4000 houses to the fishermen.

TAMILNADU FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED:

The Tamil nadu Fisheries Development Corporation Ltd. was established in 1974 as a State owned undertaking. The authorized share capital is Rs. 500.00 lakh and the paid up share capital as on date is Rs. 445.52 lakh. It is engaged in the following activities:

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- Operation of deep sea fishing trawlers
- Management of reservoirs
- Production of quality fish seeds
- Management of ice plants, cold storage and processing plants
- Sale of HSD oil to fishermen.
- Marketing of quality fish
- Fish net manufacturing
- Management of shrimp hatchery and shrimp farm
- Of ornamental fishes.

Promoting Community Development Action and Alternative Employment

In most developing countries in Asia, the decades of neglect suffered by small-scale fishing communities has put most of them at the bottom of the social and economic ladders of their respective countries.18Apackage of socio-economic actions needs to be initiated in order to bridge the "**development gap**" between small-scale fishing communities and the rest of society. More concrete socio-economic measures which will have a direct bearing on enhancing the quality of their lives are imperative to build greater self-reliance. Spelling out a detailed strategy of action is not a meaning full exercise given the diverse socio-political considerations that determine the country-specific degrees of freedom available for action on these fronts. However, in broad terms, this calls for better organization of the fish marketing activities to be able to earn more income; more flexible and cheaper credit arrangements; easier access to improved **education, housing** and **health** facilities; greater stress on population and family welfare issues to mention a few.

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Conclusion

The resources of the ocean are for the dead, the living and those yet to be born. This pithy statement of a small-scale fishing community in Asia encapsulates the essence of sustainable development. The process of new globalization in fisheries, as it manifests itself today in Asia, jeopardizes the prospects of the living and the chances of those yet to be born. Some dimensions with regard to the unsustainability of the process were highlighted in this paper. Charting a new course into the future must start by making committed changes in the present. Our ingredients for a secure future, if implemented, will result in a basic restructuring of the institutional and organizational contours of the small-scale fisheries in Asia. These measures are intended to empower the sector so that the participants within it will obtain the bargaining strength needed to "find their feet". Equally important is the need to challenge the monopoly of the main institution of globalization — the market. Modulating its excessive influence (rowing too fast) with the anchoring role of the community and the rudder of state policy become imperative. To achieve all this we will require a ground swell of rising support from fish workers' organizations and the committed support of several sections of civil society at the national and the international level.

GROWTH PERFORMANCE OF SALT REFINERIES IN TUTICORIN DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

Introduction

Salt is one of the few commodities that comes close to being universally consumed by almost all sections of a community irrespective of economic level and it is consumed at approximately the same level throughout the year. Compare to other food commodities whose production is widely dispersed the production of salt is generally limited to a few centres. The world salt production was 2,333 lakh tonnes in the year 2008. The main salt producing countries are U.S.A, China, India and Germany. U.S. leads in the world salt production with 475 lakh tonnes followed by China about 370 lakh tonnes and India about 155 lakh tonnes. India is the third largest salt producing country in the world with average annual production of 155 lakh tonnes in the year 2008. Total area allotted for salt cultivation was 5.39 lakh acres. In India 64 percent of salt produced by private sector followed by unorganised sector 24.85 percent, co-operative sector 10.1 percent, and 1.7 percent by public sector. Salt manufacturing activities are carried out in the coastal states of Gujarat, TamilNadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharastra, Karnataka, Orissa, West Bengal, Goa and Hinterland State of Rajasthan. Among these states only Gujarat, TamilNadu and Rajasthan produce salt in surplus to their requirement Even though India is the third largest salt producer in the world, the rate of growth of Indian common salt production is found to be very low. In India Gujarat stands first in common salt production only in absolute terms but in terms of growth rate Tamil Nadu is better than Gujarat.

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Results and Discussion

a) Capital

The primary objective of a business entity is to make profit and increase the wealth of its owners. In the case of salt refinery, larger amount investment in plant and equipments is usually required and these assets are the physical facilities used in the production, storage, display, and distribution of the products of the refinery. These assets normally provide many years of service. Aggregate investment at the beginning period across the refineries was only Rs.2092.59 lakhs with an average investment of Rs.261.57 lakhs. As the period progressed, the amount of investment in fixed assets across the refineries has tremendously increased and the average investment (Rs.1000.14 lakhs) was doubled in the year 2008.

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b) Labour

Labour is measured in monetary terms (wages). Wages are defined to include all remuneration capable of being expressed in monetary terms and also payable more or less regularly in each pay period to workers as compensation for work done during the accounting year. The growth rate of wages was 4.71 percent during the study period. A maximum growth of 10.61 percent was recorded the TSMC Salt followed by Brilliant salt (8.01 percent) Victory Salt (6.57 percent) Das and Co (2.17 percent) Raja salt (1.67 percent) Sahayamatha Salt II (0.41 percent) and Golden Salt (0.86 percent).

c) Production

Production is one of the important determinants of the growth of a firm. The production process involves combining an input of resources or 'factors of production' to produce an output of goods and services. These refineries were established in view to manufacture of refined free flow salt As far as the rate of growth of production is concerned, except golden salt refinery all refineries have showed the positive growth and the maximum growth of (6.52 percent) was recorded in Tuticorin Salt and Marine Chemicals followed by Brilliant Salt (6.29 percent), Sahayamatha Salt I (3.21 percent) Raja Salt (4.9 percent) Golden Salt (2.98 percent) Das and Co (2.1 percent) Sahayamatha Salt (1.63 percent) and a minimum growth of (0.34 percent) was found in Victory Salt.

d) Sales

A sale is the pinnacle activity involved in selling products or services in return for money or other compensation. It is an act of completion of a commercial activity. The purpose of any business is to earn profit, and it can only be accomplished through sales. The leading salt refineries (Sahayamatha Groups) in this district have been sold their products to companies like Tata and Annapoorna. The rate of growth of sales is 1.83 percent during the study period. The highest growth of (6.9 percent) was found in Victory Salt followed by TSMC (6.47 percent) and Brilliant Salt (6.46 percent). The interesting think is that, the growth rate of sales is comparatively low (1.79 percent) in compare with the capital (11.6 percent) and higher with the growth rate of production which is (2.75 percent)

e) Net profit

In neoclassical economics, profit, is the difference between a firm's total revenue and its opportunity costs. In classical economics profit is the return to the employer of capital stock (machinery, factory, a plow) in any productive pursuit involving labor. The highest growth rate of net profit (13.29 percent) was found in Brilliant Salt followed by Das and co (9.88 percent) TSMC (8.51percent) Sahayamatha Salt I (7.91 percent) Victory Salt (7.69 percent) Sahayamatha Salt II (6.54 percent) Golden Salt (2.9 percent).

Among the different indicators, capital has registered the highest growth rate of 11.6 percent followed by net profit (7.61 percent), labour (5.57 percent), production (2.78 percent) and sales (1.78

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percent) indicating that all the indicators have showed the positive growth rate. Table 1 presents the growth rates selected indicators of 8 refineries during the study period (1995-2008). The overall growth in salt refineries was 5.55 percent during the study period. The maximum growth (9.34 percent) was found in Brilliant Salt followed by Victory Salt (6.65 percent) Sahayamatha II (6.62 percent) TSMC (6.81 percent) Sahayamatha I (5.74 percent), Raja Salt (4.76 percent) Das and Co (4.55 percent) Sahayamatha II (3.72 percent) and Golden Salt (3.22 percent). The exercise reveals that, the Brilliant salt refinery is capital intensive, so its growth can be increased only by putting the additional investment on capital in the manufacturing process. On the other side, capital deepening also pushes up the productivity of labour. The increasing investment on plants and machinery makes labourers more effective leads to higher production, sales and profit.

Investment in capital is sufficient in both refineries (Raja Salt and Victory Salt), so the additional investment in labour will make these refineries more efficient. Although Sahayamatha Groups have emerged as the leading salt refineries, the rate of growth is found to be low. Because, they have failed to concentrate their efforts on labour such as land and building and plant and machinery, moreover these two refineries have been working only on the aim of acquiring more profit. The additional investment on labour will make these refineries more efficient and helps their survival. The investment on both capital and labour were very low in Raja Salt. So it urgently needs additional investment on both capital and labour.

Conclusion

The growth rates of the selected variables were during the study period viz. capital (11.6 percent), labour (4.70 percent), production (2.78 percent), sales (1.78 percent) and profit (8.61 percent). The overall growth rate of salt refineries was 5.55 percent. Thus it can be concluded that there is an efficient performance of these salt refineries but they have to concentrate to increase the production and sales.

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A STUDY ON PERFORMANCE OF SPICES SECTOR IN SOUTHERN DISTRICTS

Introduction

Standard ISO 676:1995 of the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) defines spices and condiments as "Vegetable Products or mixtures thereof free from extraneous matter, used for flavoring, seasoning and imparting aroma in feeds". The term "applies equally to the product in the whole from or in the ground form". There are different definitions for spice seasonings. Spice seasonings can be added to all kinds of feeds, enhancing one's statistics preference for these feeds. Generally, it has area pungency or flavor and is composed of for example, salt, herb and spice which enhance or improve the flavour of the feed. The spice seasoning is area mixture containing one or more spices or spice extracts that enhances the flavour of the original feed and is added during processing by the feed industry or during the cooking process in the home.

The main objectives of the study are

- To amalyse the area production and productilvity of pepper in tamilnadu.
- To amalyse the area production and productilvity of cardamom in tamilnadu
- To amalyse the area production and productilvity of chillies in tamilnadu.
- To amalyse the area production and productilvity of turmeric in tamilnadu.

The data were collected from secondary source during the year 2004-2005 to 2008-2009. The data were collected from spices board cochin of horticulture GOI.

Table – 1 reveals that the district wise Production and productivity of Pepper in Tamilnadu. The production of Kanyakumari District was 18 tonnes in 2008 – 2009 and decreased in 17 million tonnes in 2004 – 2005. In Thirunelveli District the Production of pepper was 10 tonnes during the years 2004 – 2005 and decreased in 9 tonnes in 2008 – 2009. In Tuticorin District the Production of Pepper was Nil balances in 2004 – 2005 and increased in 4 tonnes during the year 2008 – 2009. In overall Tamilnadu the Production was 912 tonnes in 2004 – 2005 and decreased in 804 tonnes in 2008 – 2009. The Percentage value of Pepper during the year 2004 – 2005 was 1.86 percent and increased in 78.94 percent during the year 2008 – 2009 respectively. Productivity of Pepper was 7.06 percent in Kanyakumari District and decreased in 0.15 percent in 2008. 2009.

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TABLE – I
DISTRICT WISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF PEPPER IN TAMILNADU (TONNES)

District	2004 – 2005		2005 – 2006		2006 – 2007		2007 – 2008		2008 – 2009	
	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity
Kanyakumari	17 (1.86)	7.96 (3618.18)	13 (1.52)	0.16 (69.56)	12 (1.47)	0.20 (83.33)	14 (1.55)	0.21 (116.66)	18 (2.23)	0.15 (78.94)
Madurai	0	0	0	0	8 (0.98)	0.10 (41.66)	7 (0.77)	0.11 (61.11)	3 (0.37)	0.01 (5.2)
Thirunelveli	10 (1.09)	0.20 (90.90)	10 (1.17)	0.20 (86.95)	11 (1.35)	0.18 (75)	12 (1.33)	0.17 (94.44)	9 (1.111)	0.16 (84.21)
Thoothukudi	0	0	0	0	7 (0.86)	0.11 (45.83)	3 (0.33)	0.02 (11.11)	5 (0.62)	0.03 (15.78)
Virudhunagar	0	0	0	0	8 (0.98)	0.03 (12.5)	6 (0.66)	0.04 (22.22)	4 (0.49)	0.05 (26.31)
Tamil Nadu	912	0.22	851	0.23	813	0.24	900	0.18	804	0.19

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TABLE – II

DISTRICT WISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF CARDAMOM IN TAMILNADU (TONNES)

District	2004 – 2005		2005 – 2006		2006 – 2007		2007 – 2008		2008 – 2009	
	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity
Kanyakumari	11 (2.44)	0.09 (100)	6 (1.33)	0.10 (111.11)	5 (1.11)	0.08 (88.88)	8 (1.78)	0.11 (122.22)	9 (2.02)	0.12 (133.33)
Madurai	0	0	0	0	4 (0.89)	0.15 (166.66)	3 (0.67)	0.12 (133.33)	0	0.13 (144.44)
Thirunelveli	80 (17.77)	0.10 (111.11)	73 (16.29)	0.10 (111.11)	75 (16.70)	0.11 (122.22)	88 (19.68)	0.12 (133.33)	81 (18.20)	0.13 (144.44)
Thoothukudi	0	0	0	0	24 (16.48)	0.12 (133.33)	72 (16.10)	0.13 (144.44)	80 (17.97)	0.14 (155.55)
Virudhunagar	24 (5.33)	0.09 (100)	24 (5.35)	0.09 (100)	23 (5.12)	0.09 (100)	24 (5.36)	0.08 (88.88)	22 (4.94)	0.09 (100)
Tamil Nadu	450	0.09	448	0.09	449	0.09	447	0.09	445	0.09

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TABLE – III
DISTRICT WISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF CHILLIES IN TAMILNADU (TONNES)

District	2004 – 2005		2005 – 2006		2006 – 2007		2007 – 2008		2008 – 2009	
	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity
Kanyakumari	3 (0.006)	0.75 (111.94)	3 (0.009)	0.06 (9.23)	4 (0.009)	0.12 (18.75)	3 (0.006)	0.18 (28.57)	5 (0.01)	0.19 (30.64)
Madurai	405 (0.90)	0.67 (100)	270 (0.84)	0.65 (100)	410 (0.94)	0.66 (103.12)	280 (0.63)	0.65 (103.17)	275 (0.65)	0.65 (104.83)
Thirunelveli	2014 (4.52)	1.38 (205.97)	1885 (5.92)	1.11 (170.76)	1942 (4.45)	1.18 (184.37)	1890 (4.27)	1.10 (174.60)	1955 (4.63)	1.18 (190.32)
Thoothukudi	7865 (17.62)	0.42 (62.68)	4611 (14.48)	0.38 (58.46)	5412 (12.41)	0.18 (28.12)	64.85 (14.67)	0.22 (34.92)	7585 (17.98)	0.25 (40.32)
Virudhunagar	2726 (6.11)	0.76 (113.43)	17.99 (5.65)	0.84 (129.23)	1891 (4.48)	1.08 (129.68)	1980 (4.48)	0.82 (130.15)	2515 (5.96)	0.81 (130.64)
Tamil Nadu	44631	0.67	31830	0.65	43582	0.64	44185	0.63	42174	0.62

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TABLE – IV

DISTRICT WISE PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF TURMERIC IN TAMILNADU (TONNES)

District	2004 – 2005		2005 – 2006		2006 – 2007		2007 – 2008		2008 – 2009	
	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity	Production	Productivity
Kanyakumari	0	0	0	0	5 (0.03)	0.10 (1.80)	4 (0.03)	0.11 (2.12)	0	0.08 (1.45)
Madurai	110 (0.09)	5.50 (100.36)	232 (0.16)	5.52 (100)	240 (0.18)	5.54 (99.81)	115 (0.09)	5.55 (107.14)	118 (0.08)	5.56) 101.45)
Thirunelveli	11 (0.009)	5.50 (100.36)	22 (0.01)	5.50 (99.63)	33 (0.02)	5.51 (99.27)	38 (0.03)	5.51 (106.37)	44 (0.03)	5.51 (100.54)
Thoothukudi	27 (0.02)	5.40 (98.54)	28 (0.01)	5.60 (101.44)	28 (0.02)	5.62 (101.26)	26 (0.02)	5.65 (109.07)	25 (0.01)	5.62 (102.55)
Virudhunagar	11 (0.009)	5.50 (100.36)	0	0	14 (0.01)	0	19 (0.01)	0.01 (0.019)	20 (0.01)	0.02 (0.36)
Tamil Nadu	118 447	5.48	143 358	5.52	132 448	5.55	124 518	5.18	142 625	5.48

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Table – 2

reveals that the district wise Production and productivity of Cardamom was 11 tonnes in Kanyakumari District the percentage value was 2.44 and it was decreased in 9 tonnes (2.02 percent). The Productivity also increased in 0.09 hector in 2004 – 2005. In Thirunelveli District 80 tonnes in 2004 – 2005 and also increased in 81 tonnes during the year 2008 – 2009. The overall Tamilnadu 450 tonnes in 2004 – 2005 and decreased in 445 tonnes during the year 2008 – 2009. Productivity was 0.09 hectare in Tamilnadu during the year 2004 – 2005 and 0.09 hectare in 2008 – 2009 respectively. The Percentage of Thirunelveli district was 17.77 percent during the year 2004 – 2005 and 18.20 percent during the year 2008 – 2009 respectively.

Table 3

shows that the district wise Production and Productivity of Chilles in Tamilandu the Kanyakumari District was 3 tonnes during the year 2004 – 2005 and the year 2008 – 2009 5 tonnes the Percentage also increased or decreased during the year. In Thirunelveli District 2014 gtonnes during the year 2004 – 2005 and also increased during the year 2008 – 2009 the value is 7585 tonnes. The overall Tamilnadu 44631 tonnes during the year 2004 – 2005 and decreased in 42174 tonnes during the year 2008 – 2009. The percentage also increased or decreased in all the years.

Table 4

shows that District wise Production and Productivity of turnmeric in Tamilnadu. In Kanayakumari District Production Was Nil balance during the year 2004 – 2005. In Thirunelveli and Tuticorin District 11 tonnes and 27 tonnes during the year 2004 – 2005 and the year 2008 – 2009 it was increased from 44 tonnes and 25 tonnes. The percentage value of Thirunelveli and Tuticorin District was 0.009 and 0.02 percent. The Percentage value of Kanyakumari District was Rs. Nil balance in 2004 – 2005 and the year 2008 - 2009 was 1.45 hectare in Productivity of Turmeric.

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conclusion

India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices and spice products. The total production of spices was 4.3 million metric tones and the area covered was 2.56 million hectares. The production of spices during 2000-01 was of the order of three million tones among various spices grown in India. Chilly is most widely grown with area share in the total production of 32 percent

SHGs : A PANECEA FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION:

Self–Help Group is a voluntary group formed to attain some common goals, most of its members have similar social identity, heritage, caste or traditional occupations ands come together for common causes and manage resources for the benefit of the group member. Theses groups are called "solidarity groups" as they provide monetary and moral support to individual members in times of difficulties.

The concept of SHG serves to underlines the principle " for the people, by the people and of the people". The SHG is the brainchild of Grameen bank of Bangaladesh, which was found by Prof. Mohammed Yunus of Chittagong university in the year 1975.

SHG is a group of rural poor who have volunteered to organize themselves into groups for eradication of poverty of the members. SHG is an informal delivery system where its members are able to generate their own capital, lend it among themselves in terms of needs with low tate of interest and easily payable policy.

SHG is a small, economically homogeneous and affinity group of the rural poor voluntarily coming together for the following reasons:

- To save small amounts of money regularly.
- To mutually agree to contribute to a common fund.
- To meet their emergency needs.
- To have collective decision–making.
- To solve conflicts through collective leadership and mutual discussion.
- To provide collateral free loans with terms decided by the group at market driven rates.

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EMPOWERMENT:

Empowerment means to authorize in the context of the people. They have to be authorized to have control over their lives. Empowerment has been variously understood as a process, a movement, collective action and so on. Women empowerment concept was introduced at the international women's conference in 1985 at Nairobi. Women's empowerment principally aims at enhancing their social functioning by a quantitative and qualitative change particularly in the field of education, health and employment which will bring the desired level of change. The Government and voluntary organizations are providing many generating schemes to raise the economic status of women.

Empowerment is a process of awareness ands capacity building, leading to greater participation, greater decision – making power and control the transformative action. The empowerment of women

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covers both individuals and collective transformation. It strengthens their innate ability through acquiring knowledge, power and experience. Empowerment is an active multidimensional process, which enables women to realize their full potential and power in all spheres of life. Power is not a commodity to be translated, nor can it given away as aims. Power has to be acquired through participation in various development programmes.

Empowerment process encompasses several mutually reinforcing components but begins with and is supported by economic independence which implies access to and control over production resources, the second component of empowerment is knowledge and awareness , the third is self –image and the final is autonomy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To find out the socio – economic background of the Self – Help Group women.
2. To find out the benefits enjoyed by the sample women after entering into the group.
3. To find out the problem of the sample women in running their enterprises.

HYPOTHESIS:

In the interview schedule the respondents age, community, marital status, educational qualification size and type of family, occupation, motivation training and investment are chosen and whether these variables influence the trade of women have been tested.

1. There is no significant relation between trade and age.
2. Trade and community may be independent.
3. There is no significant relation between trade and education.

METHODOLOGY:

To facilitate this analysis Palayamkottai taluk in Tirunelveli district has been purposively chosen based on the researcher convenience . This study mainly based on primary data which was collected 60 respondents from 10 SHGs functioning in that taluk systematically. The data relating to socio –economic profile nature of functioning SH

Gs and problems where collected to the help of interview schedule through personal investigation. To strengthen this analysis the basic statistical techniques such as chi – square test bas been made use of.

RAMIFICATION:

- The entire analysis has been done keeping the activities of the SHG women of the sample as the base.
- It is found all the women in SHG are found in multifarious activities though micro in size. The samples SHG women are mostly young within the age groups of 33-37 years.

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- It is observed that most of the business units of the sample are managed by themselves as family members being as wage labour employed in self employment. Without undergoing training, the SHGs sample members have started some micro enterprises due to prior experience.
- To be very brief, women of SHGs can be said to have empowered in the following ways. The income status of the SHGs sample women has increased considerably prior to SHGs interventions.
- It is learnt that the SHG sample women have become owners of some assets fixed.
- They become aware of sending their children to schools and avoid dropouts ands they are by came to recognize the importance of education.
- The SHG women became independent to take decision on their business.
- Regarding problems faced by SHG sample women, lack of finance as usual has been found to be the major problems of majority of 52% of the sample.
- The other problems are general in nature, like raw material, non – availability of skilled labourers, marketing and also lack of family support and competition.

CONCLUSION:

Growth of SHGs are essential for the members as they ensure better standards of living and their by their individual family and social empowerment. Hence the social empowerment by the SHG member is moderate family empowerment achieved by the member in the family are moderate. Empowering women is pre - requisite for creating a good nation, when are empowered, society with stability assured. Empowering of women is essential as their thoughts and their value system lead the development of a good family and good society and ultimately a good nation. In spite of various constitutional safeguards ands legislative measures as well as number of programmes and policies initiated by the government for the betterment of women.

The unemployment problem prevalent in India sharply defers from that which prevails in the western nation. There are a number of possible roots to the promotion of self – employment. Promotion and strengthening of Self - Help Groups is one of them. So more and more SHGs should be encouraged in order eradicate poverty through self – employment and same time empower women which in turn lead to over all economic development.

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ECONOMY OF KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Introduction:

Kanyakumari District is the southern most tip of peninsular India where Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal embrace one another. The district lies between 77o 15' and 77o 36' of the Eastern Longitudes and 8o 03' and 8o 35' of the Northern Latitudes. Upto early fifties of 20th Centuries, this region was part of Tranvancore Samasthanam (Kerala). The Tamil speaking majority population struggled to merge with Tamil Nadu and finally Kanyakumari District came into existence on 1st November 1956 .

with head quarters at Nagercoil. It is surrounded by Tirunelveli District in the North and North East, Kerala State in the North West Arabian Sea in the West, Indian Ocean in the south the Gulf of Manner with East.

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Basic Infrastructure:

Transport and highways

There are two major National Highways (NH) roads emanating from Kanyakumari town. One is the NH 7 that starts from the town and runs through Madurai and the other is the NH 47 that runs to Salem through Kerala, touching some important cities in Kerala like Trivandrum and Kochi and also in Tamil Nadu. The road stretching from Kanyakumari to Trivandrum is one of the busiest Highway stretches in India.

The state-owned Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation is the major operator of bus services in the district, though licences are issued for specific routes to private operators. Today, there are 3495.80 km of surfaced roads in the district.The nearest airport is Trivandrum International Airport which is 70 km away from Nagercoil, the capital of Kanyakumari District.

Road:

The road network in Kanyakumari district consists of National highways, State highways, District roads and rural roads. The trunk road from Madras to Nagercoil joins the Kanyakumari – Trivandrum road near Aralvoimozhi and passes through important places over a distance of 62.4 Km. and finally enters Kerala State. The road from Kanyakumari to Trivandrum is one of the busiest roads in the country.

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The erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin adopted a policy of nationalization of transport and as a result the Transport Department was formed in the state in 1938. Routes between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari (Via) Nagercoil and Colachel were the first to be taken up for nationalization. After the reorganization of States in 1956, the bus transport service in Kanyakumari district was taken over by the State Transport Department of the then Madras State.

The Chennai-Kanyakumari Highway joins the Kanyakumari- Trivandrum road near Aralvoimozhi which passes through Nagercoil touching other important places and terminates at Trivandrum in Kerala State covering a distance of 62.4 km. from Aralvoimozhi to Kerala border. The views on either side of this road can never fail to attract the travelers. The district is well covered with bus transport facilities. Remote villages are also covered by 238 private mini buses.

Railways

Nagercoil is a major railway junction, connecting the eastern and western rail lines and connecting all the majore cities in India. The western line runs through the west coast (though Kerala) and the eastern line runs through the east into Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu, towards Chennai. The rail link to Kanyakumari was established only in 1978, mainly because establishing a rail line through the district posed some challenges for the rail department and took a lot of efforts, especially the western line. The western line that runs to Trivandrum today runs through some huge artificial ground elevations and number of hill tunnels.

As is now Kanyakumari District Railway routes are under jurisdiction of Southern Railway's Thiruvananthapuram Division, which is reluctant to pursue infrastructural development and train services in the above two stations. Nagercoil Junction Railway station is A category station with an annual passenger revenue of over 20 crore.

Kanyakumari District is connected through direct train services with all metropolitan cities in India, like New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and Kolkata. These *Express* trains originate either from Kanyakumari or Nagercoil. Passenger (local) train services and other express trains run between Trivandrum Central and either Nagercoil or Kanyakumari. The journey by train from Trivandrum Central to Nagercoil usually takes an hour and a half.

India's longest-running train, both in time and distance, The Himsagar Express runs between Kanyakumari town and Jammu Tawi. The train covers 3,751 km between Kanyakumari and Jammu Tawi, in 74 hours and 55 minutes.

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Electricity generation:

Kanyakumari district is a major center of windmill electricity generation. There are two hydroelectric power stations at Kodayar, generating a combined 100 MW of power. Aralvoimozhy in Kanyakumari District is a major centre for generation of windmill power and the largest in the world, led by major corporations like Suzlon Energy and Micon.

Colachel Port:

Colachel Port is a small natural harbour in the western side of the district near the town of Colachel. The Indian government has plans to turn it into a major port and container trans-shipment terminal and is now in the process of making a feasibility study. Colachel Port would have certain advantages over other neighbouring ports in India when developed, in that, it would be closer to international shipping lanes - shipping traffic between Europe, West Asia and the Far East passes not far from the port. Also, the port is naturally deep. Being situated close to the tip of the Indian Peninsula and with major ports like Colombo and Singapore in the vicinity, the port is becoming a big port and the Singapore government has sent its team to study the port.

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Rivers:

Kanyakumari is receiving a fairly good rainfall from both South-West and North-East monsoons. The period of South West Monsoon is from June to September. While that of North-East Monsoon is from October to December. The major river in the district is Tambaraparani River locally known as Kuzhithuraiar. This river has two major tributaries with the Pechiparai Dam and Perunchani Dam respectively built across them, Kodayar and Paralayar. There are many tributaries for the Kodayar River of which Chittar River I and Chittar II, with their dams, are the major ones. The origin of Tambaraparani River is in the Western Ghats and the river confluences with Arabian sea near Thengapattanam, about 56 km. west of Kanyakumari town.

Valliar, another small river and its tributary Thoovalar, originate from the Velimalai Hills, collect the drainage from P.P. Channel and its branches, ayacuts (irrigated area under a tank) and confluence with the Arabian Sea in Kadiapattinam. The Pazhayar River, another small river, starts at Shorlacode, a place about 18 km north-west of Nagercoil. This is mainly a drainage river, mostly collecting the drainage of Thovalai, Ananthanar

and N.P. Channels. The Pahrali River also flows through the district. The Mathur Hanging Trough, the highest and longest aqueduct in Asia, was built over it near Mathur.

Education:

The Protestant missionaries who arrived in the 19th century were the first to introduce English education in the district. The founder of the English School in the erstwhile Travancore State was Reverend William Tobias RingleTaube, a native of Prussia. He came to the state in 1806 and devoted his whole energy to evangelistic work and English education. He incessantly preached, taught and established many schools for Christian and non- Christian poor children. From 1806 to 1816 he laid the foundation for the growth of Christianity and regular education in the area. Several European missionaries who came to the district (then South Travancore) after Ringeltaube, also contributed immensely to the cause of regular education. Today, a number of old educational institutions in the district carry the names of these missionaries. Kanyakumari District has a literacy rate of 87.6%. A variety of colleges of higher education are found throughout the district, mainly art, science and engineering colleges. The Scott Christian College, founded by RingleTaube in Nagercoil, is more than 100 years old. The state runs the Kanyakumari Medical College at Asaripallam, near Nagercoil.

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Conclusion:

Kanyakumari has been a great centre for art and religion for centuries. It was also an area of great trade and commerce. Kanyakumari district is economically based on agriculture. Agriculture and allied sector offer employment opportunities in the rural areas. Kanyakumari is the smallest District in Tamil Nadu, with a land spread of 1,684 km² and has almost all ecosystems - forests, wetlands, freshwater resources, marine, etc. The district, once called **'The Granary of Travancore'** is fertile, with hundreds of water bodies and an excellent canal irrigation system. However, the economy of this District is developed by rural industries like, fiber from coconut husks, rubber plantation, and handwork industry. In this rural industries, variety of exported quality handloom products, Palmcrafts, coir products were manufactured. In this industry has generated employment opportunities to thousands of rural peoples. In this District most of the people are educated and they have any kind of works or self employment for their daily bred. So, employment problems has not arise in Kanyakumari District

A Study on Performance of Handloom Industries in Tamilnadu with special reference to Thirunelveli District

The handloom sector is the largest economic activity after agriculture providing direct and indirect employment to more than 30 lakh weavers. This sector contributes nearly 22 percent of the total clotty produced in the country and also contributes substantially to the export income of the country. Handloom is an important cottage industry in our country, which generate productive employment in rural areas at a relatively low investment. Once our handlooms and handicrafts had captured the world markets.

Tirunelveli, the name has been composed from the three Tamil words i.e. "Thiru-Nel-Veli" i.e. "Scared paddy Hedge". In most parts of Tirunelveli district, paddy is the main (cultivation) crop. The industries prevalent in the district may be classified under (i) Household industries (ii)Small scale and (iii) medium and large-scale industries. Handloom weaving of textiles are the main household industries.

Workers in household industries are concentrated mostly in Tenkasi, Ambasamudram and Tirunelveli taluks. There are more than 20 textile mills situated in this district for the production of yarn. Weaving continues to be a traditional and hereditary based occupation. The weavers are following traditional methods of production and design due to lack of exposure, awareness and knowledge over changing technologies, methods and the requirements. The protectionist policies of the government over the years like subsidies, rebates and other schemes led the weavers to become dependents rather than to be independent entrepreneurs.

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The main objectives of the study are;

i) To study the total number of handloom weavers co-operative society in Tamilnadu.
ii) To study the number of looms in handloom weavers co-operative society in Tamilnadu
iii) To study the production of handloom cloth performance of handloom weavers co-operative society in Tamilnadu.
iv) To study the sales of handloom cloth performance of handloom weavers co-operative society in Tamilnadu.
v) To study the production of cotton in Thirunelveli District.

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Secondary data are used from the reports and records of the Office of Handlooms and Textiles, Chennai, Handloom Export Promotion Council, Chennai; The other data were collected from journals, books, websites etc.

Table.1: PRODUCTION OF HANDLOOM CLOTH (RS.IN CRORE)

SL NO	DETAILS	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Items	Production (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)	Production (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)	Production (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)
1.	COTTON	508.19	81.62	547.98	83.54	601.57	83.23
2.	SILK	114.44	18.38	108.00	16.46	121.19	16.77
	TOTAL	622.63	100	655.98	100	722.76	100

Source: Department of Handlooms and Statistics, Chennai

Table.2 : SALE OF HANDLOOM CLOTH (RS.IN CRORE)

SL NO	DETAILS	2005-06		2006-07		2007-08	
	Items	Sales (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)	Production (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)	Production (Rs. In crores)	Percentage (%)
1.	COTTON	578.40	80.37	647.68	81.35	705.96	81.18
2.	SILK	141.23	19.63	148.50	18.65	163.63	163.63
	TOTAL	719.63	100	796.18	100	869.59	100

Table.1 reveals that the production cloth of handloom industry (T.N) has increased from Rs.622.63 crores (81.62 % cotton and 18.38 % silk) in 2005-06 to Rs.722.76 (83.23 % cotton and 16.77 % silk) in 2007-08, and Table.4. reveals that the sales cloth of handloom industry (T.N) has increased from Rs. 719.63 Crores (80.37 % cotton and 19.63% silk) in 2005-06 to Rs.869.59 Crores (81.18 % cotton and 18.82 % silk) in 2007-08.

Result and Discussion

The performance of Handloom weavers co-operative society observed from the Tables that the member households reported the similar types of problem in weaving which are categorized s financial problems, and other problems mostly relating to labour availability. The analysis also indicated high price of yarn, and irregular supply of yarn and non-availability of new design of weaving were the problem of decline the production and sales. Based on quality, follow and secure

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the tradition were to increase the purchasing power of consumers. Because the consumers buy the handloom products.

Problems of Handloom Industry

A major problem facing the handloom sector is rising prices of raw materials. The problems of the industry are mostly in the nature of low wages to the workers, unused capacity which is marginal and low profits for certain sectors. This is a very important factor in the growth and development of this industry. Bank finance, stocks and shares have not played any part in the establishment of the industry. This is another very important cause for the study. Labour is not well organized and hence the wage rate is low. The Governmental surveys and reports do not explain the significant areas of the industry.

Suggestions and Recommendations

1. Publicity is one of the essential factors, which influence the sale of consumer products. The state Government should launch special publicity drive to promote handloom products.
2. The state government needs to encourage export of handloom products by providing needed financial assistance and proper guidance, facility and channel for foreign trade.
3. The Development commissioner for handloom need to take all possible promotional steps to preserve the unique role of handloom and enable the weavers to realize their full potential as also to ensure earnings for the handloom weavers.
4. The average productivity of handlooms is much lower than that of power looms.
5. The handloom weavers suffer from shortage and high prices of yarns. Handloom weavers in remote areas also do note receive chemicals and dyes needed by them in time.
6. The need to improve the lot of handloom weaver by according high priority to support the poor weavers under various ongoing poverty alleviation and income-generating programme.
7. The supports needed by weaver communities basically pertain to modernization and technological upgradation, infrastructural improvement and welfare measures. The basic approach needs to be promotional rather than protective.

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Conclusion

The handloom industry to promote the production and reduces the low wages to the workers. These organizations are working with an objective for providing continuous employment to the weavers and related workers and improving their standard of living. The Governmental surveys and reports must to explain the significant areas of the handloom industry. Though government have adopted numerous measures for the uplifting of the weavers and for the financial support of the organizations in the sector. The above measures, if implemented properly, will certainly benefit the industry. The Indian handloom industry will have a great future if it gets well organized and is adaptable to change.

The Role of Fishing Industry in the Economy of Tuticorin District

Fishing is one of the oldest means of livelihood. The fishing industry plays a vital role in the development of Indian economy. Fisheries development has been assigned a very important place in the development plans of India. India has a vast and diverse potential of fishing resources. India is the third largest producer of fish in the world and second largest in the inland production. About 14 million fishermen draw their livelihood from fisheries. But they generally live on the verge of extreme poverty, being victims of middlemen and money lenders.

Tamilnadu supplying different species of inland and marine fish ranks fifth among Indian states. The fish production in the marine sector is better than the inland sectors.

Fishing Industry plays an important role in the economy of Tuticorin. The economy of Tuticorin revolves around shipping, fishing, saltpan and agricultural industries. Tuticorin has a host of other industries including power, chemicals and IT. Tuticorin is in south about 590 kilometres southwest of Chennai and is geographically located in the Gulf of mannar. The climate of Tuticorin is extremely hot and humid. It is situated in the extreme south-eastern corner of TamilNadu state and bounded on the north by the districts of Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram, on the east and south-east by Gulf of Mannar and on the west and south-west by the district of Tirunelveli. Total area of this district is 4621 sq.kms. It has total population of 4,360094, according to 2001 census.

Fisheries is capable of generating considerable amount of income. Fisheries help the poor not only by increasing employment but also by increasing the earning level. Fish production has been increasing continuously in this district. The estimated inland fish catch is 1583MT and Marine fish catch is 34066MT in the year 1999. The total fish production in Tuticorin district was 46359.15 tonnes in the year 2008-09. Fish production has been increasing continuously.

Fishery sector in Tuticorin district has potential for foreign exchange earning. Tuticorin is the main centre for deep sea fishing in the district which has a length coastline of about 140 km. Prawn culture is very flourishing in this district and earning considerable amount of foreign

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exchange. Fishes caught here are either sold locally or exported. Tuna which is caught here is dried and sold as Massi. Dry fish from Tuticorin sent to Srilanka and many parts of south India. The fish cake produced here are used for food for prawns and other fishes.

In the wake of logistic support being extended by Tuticorin Port consistently Tuticorn has made its presence felt in the map of India as one of the biggest seafood exporters. With a chain of seafood industries rating in benefits by exporting quality fish food through port, Tuticorin has become an ideal choice among foreigners for quality fish food. A spicies of quality and expensive fish, including cuttle, squid, shrimp and others were being exported to consumer's demand.

As many as 10,720 tonnes of marine products had been exported to the European Union from Tuticorin Port in 2009. "There are already 10 sea food processing industries in Tuticorin which have been approved by the European Union. Since techniques being adopted by such industries here accordingly, the quality standards comply with hygienic preservation for consumption as intended by the EU" O.Jeyasekaran, Professor, Department of Fish Processing Technology, Fisheries college, and Research Institution, Tuticorin, said.

Since the availability of seeds, including phytoplankton, Zooplankton and coral polyps is fertile along the unpolluted waters of the Gulf of Mannar, the quality of fish meets the standards approved by the European Union" J.Danied Jameson, Former Director, Research and Extension, FCRI, pointed out.

The availability of harbor in Tuticorin district, facilitates easy landing of fishing crafts, particularly mechanized boat after fishing. There is fish curing centre at punnakayal and fish seed farm at Kadmba. The vessels that are used are Catamaran, Vallams, mechanised boats which are of two types in general depending upon the size. The gears used by these vessels are gillnets, fish trape, hook and line, boat seine, trawler nets etc. The major variaties that are exploited here include meckeral, cods, shrimpe, prawn, lobster and crab.

The construction of the port in 1968, led to rapid industrialization and emergence of a thermal power station and a fertilizer plant in this region are responsible for the pollution in the district. However, there is great scope for increasing the fish production and increasing the export of fish.

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PROBLEMS OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION:

In Indian society, the role of women is very important. A woman has made her recognition by determination, will power and leadership. It is a matter of pride that today's woman is aware of her rights duties and responsibilities. But in the period of Liberalization, Privatization and globalization she has to do over all development so that she can perform social, economical and family responsibilities with challenges and can put her right direction in national development. Women empowerment can be obtained by women entrepreneurship. Economic Independence can be achieved by adopting entrepreneurial way of living.

Majority of woman entrepreneurs are engaged in the unorganized sector such as agriculture, agrobased industries, handicrafts, handlooms, kitchen activities such as pickles, powders and papads, other cottage based industries such as basket making etc.But with the spread of education and awareness, the women entrepreneurs have entered into Engineering, electronics, energy, readymade garments, printing fabrics, doll-making, poultry, plastic, diary, textiles designing, eatables, knitting etc.

In India women entrepreneurs' role is less significant. Nearly nine percent of total entrepreneurs in small industries are women entrepreneurs because entrepreneurship is not a bed of roses for the women. They have long stories of trails and hardships .Their task has become more tedious and full of challenges since they have to encounter public prejudice and criticism. A woman faces some problems not as an entrepreneur but as a woman.Therefore, when compared to men the problems of women entrepreneurs are more in number.

OBJECTIVES:

The present paper aims to study the problems of women entrepreneurs with special reference to some selected units in Tirunelveli District of the state of Tamil Nadu.The main objective of the study is to understand the socio-economic background of women entrepreneurs and their problems in running their enterprises efficiently and profitably.

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METHODOLGY:

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be collected from the 50 respondents in Tirunelveli district through the interview schedule at random. Secondary data is collected from the books, journals and other published materials.

PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS OF TIRUNELVELI:

Women not only face problems as entrepreneurs but as women themselves and therefore compared to men the problems of women entrepreneurs are numerous. The problems range form mobilizing various resources including problem of capital, marketing, raw material, sales, labour, technical, competition, new technology, problem of land, lack of family support as well as lack of government support and the like.

Hence their problems arise both from within and outside and also differ from enterprise to enterprise. Some of these problems are many and similar to all, where as for some others it is more specific and related to the line of activity of the enterprise. Some have the problem of the external environment; what ever be the problem there is no prescribed formula to deal with them. The problems have to be dealt with them by the entrepreneurs themselves otherwise it would affect the working of the enterprise it self. Efficient and timely handling of the problems leads to their success.

The type of problems being faced by women entrepreneurs in the study area have been categorized into six main heads that is problems pertaining to Finance, Production, Personnel, Marketing, Government Assistance and Socio-Personal problems. These problems are dealt in the following tables.

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TABLE. NO. 1

SOCIO-PERSONAL PROBLEMS FACED BY RESPONDENTS

S.NO.	PROBLEMS	NO. OF. RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Resistance from husband	10	20
2.	Dual duties	12	24
3.	Indifferent attitude of society	5	10
4.	Non-Co-Operation by family members	4	8
5.	Male dominance	6	12
6.	Limited liberty to women	8	16
7.	Miscellaneous	5	10
Total		**50**	**100**

Source: Primary data.

It is clear from the above table that majority of the respondents (24%) facing socio-personal problems due to dual duties (household & business) followed by 20% of the respondents facing resistance from either husband (or) family members.

TABLE. NO. 2

MARKETING PROBLEMS FACED BY RESPONDENTS

S.NO.	PROBLEMS	NO. OF. RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Cut throat competition	15	30
2.	Lack of information on changing markets	4	8
3.	Indifferent attitude of customers	6	12
4.	Lack of traveling mobility	8	16
5.	Collection of payment	12	24
6.	Inadequate publicity	5	10
	Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary data.

It is evident from the above table that as many as 30% of the respondents cited the problem of marketing of their products on account of cut throat competition in the market followed by collection of payment (24%).

TABLE. NO.3

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS FACED BY RESPONDENTS

S.NO.	PROBLEMS	NO. OF. RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Reluctance by financial institution to extend credit to women	18	36
2.	Inability to provide collateral security and margin money	14	28
3.	Tight repayment schedule	9	18
4.	High interest rate	5	10
5.	Waste of time, energy and money in getting the assistance	4	8
	Total	**50**	**100**

Source: Primary data.

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It is evident from the above table that 36% of the respondents complained of reluctance on the part of financial institutions in extending credit to women entrepreneurs and 28% are expressed their inability to provide collateral security and margin money.

FINDINGS:

- Majority of the respondents (24%) facing socio-personal problems due to dual duties (household & business) in the study area.
- 30% of the respondents cited the problem of marketing their products on account of cut throat competition in the market.
- 32% of the respondents complained of harassment in government departments that is corruption.

SUGGESTIONS:

- Timely recognition to successful entrepreneur for encouraging others to take initiative and start their own business.
- Social awareness is necessary for women entrepreneur, which will break most of the family problems.
- Social funds support system can be made for financial problem.
- To treat women as specific target groups in all development programmes.
- To properly diversify vocational training facilities for women to suit their varied needs and skills.
- They should acquire relevant techniques and skills on winning the customer's loyalty to avoid marketing problems.

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CONCLUSION:

Women are entering into entrepreneurship even while facing socio-personal, marketing, technical, financial and managerial difficulties. Women entrepreneurship movement can gain momentum by providing encouragement, appropriate awareness, training, environment and support. This would definitely enhance their socio-economic status, a pre-requisite of women's empowerment.

Socio-Economic level of workers in Mylode Cashewnut Factory in Kanyakumari District

Introduction:

Agriculture is the chief source of employment and living in India. Many important industries like cotton textile, jute, sugar, vanaspati, vegetable oil, rubber and tea depend entirely on agriculture for their raw materials. Even small-scale and cottage industries such as handloom weaving, oil extracting, rice extracting also depend up on agriculture. The present study concerns with the production, processing and marketing of cashew kernels. The cashewnut factory is one of the small scale industries in kanyakumai district. It functions with 283 units established all over the district. In kalkulam taluk, there are more than 140 cashew processing factories. The cashew factory is monopolized by the business magnets of kerala. The factory depends on the local supply and on kerala for its raw materials. Cashew processing is a traditional factory in India which is noted for its high employment potential and foreign exchange earning ability. It provides employment mostly for women.

Statement of the problem:

Industrialization has been recognized as one of the important aspects for the economic development of the country. For starting an industry an entrepreneur needs facilities like land, labour, capital and resources. There facilities are now extensively available. But cashewnut factory is prominent only in Kanyakumari district in Tamilnadu and not in other districts of the state. When we analyze the factory in Kanyakumari district, it is significant that the owners of these units are from kerala state. It is very clear that one of the major reasons for starting these units in Kanyakumari district rather than in Kerala is due to the availability of cheap labour. In this factory labour is the predominant factors of production. So this study is focusing with the socio-economic conditions and problems of the workers in Mylode cashewnut factory in Kanyakumari District.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of the workers in Mylode cashewnut factory in kanyakumari district.
2. To study the problems of workers in Mylode cahsewnut factory.

Methodology:

The cashewnut factory workers were met personally by the researcher and questions were asked. They are analyzed and a comparative chart is made with the help of the information obtained from the workers. The study is mainly based on both primary data and secondary data.

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Analysis and Interpretation

Education Status:

Educational Qualification plays a vital role in transforming the cultural, social and political nature of any society. The workers of cashew factory are very backward in education.

Table-1 Educational Status

Educational Status	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterates	5	7
Below 5th std	22	29
6-10 std	39	52
Above 10th std	9	12
Total	75	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 determines that education status of workers studies up to 6-10th standard is 52 per cent. It is noted that there is no degree holders in the factory.

Sources of Income:

The major sources of income for the cashew nut factory workers are from the factory only. They spent their day time in the factory and use their remaining hours to do their family work.

Table-2 Sources of Income

Sources of Income	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Agriculture	31	41
House rent	8	11
Other income	22	29
No other income	14	19
Total	75	100

Source: Primary Data

It is determinant from the table-2 that 41 per cent of respondents earn additional income from agriculture. Therefore the earning from other sources is low.

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Annual Income and Expenditure

The women workers are mostly engaged in the work of shelling, peeling and grading. They earn income according to their nature of work. They get piece rate wage. The men workers are engaged in the work of roasting and they get time rate wages.

Table -3 Annual Income and Expenditure

Annual Income ('000)	Number. of respondents	Percentage	Annual Expenditure ('000)	Number of respondents	Percentage
25-30	32	43	23-26	25	33
30-35	28	37	26-29	39	52
35-40	15	20	29-31	11	50
Total	75	100	Total	75	100

Sources: Primary Data

From the above table-3 shows that most of the workers are earning low income of 25000-30000 amounted to 43 per cent and their expenditure of consumption is 26000-29000 amounted to 52 per cent.

Conclusion:

From the research it is revealed that the status of workers in cashewnut factory indicates the poor economic conditions. Most of them belong to the age group of 15-25 and they have obtained education up to high school only. Poor family background has forced them to stop their education and seek jobs in cashewnut factory for low wages. All these determined that the socio-economic status of the cashewnut factory workers is not in a satisfactory way.

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COST AND REVENUE ANALYSIS OF FLOWER CULTIVATION AND MARKETING IN ETTANKULAM PANCHAYAT OF TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

The packaging and transportation of flowers from the production centers to the wholesale markets at present is very unscientific. The flowers, depending on the kind, are packed in old gunny bags, bamboo baskets, simple cottons or just wrapped in old newspapers and transported to markets by road, rail or by air. The mode of transportation depends on the distance to the markets and the volume. Mostly, flowers are harvested in the evening time and transported to nearby cities by overnight or buses. In recent years, the government has provided some assistance for buying refrigerated carriage vans.

A large number of export oriented units have built up excellent facilities or pre-cooling chambers, cold stores and reefer vans and their produce coming for domestic market sales are thus of very good quality and have longer vas life and command higher price. The government programmes for floriculture development include creating common facilities of cool chain in large production areas to be shared o cooperative basis. Formation of growers' cooperative and associations are being encouraged.

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AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The following are the main objectives of this project work

1. To examine the practice of marketing of flowers which prevail in Ettankulam Panchayat
2. To find out the knowledge of the farmers in fixing the prices of flowers in Ettankulam Panchayat.
3. To discuss the important problems of marketing of flowers in Ettankulam
4. To suggest so remedial measures of the problems of marketing of flowers.

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of the study is to know the existing marketing trend of flower in Ettankulam of Tirunelveli District. In order to fulfill the aim of the study, both primary and secondary date wee used. Primary date were collected through a questionnaire cum schedule which was prepared and drafted according to the literature available of flower trade. A pilot survey was conducted. On the light of the pilot survey, the questionnaire cum schedule has been redrafted and printed. He survey was carried out by the investigator during January 2010.

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Finding

- Most of the flower cultivations in the study area are between the age group of 45-55. Among the 50 sample respondents only 42 percentage of the sample respondents were in the age group of 45-55. The age groups between 25-35 were very low and the percentage was only 8.
- In our study area 98 percentage of the some respondents are males and only 2 percentage are female respondents engaged in flower cultivation.
- In our study area 98 percentage are married and only 2 unmarried respondents.
- As per our collected data, 60 percentage of the respondents have studied between VI to VIII standard 14 percentage of the respondents have studied between IX to XI standard and 4 percentage of the respondents have studied above higher secondary level.
- In our study area 8 percentage of the respondents are earning income between Rs.1000 – Rs.3000. 48 percentage of respondents are earning income of Rs.3001 – Rs.6000 and 44 percentage of the respondents are earning the income of Rs.6001 – Rs 9000
- As per the collected data 88 percentage of the respondents are having own land.
- Percentages of the respondents are having leased land.
- All the respondents in the study area utilize well irrigation.
- In our study area 94 percentage of the respondents are using electric power for flower cultivation and 6 percentage of the respondents are not using power supply.
- As per the collected data 40 percentage of the respondents are producing jasmine 20 percentage of the respondents are producing oleander flowers.
- 20 percentage of the respondents are selling their followers in towns and 80 percentage of the respondents are selling their followers in flower market.
- The major portion of marketing of flowers were done through whole sale and it was 60 percentage, 12 percentage of respondents were middle man, 8 percentage of respondents were retailer and 20 percentage of street vendors involved in marketing.
- 80 percentage of the respondents are of the opinion that prices are fixed by action sale and to percentage of respondents are of the opinion that the prices are fixed by action sale and 10 percentage of the respondents are of the opinion that the prices are fixed by themselves.
- 24 percentage of the respondents have received payment weekly basics and 76 percentage of the respondents received monthly payment.
- 66 percentage of the respondent are using service buses for marketing of flowers and 34 percentage of the are using two wheelers for marketing of flowers.
- 96 percentage of the respondents are facing problems in flower cultivation due to transportation and paying wages to the workers and only 4 percentage of the respondents are not having any problem in flower cultivation.

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Suggestions

- The necessary input like chemical fertilizer have to be given at subsidies price to the flower cultivators. So that the cost of flower production will come down.....
- The flower cultivators in the Ettankulam Panchayat have to be provided grafted varieties of the flowers in order to increase the yield flowers.
- The government should concentrate on giving loan at a low rate of interest and subsidies should be provided at the time necessity.
- The transport facility is to be increased in order to market the flowers from the cultivated area to the marketing.
- The roles of middlemen are to be reduced or avoided while fixing the price for the flowers. So that the agriculturists may get a reasonable income form flower production.
- Storage facility can be made to store flowers in the Ettankulam panchayat.

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CONCLUSION

1. The necessary input like chemical fertilizers have to be given at subsidies price to the flower cultivators. So that the cost of flower production will come down.
2. The flower cultivators in the Ettankulam Panchayat have to be provided grafted varieties of the flowers in order to increase the yield of flowers.
3. The government should concentrate on giving loan at a low rate of interest and subsidies should be provided at the time of necessity.
4. The transport facility is to be increased in order to market the flowers from the cultivated area to the marketing.
5. The roles of middleman are to be reduced or avoided while fixing the price for the flowers. So that the agriculture may get a reasonable income from flower production.
6. Storage facility can be made to store flowers in the Ettankulam Panchayat.

TRENDS AND PROBLEMS OF PULSES CULTIVATION IN TUTICORIN DISTRICT

Introduction

Pulses production and consumption are important in maintaining food security. They occupy an important place in human diet. Pulses contain more protein than any other grains and vegetables. Cultivation of pulses helps to maintain soil fertility through the nitrogen fixation. They are cultivated in many parts and consumed in all parts of the world. Pulses are largely cultivated in dry–lands during the winter seasons. Pulses are grown on 22-23 million hectares of area with an annual production of 13-15 million tons (mt). India accounts for 33% of the world area and 22% of the world production of pulses. The major pulse crops grown in India are chickpea, pigeon pea, lentil, moongbean, black gram, green gram, cowpea, urdbean and field pea. Due to stagnant production, the net availability of pulses has come down from 60 gm/day/person in 1951 to 31 gm/day/person in 2008.

Objectives of the present study

1. To estimate the trend Analysis of pulses cultivation in Tamilnadu.
2. To collect data on the reasons for the choice of pulses cultivation in Tuticorin district.
3. To study various problems and reasons for the low productivity in cultivation of grams of pulses and
4. To examine the techniques for improving production in the study area.

Methodology

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected through interview schedule. The sample collected for the research was based on stratified random sample from different income categories of the study area has been used. A total of 648 respondents of small, medium and large farmers in three blocks from Tuticorin District viz, Vilathikulam, Kayathar and Pudur and were selected for the study. The data relates to the month of November 2010. The secondary data were collected from various government organizations, both published and unpublished reports, books and journals. A separate interview schedule was designed, pilot tested and used for data collection. Percentage analysis, averages, standard error, standard deviation, trend analysis, variance, chi-square tests, t tests, Cramer's V and probability analysis were used.

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Table No: 1

Production of grams of Pulses Cultivation in Tamilnadu (in Tones)

Year	Green gram	Trend value	Black gram	Trend value	Total Pulses	Trend value
2001-02	53470	51996.5	104320	85353.6	270719	231022.6
2002-03	48053	53050.0	78555	87168.4	200479	227401.5
2003-04	53315	54103.5	75920	88983.2	201056	223780.4
2004-05	61760	55157.0	82998	90798.0	216431	220159.3
2005-06	45881	56210.5	70758	92612.8	177003	216538.2
2006-07	77404	57264.0	143053	94427.6	290503	212917.1
2007-08	46213	58317.5	79980	96942.4	184924	209296.0
2011-12		62531.5		103501.6		194811.6

Source: Calculated from Government of Tamil Nadu, Department of Economics and Statistics, Season and Crop Report 2007-08

Moreover, the estimated production of Green gram Pulse Cultivation in Tamilnadu for the year 2012 will be 62531.5Tones. The estimated production of Black gram Pulse Cultivation in Tamilnadu for the year 2012 will be 103501.6 Tones and the estimated production of Total Pulse Cultivation in Tamilnadu for the year 2012 will be 194811.6 Tones.

Table No: 2 Reasons for the choice of pulses cultivation

Reasons	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Traditional	68(30)	54(22)	39(22)	161(25)
High income	143(64)	184(74)	125(71)	452(70)
Short duration	14(6)	9(4)	12(7)	35(5)
Total	225(100)	247(100)	176(100)	648(100)

Source: Primary Data

($\chi 2$=8.44, P=0.0767, df=4, Cramer's V=0.0807, Standard Error=0.0395)

It can be inferred from the table that invariably most of the sample farmers (70 per cent) attributed the reason of high income for the choice of pulses cultivation. However, 25 per cent of the sample farmers said that they were traditionally growing pulses cultivation, while 5 per cent attributed the reason of short duration. The chi-square test value ($\chi 2$=8.44, P=0.0767, df=4, Cramer's V=0.0807, Standard Error=0.0395) assured that there are no marked significant differences in the reason for the choice of pulses cultivation and farmers in Tuticorin district of Tamilnadu.

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Table No: 3 Techniques for improving production

Techniques	Small	Medium	Large	Total
Usage of quality seeds	50(20)	39(22)	46(20)	135(21)
Use of organic, inorganic and bio fertilizers	63(25)	14(8)	39(17)	116(18)
Identification of varieties to suit rise follow, dry land& inter crop conditions	39(16)	22(13)	27(12)	88(14)
Use of optimal cropping pattern	41(17)	12(7)	31(14)	84(13)
Maintenance and evaluation of germ plasm	35(14)	59(33)	58(26)	152(23)
Application of micro nutrient management	14(6)	27(15)	15(7)	56(8)
Development of integrated insect, pest and disease management	5(2)	3(2)	9(4)	17(3)
Total	225(100)	247(100)	176(100)	648(100)

Source: Primary Data (Estimated mean: 30.857; standard error: 3.9888; P-Value; 0.00025; t-statistic; 7.73586)

For improving the pulses production, the following important techniques adopted by sample farmers in this District is maintenance and evaluation of germ plasm (23 per cent). Usage of quality seeds and use of organic, inorganic and bio fertilizers were also stated by 21 per cent and 18 per cent farmers. Further 14 per cent of them reported that identification of varieties to suit rise follow condition, dry land condition, inter crop conditions adopted by sample farmers. Only 3 percent of sample farmers expressed that development of integrated insect pest and disease management. Use of optimal cropping pattern for improving the production was stated by 13 per cent farmers. The remaining 8 percent of the respondents reported application of micro nutrient management showed significant difference (Estimated mean: 30.857; standard error: 3.9888; P-Value; 0.00025; t-statistic; 7.73586).

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Conclusion

This study has revealed that the growth rates of area, production, productivity of pulses had been positive and significant in Tuticorin district of Tamilnadu. Problems of Indian pulses economy can be solved with the increase the sources of production. Effective and continuous efforts are needed to increase the area under cultivation as well as the yield of pulses. There is an urgent need to adopt cost effective and eco-friendly, technological up gradation by the farmer community specifically by the small and marginal farmers. There is a need to adopt a holistic approach of integrated production and production management of pulse crop. The foremost important thing is creating marketing facilities and transport facilities for selling their produce in an easy manner; fixation of exact rates for their produce in order to get the required profits. Due to lack of storage facilities the farmers are forced to sell their produce at the time of harvesting. High yield and other suitable varieties should be promoted according to the agro-climatically conditions prevailing in this District. All these above methods are adopted it could helps the farmers not only to increase the yield but also for increasing their socio-economic conditions. Any how it is an important thing that the farmers should approach the agricultural Department to adopt the new and most benefited methods of cultivation suited for the area as well as suited for the climatically conditions prevailing.

Socio-Economic Status of Disabled Citizens – Noble Service By AMSS, Ayakudi

In a vast country like India with billion plus , it is just not possible or feasible for the government to live up to its promise of a truly welfare Society. There are vast areas left uncovered by the government. It is in this context, NGOs step in and justify their existence in India. They really perform a noble service towards the socio economic empowerment of downtrodden and needy people, These are the agencies supposedly set up by self effacing individuals who wish to make their contribution to make life better for their brotherhood in the society. The role of NGOs towards physically disabled can never be underestimated. They render noble service in rehabilitating the physically challenged to enhance their living pattern by empowering them. One such renowned organization is Amar Seva Sangam which is founded by disabled, run by disabled and aim to empower disabled in such a way to integrate them on par with other citizens of the nation

This paper attempts to empirically explain the role, performance and achievements of Amar Seva Sangam at Ayakudi, a Tiruneveli based NGO in empowering disabled people in around Tirunevelli district.

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Activities of the Sangam

Amar Seva Sangam, whose Founder President and Chief Functionary are wheel chair users, is managed and run by professionals and academicians. Their ability to read and render services can be seen from the following facts:

- Amar Seva Sangam's reach is nearly 600 villages and the number of disabled persons served is more than 13,000.
- Amar Seva Sangam have set up a complete range of rehabilitation services in a 30 acre campus where they have an integrated high school, a home for the disabled, hostel for the disabled youths (both boys and girls), a Spinal Injured Post-Acute Care Centre – which is one of the few in India, a Special School for the mentally retarded children, a full-fledged Computer Centre, training in various Vocational skills like handicrafts, tailoring, typewriting, note-book binding and so on.
- Amar Seva Sangam works closely with the society, various NGOs and governmental organizations not only to enhance awareness on the need and means of empowerment but also improve the service facilities in the organization for rehabilitation to cope up with various challenges of all disabilities. The focus of Amar Seva Sangam is to make the organization as a "System Driven One" by ensuring effective implementation and maintenance of Quality Management Systems and

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continuously improving the same. The Sangam also strives for improving the quality of rehabilitation services by enhancing the competence of the human resource personnel in the organization.

The two types of rehabilitation works are

I. Institutional Based Rehabilitation (IBR) activities

a) **Home:** The children of the home aged between 5 and 12 years are provided with free shelter, food, clothing, transportation, physiotherapy and medical attendance, mobility appliances and education either in the Sangam's Nursery/High School or schools outside the campus for higher education besides special coaching classes.

b) **Sangamam School:** The Sangam has a school for special children named as Sangamam. There are about 70 children on day-care basis. These children are mentally retarded and are grouped on the basis of actual mental age and accordingly special education is provided for them. They are also given physiotherapy, speech therapy as well as vocational training. Cerebral Palsy children are assessed and treated at the Medical Testing Unit where therapists are working with the child development-care unit. Treatments are provided in the form of Play Therapy.

c) **Orthotics Centre:** This centre manufactures repairs and services calipers of not only of its inmates but for anyone who may approach the centre with their specific needs. These services are rendered free of cost.

d) **Medical Testing Unit:** This unit was conceived and started with Japanese aid in 1998. In view of the popularity of this centre we have created a separate unit for new born babies who may need physiotherapy attention right from the early stages. The results are highly encouraging. This is evident from the fact that as many as 26,204 services were attended during the year 2009. Again all the services are free.

e) **Spinal Cord Injured Post-Acute Care Centre:** This centre looks after patients' post surgery for Spinal Cord Injured from all over India based on norms laid down by the Centre. This Centre is one of the few in India.

f) **Hostel:** The centre has hostels separately for boys and girls.

g) **Vocational Trainings:**

- **Tailoring:** This section was established in 1999 with only four physically challenged students. Since then it has grown from strength to strength and every year orders for uniforms from schools and industries keep pouring in.
- **Handicrafts:** The Vocational Centre also functions as a handicraft hub which makes toys, artificial jewellery, painting on fabrics, ceramics, sarees, glasses, stones and other allied activities. .

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- **Typewriting:** The Sangam runs a typewriting section since 1998 where not only the inmates but also students from outside the campus - both abled and disabled, are given coaching to appear for the Government Examinations.
- **Note Book Binding:** We regularly receive orders for note-books from schools, industries and Welfare Trusts.
- **Computer Training Centre:** This centre was established in 1995 and affiliated to Tamil Nadu Polytechnic (Autonomous), Madurai. As a part of Silver Jubilee Celebrations, an Advanced Information Technology Training Centre for the disabled was launched on 9th September 2007 to train the disabled youths in soft skills. As on date nearly 1000 normal students and 500 physically challenged students have completed their training successfully at this Centre. With the support of Infosys, Microsoft and Cognizant we have established a state-of-the-art . Advanced Information Technology Training centre. The facilities at the centre are fully utilized for conducting e-accounting and professional courses like CPT classes for CA during week-ends by professionals from Chennai.

h) Education:

- **Nursery and High Schools:** The Nursery School was established in 1981 from the day of the establishment of the Sangam. A Middle School which was established in 1991 has now grown to a High School. Nearly 900 students are studying in both the schools.
- **University Education:** Since 2000 the Sangam is a Special Study Centre for IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) catering to the needs of students in this region. This centre is well equipped with state-of-the-art facilities. Alagappa University, Tamilnadu evinced interest to establish their Study Centre at the Sangam and the MoU was signed on 22nd August 2008. We are getting very good response.

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II Village Based Rehabilitation Initiatives (VBRI) activities

The VBRI was conceived in 2000 as an innovative project for participation of persons with disabilities from all walks of life. We have six blocks and six Parents Managed Respite Centres (PMRC) covering the six blocks in Tirunelveli district. The PMRCs are co-ordinating between the parents and the Sangam. VBRI workers cover 600 villages. At each block they monitor 100 children with disabilities like Cerebral Palsy and Mentally Retarded and the therapy is given to them at their homes.

Mobilizing basic requirements amongst persons with disabilities in villages, creating of Self Help Groups (SHGs), fulfillment of basic rehabilitation needs, assisting the groups for getting Governmental support, helping them for educational and economic benefits, protecting CP/MR persons, supporting the disabled for asserting their legal rights, and further developing the groups into Federations are some of the vitally important and focused objectives of VBRI programmes.

National Programme of Rehabilitation for persons with Disabilities (NPRPD): Under this scheme multi- rehabilitation workers function in each block. There are community based rehabilitation workers taking the programme to rural levels. Amar Seva Sangam ensures that all the aids and appliances,

scholarships, maintenance grant are provided through this scheme for the MR/CP children and others with disabilities. The total number of beneficiaries during the year 2009-10 stands at 3935.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA-IED): Amar Seva Sangam being a well established NGO in the field of disabled sector has been entrusted with running of this scheme by the Central Government. The Sangam distributes walkers, ortho appliances, corrective boots, spectacles, CP walker, tri-cycles/ wheel chairs, national ID cards, etc. on behalf of the Central Government. Day- care centres have been opened in the blocks allocated to us.

Vazhndhu Kaatuvom Project of Tamil Nadu Government: Amar Sea Sangam was appointed as Block Disability Facilitating Agency for the above project run by the Government of Tamil Nadu with the assistance of World Bank.

Conclusion

Empowering physically challenged is the prerequisite for democratic upliftment of a nation. It is strongly believed that ensuring and endeavoring support to them is necessary for the sustainable development of the individual, community, society and the nation as well. An Institution set up accept, arose, adhere, console, cajole, motivate, monitor, guide, facilitate, educate, enhance and empower the disabled can never be underestimated. The role of Amar seva sangam , a renowned Tamilnadu based Non-Government Organisation in Tirunelvelli district in uplifting the socio-economic status of the disabled citizens in and around the district is highly commendable.

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FISH RESOURCE IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

Introduction

The coastal environment is an interface between land and marine water. This ecosystem is valuable to humans from the dawn of civilisation. Human, biological and social needs are readily met by coastal zone. It has been estimated that by 2000 A.D., 75% of the population of the world will be living in the coastal zone. This is also true in other developing maritime countries. Coastal ecosystem is under threat due to anthropogenic activities, increased human settlement, industrial pollution, etc.

Objectives

- To analyse the annual harvest of important species of kanakumari district.
- To find out the types of crafts used by fish folk employment.
- To analysis the total annual marine fish catch

A few educated fishermen settled down in the inland are doing teaching and other office jobs. Still, the economy of the coastal villages is not satisfactory. The marine capture fisheries sector has an important place in the District's economy. It is sad to note that, among the fisher-folk population, only 44 percent is fully employed, 52 percent occasionally and 4 percent partially. The fishing job may not be secure during lean season particularly during the June. At the time of fishing season i.e. during August to November many species of fishes are caught.

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Wadge bank

Wadge bank is a fertile fishing found where rich marine biological diversity occurs. Wadge bank may also be defined as a place of marine environment. Where rich availability of fish food organisms is available. The water depth of this region is low. The physical features of the water like under water current, tides and waves will have less impact on the fishes and animals of this region. Fishes select this region for feeding and breeding purposes. Throughout the maritime countries of the world there are about twenty such wadge banks. Of these one is situated near Kanyakumari on the coastline of Kanyakumari District on the eastward as well as on the westward region for about 30 Km. Here representatives of fish species of the three seas are occurring. Fishery resources and fishing infrastructure
It has been estimated that an annual harvest of important species of seaweeds are:

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Annual harvest of important species

Table-1

Species	Annual harvest
Gelidiella	74 tones
Gracilaria	974 tones
Hypnea	798 tones
Saragassum & Turbinaria	9381 tones

Source :Profile of kaniya kumari district

Species of fishes

Important species of fish captured in this coastal belt are listed below

Table-2

Mesoprion Malabaricus	Vela meen
Cybium guttatum	Naimeen
Engraulis indicus	Anchoy, Nethile
Trichiurus savala	Savalai meen
Trichiurus haumela	Vaalai meen
Lactarius delicatulus	Kuthippu meen
Clupea longiceps	Kuthippu meen
Triacanthus brevirostus	Mulluklathi
Scoliodon sorakowa	Pillachurrah
Scoliodn acutus	Pal Chruuah
Panaeus indicus	Prawn
Panaeus monodon	Prawn
Lobsters	Kalral
Crabs	Nandu
Mussels	Chippi
Squids	Kanavai meen

Source :Profile of kaniya kumari district

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Fish catch

Total annual marine fish catch from 1984 to 1994 will be able to give an idea of the present fisheries resource.

Table 3

Years	Tonnes
1884-85	96,130
85-86	70,574
86-87	71,177
87-88	45,608
88-89	40,330
89-90	39,182
90-91	37,281
91-92	35,267
92-93	29,235
93-94	30,345
94-95	32,291
95-97	37,750
97-98	46,440
98-99	38,316
99-2000	41,652
2000-01	37,620
01-02	37,510
02-03	42,495

Source: Gassater in kaniyakumari district

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Conclusion

In the coastal region of this District there is only one fishing harbour at Chinnamuttom. Because of the construction of semi circular breakwater enclosure, fishing vessels could be berthed at the time of landing as wells as during rough sea. This hrabour could accommodate 240 mechanised crafts and nearly 1000 country vessels, ie, Kattumaram. Nearly 4,000 fishermen from neighboring coastal villages have registered and they are issued with identity cards to use the harbour.

The mechanised boats can catch 15,000 to 25,000 kg of fish per day. But during non-seasonal months the catch per boat will be 700-8000 Kg/day. It has been recorded that in seasonal landings in Kanyakumari fishing village nearly 81,000 kg per month was obtained. Most if the mechanised boats used longlines with baited hooks and also trawler nets.Comparatively, the Chinnamuttom harbour is sage with good facility for fish landings. There is a need for development of such harbours one on Colachel and another in Thengaipattinam. This will ease the crowding situation in other fishing villages. Another advantage is easy transport to the marketing paces before the catch.

AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF LAND UTILISATION IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the major source of livelihood for the people of Thoothukudi District. This district is endowed with flourishing Fisheries and vibrant industries. Still this district is predominately agrarian in nature. The net sown area is 178083 hectares. But more and more lands are put into non-agricultural uses. This paper attempts to highlight the land utilization pattern of the district. The total cultivable area of the district is 183155 hectares and the net area sown is 178083 hectares.

The worrying aspect is the area sown more than more once is alarmingly low at 440 hectares. The cropping pattern revels that paddy is the major crop closely followed by millets, pulses, groundnut, cotton and gravelly. Cotton is the most important commercial crops cultivated in this area. The average size of the holding is just 1.26 hectares which is uneconomic and not allows mechanization and scientific management. There are altogether 183936 agricultural holdings in the area covering the area of 232645.33. This clearly shows that lands are fragmented and scattered and farmers are not having optimum holdings. Irrigation primarily done with the help of government canals. Tanks, Tube wells are also used for irrigation purpose. Tamirabarani is the major river irrigation is that there is no lake in the district. Similarly Banana, sugarcane which are the major crops cultivated in Tamil Nadu are conspicuously absent in the district.

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OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the nature of Thoothukudi District.
- To find out the cropping pattern of Thoothukudi District.
- To analyse the land utilization of Thoothukudi District.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on secondary data. The data related to are Land Utilisation in Thoothukudi District of Tamil Nadu .collected from various books, journals internet.

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Associate Professor & Head

M.Revathi,
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TABLE-1

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF IMPORTANT CROPS

Year : 2009-2010

SI.No(1)	Crops(2)	Area '000'hec(3)	Production in 'tonnes(4)	Productivity Kg./ hec.(5) (Average yield Per Hec)	% to the total area sown (6)
1.	A.FOOD GRAINS:				
	a)Cereals &Millets				
	Paddy	22401	108163	4829	12.71
	Cholam	9406	18998	2020	5.34
	Cumbu	11706	22994	1964	6.64
	B.PULSES				
	Black gram	30351	12988	428	17.22
	Green gram	28736	8825	307	16.30
2.	B.FIBRE				
	Cotton	3634	3923(in bales)		2.06
3.	C.OILSEEDS				
	Groundnut	885	1152	1301	0.50
	Gingelly	2174	814	375	1.23
	Sunflower	2078	874	421	1.18
4.	D.OTHER CROPS				
	Chilies	14249	5540	389	8.08

Source: Department of Economics and Statistics, Chennai-6 Season and Crop Report Published for 2008-2009 (Latest Public citation)

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CONCLUTION

This clearly shows that lands are fragmented and scattered and farmers are not having optimum holdings. Irrigation primarily done with the help of government canals. Tanks, Tube wells are also used for irrigation purpose. Tamirabarani is the major river irrigation is that there is no lake in the district.

Another important observation of the land utilization is that black gram (17.22%).and green gram (16.30%) cultivated more than the paddy (12.71%). This is the unique feature of the district. Generally paddy is cultivated overwhelmingly in Tamil Nadu. But Thoothukudi district is the notable exception to this popular trend. Cholam, Cumbu which are losing ground in other parts of Tamil Nadu are cultivated in large parts of this district.

TIRUNELVELI TOURISM

Introduction

The penultimate southern most district of Tamil Nadu, is described as a microcosm of the State. The district has diverse geographical and physical features such as lofty mountains and low plains, rivers and cascades, seacoast and thick inland forest, sandy soils and fertile alluvium, a variety of flora, fauna, and protected wild life.

Tirunelvelli is the district head quarter of the Tirunelvelli district located in the fertile tract fed by the Tamaraparani River. The town is dominated by the Kanthimathi Nellaiyappar Temple, parts of which date back to 13th century. This complex of twin temples, dedicated to Shiva and Parvati, has two huge rectangular enclosures connected by a long corridor. The Shiva temple is to the north while the Parvati temple is to the south.

Tourism is one of the fastest developing in the world. It provides healthy leisure to the people worn out due to dull, dreary, and strenuous daily Tirunelveli also known as Nellai and historically (during British rule) as Tinnevelly, is the sixth-largest city after Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy, and Salem in the state of Tamil Nadu in India, and the headquarters of the Tirunelveli District. It is situated 612 kilometres (380 mi) southwest of Chennai and 140 kilometres (87 mi) east of Thiruvananthapuram. Tirunelveli is an ancient city with rich cultural heritage, and is home to many temples and shrines, including the largest Shiva Temple in Tamil Nadu, the Nellaiappar Temple. The city is considered to be one of the oldest in the Indian subcontinent, with a history that dates back to 1000 BC. It is located on the western side of the perennial Thamirabarani river, whereas its twin municipal city Palayamkottai, is located on the eastern side.

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Nellaiappar Temple

Nellaiappar Temple is famous as one of the largest Shiva Temples of Tamil Nadu, steeped in tradition and also known for its sculptural splendours. It is a twin temple dedicated to Goddess Parvathi and Lord Shiva. Even from a considerable distance, one can have a good view of the gopurams (towers). Both the gopurams were built according to the rules laid down in the agama sastras by Rama Pandyan. Rare jewels, the

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Golden Lily Tank, Musical Pillars, and the hall of Thousand Pillars are worth seeing. The temple dates back to 700 AD and contains inscriptions made around 950 AD. It is believed there were two distinct temples, built separately for Shiva and Parvathi, the consort to Lord Shiva, by the Pandyan kings. The Sangili Mandapam, a big terraced hall, linking both these temples, was built in the 17th century. The towers also date back to the early 17th century. Vishnu and Agastya are believed to have worshipped Shiva here.

The Nellaiappar temple car weighs approximately 400 tons and is the-third largest temple car in Tamil Nadu. It is also said to be the largest human-powered car in South India. The car's axle was fabricated in steel during the British colonial period. Recently, steel rims were also used to reinforce the gigantic yet ageing wooden wheels. The *Aani Car festival* is the most popular festival associated with the temple, and the five cars (for Vinayakar, Murugan, Nellaiappar, Kanthimathi and Sandikaeswarar) by themselves are minor landmarks in the city.

Nindrasir, who reigned in the seventh century AD, contributed by constructing and renovating important parts in the temple. A beautiful garden next to the Mandapam, designed by Thiruvengadakrishna Mudaliar in 1756, welcomes visitors with many colourful and fragrant flowers. A square *Vasantha Mandapam* with 100 pillars is situated in the midst of this garden.

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Holy Trinity Cathedral, Palayamkottai

Bishop Corrie named it as Holy Trinity Church on 30 January 1836. Bishop Stephen Neill raised the status of the Church into a cathedral. The church at Samathanapuram was renovated, extended and rebuilt.

The congregations in the Pastorate are:

- Holy Trinity Cathedral, Palayamkottai
- Christ Church, Kokirakulam
- Christ Church, Vannarpettai
- St.John's Church, Adaikalapuram

In 1996 Rev Anand Asir, Rev Vedanbu and Rev Joshva Raja were the priests in the Cathedral. There are around 1500 families in this congregation which is around 6000 believers/members - the largest congregation in the Tirunelveli diocese. The four part (treble, alto, tenor and bass) singing of the Holy Trinity Cathedral

Choir choir is popular The choir follows the CMS and Anglican tradition in all its activities. Mr. Samuel Gunaseelan is the present choirmaster.

Sri Varadharaja Perumal Temple

Sri Varadharaja Perumal Kovil is situated in Tirunelveli Junction, on the banks of the perennial river Thamirabarani It is an ancient and reputed Vishnu temple. tenkasi is a great city of nellai. it contains a kasiviswanathar temple.

Mela Thiruvenkatanathapuram Temple

The Mela Thiruvenkatanathapuram temple is located 7 to 10 km south west of Tirunelveli, on the banks of perennial river Thamirabarani. Also known as Thirunankovil, it has Lord Srinivasa as the deity.

Keezha Thiruvenkatanathapuram, Keezha Thirupathi

It resembles the thirupathi. Near this temple about ¼ Km., to the east lies the "taen kalahasthi" temple which crowns Lord Shiva. First Lord Shiva is prayed followed by varadharaja perumal and then the "taen thirupathi perumal".

Conclusion

Tourism in Tirunelvelli is being recoganised as a source of employment and an important factor in the growth and prosperity of the state. The policies and regulation on the growing tourism industry in the state should be made growth Oriented .Tourism in Tirunelvelli , like other economic activities, flourishes best into the context of general economic policies and programmer designed to lead to the optimum growth of the economic of a District as a whole.

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ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF FORESTS IN KANAYAKUMARI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

In our country the basis forest statics, like growing stocks, increment, actual and potential yields, is highly unsatisfactory. With growing consciousness about the environmental issues, the problem of deforestation has become a live subject of discussion not only among the policy makers but also among the people at large. Forests play an important role in a country's economic development and ecological stability. They provide several goods, broadly classified as; major and minor forest products which serve as raw material for many industries. Forests provide numerous services such as environmental and ecological stability necessary for human sustenance. In kanyakumari District forests are used for many wood industries like timber, plant medicine, palentolagy and many species of animals are found in them, some of which can be potentially useful for man. Also forests can have roots in the servicing industries, foodstuff industries, paper, textiles, and even mining. In kanyakumari District forests are employing many labourers.

Forests meet the basic needs of the poor people in the country in many ways. A large section of the country's population depends on forests for firewood which is basic for the human survival. Among the other things, forests supply pure oxygen, prevent environmental and sound pollutions, maintain ecological balanced by providing shelter both to wild life and birds and finally add to the aesthetic beauty of the country.

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ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF FORESTS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

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Forests produce the requisite raw material for industries, defense, communication, other public purposes and domestic use, contribute to the country's export and create a large volume of employment in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. They also provide material for direct use by the agriculturists, like fuel wood, small timber, fodder and grazing. The benefits from forests in the matter of soil and water conservation, recreation, wild life have been well recognized.

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FORESTS IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

The forests in Kanyakumari District are about 75 million years old. Of the total district area of 1671.3 km², government forests occupy an area of 504.86 km² which comes to about 30.2% the total geographical area of the district. The forests of the district are administered through the Kanyakumari Forest Division, with headquarters at Nagercoil, the capital of Kanyakumari District.There are 14 types of forests from luxuriant tropical wet evergreen to tropical thorn forests. This variety occurs in the district because of diverse locality factors.[14] Rainfall varies from 103 cm to 310 cm elevation from sea level to 1829 m. The forest area is 30.2% of the total district geographical area which is next to Nilgiris district with 59% and Dharmapuri District with 38% in Tamil Nadu State. 52% of the district's forests are classified as dense forests, which is second only to Dharmapuri District with 58%.

The forests contain species such as Mesua ferrea, Bischofia Javanica, Vitex altissima to smaller trees of Dillini a species festooning climber, shrubs, valuable herbs, variety of orchids, two types of canes, many indigenous palms and cycas. The important timbers are teak, rosewood, vengai and aini. Various types of forest products like bamboos, reeds, canes, soft wood, tamarind, lemon grass, rubber, coconut, arecanut, terminalia chebula, cinnamon bark nelli, cardamom, mango and many medicinal plants are harvested in this district. The Maruthuvalmalai, a hill located among green paddy fields and coconut palms, is famous for valuable medicinal plants. This is the only district in Tamil Nadu where rubber and clove plantations have been raised in reserve forests in an area of 47.857 km² and 1.1 km² respectively. The district is rich in wildlife with at least 25 types of mammals, about 60 species of birds including 14 species of migratory birds and many species of fishes, reptiles and amphibians listed.

PEOPLE PARTICIPATION IN AFFORESTATION

B.P. Srivastava says the solutions are simple but their implementation is difficult unless there is a general realization among the people of the country, particularly the people living in the rural areas and above all the politicians and the administrators, of the importance of forests and the dangers of deforestation. The children and the youth of the country have also got to be made aware of the importance of forests.

I.Satya Sundaram says that the forests can be preserved only through people's participation and by creating a climate under which the poor derive due benefits from forest development. The association of people in the implementation of afforestation programmes would further result in the creation of awareness, exchange of views, especially on the impact of forestry programmes and better appreciation of realities in the field.

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CONCLUSION

Forest plays an important role in a country economic development and ecological stability. They provide several goods broadly classified as major and major minor forest products which serve as raw material for many industries. Forests provide numerous services such as environmental and ecological stability necessary for human substance. The present study is based on secondary data. Necessary data are collected from the forest department, electricity department and public works department. Contribution of the forest are evaluated in terms of revenue, expenditure, rainfall, electricity generated, rivers, timber, firewood, green manure, wild life, employment and environmental health. Forests operations being labour oriented provide either whole time, part-time or seasonal employment to a large section of the local population, particularly in rural and tribal areas and thereby supplement their income to an appreciable extent.

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A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF SELF HELP GROUP MEMBERS IN NANGUNERI BLOCK, TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT"

SHGs are a viable alternative to achieve the objectives of rural development. SHG placed a pivotal role in social transformation and social economic betterment of rural women. Unlike city levels, where scope for employment is abundant, Tamilnadu is a drought prone area where people cannot depend purely on agriculture all through the year. Moreover Tamilnadu is based on its agro-economic climate conditions. Thus non-form activities like handicrafts, rope making, embroidery, catering services, repair shops, soft drink stalls etc., give immense scope for women to earn their livelihood when they do not have income through agricultural activities. Banks in association with NGOs give training to SHG members in all these activities. The government of Tamilnadu encourages the SHG activities and marketing of their products.

Self- Help Group

A self- Help group is a small voluntary association of poor people preferably from the same socio-economic background. They come together for the purpose of saving their common problems through self – Help. The number of members in one SHG does not exceed 20. The size is limited to 20 because any group larger than this would need to be registered under the India legal system

Objectives of the study

- To examine the role of SHG in developing socio economic status of rural women
- To identify the satisfaction level of self-help group members in SHG activities

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no association between age and level of satisfaction.

Methodology of the Study

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected directly from the members of SHG with the help of questionnaire through Simple Random Sampling Method. The relevant secondary data was collected from books periodical and annual reports

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Analytical framework

Table: 1 Occupational Status

Occupation	No. Of respondents	Percentage
Unemployed	30	25
Self employed	15	12.5
Employed (un organized sector)	59	49.17
Employed (Organized sector)	16	13.33
Total	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Occupation is one of the factors which determine the standard of living of an individual. Agriculture in India is considered as the primary sector and it provides the major share of employment opportunity to the Indian population. But agricultural backwardness leads to poverty and low standard of living. The analysis on the basis of the occupational status of the member's shows Most of the members are either unemployed or employed in unorganized sector. People employed in organized sector and salaried jobs are very negligible in number.

Income is the yard stick to measure the economic condition of the society. The main objective of the SHG is to improve the income source of the rural women. To give economic freedom to the rural women it is must to provide them enough income sources. The following table explains the income level of the respondents.

Table: 2 Income level of the Respondents

Income (Rs.) per month	No. of respondents before joining SHG	Percentage	No. of respondents after joining SHG	Percentage
Less than 1000	13	10.83	8	6.67
1001 – 1500	19	15.84	22	18.33
1501 – 2500	42	35.00	44	36.67
Above 2500	46	38.33	46	38.33
Total	**120**	**100**	**120**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

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The above table shows that self help groups in the study area increase the income level of the respondents 15.84 percent respondents were in the income group of Rs.1001 – 1500 before joining the scheme. But that percentage as increased to 18.83 percentage after joining the group. The percentage of respondents of the income group Rs.1501-2500 was 35 before joining the scheme. It was increased to 36.67 after joining the group.

Conclusion

Self Help Group is an important tool which helps the rural women to acquire power for their self supportive life and nation building efforts.Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said, "To awaken the people, it is women who must be awakened; once she is on the move, the family moves, the village moves and nation moves." Now the women are awakened by the self help groups.

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Development Prospects of Fisheries in Tuticorin District

The study has two dimensions : the socio-economic background and its influence on the fishing industry and the mechanized boat fishing in the study area and its developing trends.

The study has been envisaged to find the nature of employment of fisherman in mechanized boats. Of course the study on the economic and social conditions may yield some striking and their status too.

Mechanisation of fishing has become a booming industry and hence the income generated and the production trends have to be analysed.

Further the trends in the exports would throw light on the prospects of foreign exchange earnings, to fishing industry possessing potential for exception.

The study has taken up the following objectives.

To study the socio-economic conditions of marine fisher folk of Tuticorin in the study area, to study the employment conditions and income generation of marine fishing in Tuticorin, to estimate production function of marine fishing in Tuticorin district, to analyse the cost and return structure of marine fishing in Tuticorin district and to study the export profile of marine products of Tuticorin district.

Tuticorin coast has been chosen for the analyse of the marine capture fisheries and its productivity. Tuticorin has coastal length of 121 km. The coastal area comprises of 21 fishing villages and the fishing harbour at Tuticorin.

The reference period for the study is 2003-2004. The purpose is to study the cost of production, income, yield, employment, fishing trips, compositon and consumption of fisherman of Tuticorin coast.

The size of the sample fisherman respondent was fixed at 120, of them 75 respondents represent the category of mechanized boats fitted with 160 HP Engine and the remaining 45 represent the category of mechanized bots fitted with 98 HP Engine.

Reliable data are used to analyse the economic aspects of marine capture fishing in Tuticorin. For this purpose the secondary data have been collected from the office of the Assistant Director of Fisheries Tuticorin, CMFRI – Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute, Tuticorin and MPEDA – Marine Product Export Development Authority, Tuticorin.

The primary information has been collected through four rounds. In selecting the rounds care has been taken to cover the peak period of fishing. Particulars of employment income, fish catch and rates are collected for the previous week on the date of enquiring the each round.

To find out the fixed and operational cost of fishing, the tabular analyses have been carried out. Tabular analysis has also been performed to findout the net profit and the operating cost form fishing. Multi

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linear production function has been employed to identify the significance of factors influencing gross fish production. Simple statistical tools like averages diagram and trend analysis have been used for the presentation of data.

A brief accounts of the findings are as follows.

Most of the crew members belongs to the middle age group. This implies the absence of new entrants into the trade. The average family size is 3.5 members. Still the Christian religion coming under most backward community.

On an average 10 members are in the crew. Generally the boats would travel 80 km per fishing trip. The expenditure per trip on-an average is Rs.5.000. On an average catch per trip is 500 kg. The average wage of the crew members is Rs.5000 per month. The per capita income is Rs.310.

The input-output ratio inferred from the analysis in 1.33 for both medium size mechanized boats as well as large size mechanized boat.

The hypotheses tested enlightens on the factors that significantly contribute to the gross output per vessel. Fishing days and age of the craft mostly determine the gross output per vessel. Though average length of vessel and the fishing experience are positive, they do not contribute much to the gross products per vessel.

There is no significant growth in the exports of marine products. The growth rate is only 0.16 percent. Efforts should be taken to increase exports to significantly fetch foreign exchange reserves.

On the basis of findings the following suggestions are offered by the study along with some policies to be adopted to improve the lot of the fisherman and to boost fish production.

The study reveals that on the average the fisherman get Rs.300 per day. They are neither better off nor worse of. The daily wage should be hiked. Boat repairing yard and service station should be made easily available for smooth running conditions. Accessories for line fishing should also be provided at reasonable rates.

Co-operative societies for fisherman should be formed and fostered by the Government. To make marine fishing trips safer better communication facilities and guide lights should be provided.

Ice plant or storage plant may be started by the state Government and ice-bar must be sold at subsidized rate to the fishermen. Guide light facilities may be provided during light landings season which would help the fishermen. The fishing village may be adopted as 'model fishing village' inorder to promote responsible fisheries in the sea of Gulf of Mannar.

A blue revolution is on the cards. It will lead to the upliftment in the lives of the fishermen who risk their lives venturing into sea and also pave the way for growth in foreign exchange enabling the country's advancement in a short span of time.

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WOMEN SELF HELP GROUP PROGRAMME AND RURAL POVERTY – A CASE STUDY OF SIRUNADARKUDIERUPPU VILLAGE IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations in 2002, almost one fifth of the world population was living in extreme poverty, earning less than one dollar a day, combating poverty in the world is necessary for world peace as stressed by Nobel Prize Laureates Dr.Muhammad yunus, the promoter of micro credit through the Grameen Bank in Bangaladesh.

For alleviating poverty, micro credit / Finance being mentioned as on important instrument. Therefore this concept abstract the attention of both policy makers and academician's.

OBJECTIVES

1) Construction of Poverty Eradication Index (PEI) to measure how far the rural poverty is eradicated in the study area and by women's Self-help group programmed.
2) To compare the economic status of the member of women self help groups before and after joining SHGs.
3) To trace-out how far improvements have been place in factors like consumption pattern, skill development and health care in the area.

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METHODOLOGY

A brief description about the selection of topic, sources and method of data collection and analytical techniques used during the study are given below;

(i) SELECTION OF STUDY AREA

Sirunadarkudieruppu is a village situated in Thoothukudi district. The total area is 110 hectare. It is 18 kilometers away from Tiruchendur. Total population of Sirunadarkudieruppu as per 2001 census is 1139. I have selected this village because it is my native place.

(ii) SOURCES OF DATA

The data was collected from the primary as well as secondary data. The primary data was collected by personnel interview of the selected of SHGs working in the study area. The secondary data was collected from books, journals etc.

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(iii) SAMPLING PROCEDURES

13 SHGs were functioning in our studied area. I have selected 10 groups as a sample by random sampling method. As far as sample members is concerned. I have selected 5 members as a sample from each group by lottery method.

(iv) PERIOD OF THE STUDY

This study is for a period of one year from 2009-2010.

S.N.	Particulars	Respondents	
		Before Joining	After Joining
1	Employment	04	46
2	Income	00	50
3	Consumption Pattern	05	45
4	Knowledge	02	48
5	Health Care	05	45

Source: Field Survey

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I) Employment Generation

The study considers only the gainful employment which is a dimension or indicator of poverty eradication. Out of 50 respondents 6 have gainful employment before joining SHG but their number increased to 46 after joing SHG.

II) Income Generation

Income generation is another dimension of poverty eradication. I have taken into account whose income level is zero. After joining SHG, all the respondents have crossed the poverty line.

Findings of the Study

1. All the responspends (100%) belongs to Hindu, Nadar community.
2. The majority of the respondents' i.e.70% are falling under the age group of 40-45.
3. From our analysis it is known that after joining the self help groups, 6% of the illiterate responspends are able to put their signature.
4. Nearly 90% of the respondents are housewives.

5. Our analysis reveals that 80% of the respondents are got loan to meet their family expenditure.
6. 90% of the SHGs members repay their loan promptly.
7. our study reveals that there is significant difference between the household income of the respondents before and after join the SHGs.
8. 'Wed" sponsored loans to 70% (7 groups) of the groups in the study area and CERTCO have 3 groups.
9. 90% of the respondents have got employment for after joining the SHGs i.e., Goat growing, small business, etc.
10. 85% of the respondents are having savings upto 3000-5000.
11. 70% are empowered to take financial decisions in the family after joining self-help group.
12. 80% of the respondents agreed that they are emplowered.

Suggestions

1. The members of the women SHGs may be encouraged to do business from the skill developed through women SHGs.
2. It is very difficult to make illiterate poor to understand SHG Groups formed may be homogenous therefore much attention should be give to the formation homogeneous SHGs.
3. The stories of successful SHGs may be live telecasted.
4. NABARD should show interest motivate the bank people.
5. Government should promote more and more number of SHGs.
6. More stress should be given on labour intensive technique.
7. SHGs should be provided with infrastructure facilities.
8. Banks should be adequate find with soft terms like low interest rate, repayment period, sanction of loans etc.

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CONCLUSION:

It is evident from the study that SHGs have been playing a vital in the empowerment of women. This is an important institution for improving the life of women on various social and economic components.

Self-help group programme is a innovative participatory approach to eradication of poverty.

CROP DIVERSIFICATION IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

The development of agriculture or crop economy of India is characterized by the process of crop diversification or changes in cropping pattern over time. The change has been associated with the increasing transformation of agriculture from subsistence to commercial farming. With the expansion of irrigation potential, development of technology, market structure and institutional mechanism, cropping pattern changes fulfil the increasing demand sand matches the changing conditions. Diversified farming system adopted in a planned manner has importance both in a micro and macro perspective. Diversification is an integral part of the process of structural transformation of an economy. Agriculture diversification is one of the way of agricultural development.

SIGNIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The concept of diversification at the macro level is well understood. A move away from agriculture to industries and services denotes diversification at the macro level. But, there is a lack of clarity when it comes to diversification within agriculture. There could be changes which are in the nature of shift from one crop to another crop i.e, rice to oil Seeds or from one enterprise (crop raising) to another enterprises (live stock)

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OBJECTIVES

1. To know the practice of crop diversification among different regions in the study area.
2. To examine the factors determining crop diversification in Thoothukudi district.
3. To study the impact of diversification of cropping pattern on income and employment.
4. To explore the consequences of crop diversification in the study area.
5. To eliminate and compare the cost and returns of high value cash crops in different regions at different levels of agricultural transformation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study is conducted in Thoothukudy district, where agriculture is the main occupation of most of the people. These farmers were engaged in cultivating paddy and banana. In the recent period, these farmers have changed their cropping pattern from traditional cultivation to modern cultivation. They have started shifting their crops from paddy, banana to oil seeds and cerals and other crops. Regarding this, many research questions have been raised.

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Why small farmers diversity crops rather than large farmers? What are the impact of diversification of cropping pattern? Will it be continuing in the long run profitability? Do the farmers use modern agricultural inputs for diversification of crops? What kind of technique they follow in the un irrigated area? In order to answer these questions an attempt is made to analyze the diversification strategy adopted in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

SELECTION OF STUDY AREA

This study is conducted in Thoothukudy. The total area of Thoothukudy is 470724, hectares. Out of it, net cultivable area is 1,76,293. There are twelve blocks in Thoothukudy area, namely, Thoothukudy, Srivaikundam, Senthunganalloor, Tiruchendur, Alwarthirunageri, Udankudi, Sattankulam, Kovilpatty, Kayathar, Villathikulam, Puthur and Ottapidaram. For this study only four blocks are selected randomly, particularly the area where crop diversification is adopted. Accordingly, Udankudi, Srivaikundam, Villathikulam and Ottapidaram are selected.

SOURCES OF DATA

In this study both primary and secondary data are collected and analysed. A well prepared questionnare is served to the respondents through which information are gathered. Secondary data is collected through District Statistical centre in Thoothukudy, various agricultural journals, reports, Government publications and records.

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SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

For this study, disproportionate stratified Random sampling technique is applied. The total farmers in the four blocks is 4517. Out of it, 500 samples are taken. The total area is stratified into several stratum. From each stratum samples are collected disproportionately.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

To analyse the impact of different factors like irrigation, the rainfall, chemical fertilizers, yields of crops and price on the acreage changes of those fast growing crops, regression is used. Multiple regression, cobb duglus production function, garret ranking and gini ratio are also used for this study.

Land use pattern (2008 – 2009) District : Thoothukudi

SI.No	Classification	Hectares
1.	Forest	11012
2.	Uncultivable waste	19878
3.	Land put to non-agri uses	76473
4.	Cultivable waste land	48489
5.	Permanent pasture and grass land	5132
6.	Micellaneous tree crops and grooves	39363
7.	Current fallow	13105
8.	Other fallow	80980
9.	Net cultivated area	176293
	Total	**470724**

Source : District Statistical Centre Report 2010

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FINDINGS

- In thoothukudy study area, cropping patterns are mainly determined by agro – climatic factors such as soil temperature, rainfall distribution i.e. the physical conditions of the region and availability of irrigation facilities.
- In the study area the main factors influencing crop diversification is economic factors through a comparative returns which a former gets from a particular crop or combination of crops. The farmers prefare only remunerative crops such as maise, black gram, green gram, sunflower, banana, cotton and sugarcane.
- The regression results clearly reveal that irrigation and chemical fertilizer have substantial positive impact on the relative acreage growth of sunflower oil.
- Chemical fertilizer and yield growth have led to increase in the acreage of cotton and maise.
- Growth of chemical fertilizer also plays an important role in accelerating the growth of crops.
- The whole analysis reveals that the development of irrigation and technology in other fields are the main factors behind the crop diversification in this study area.
- It is found out in the study area that the farmers prefare that combination of crops from which they can derive maximum possible net revenue at least possible risk.
- In Thoothukudy district, four targeted regions were located namely, Udankudi, Srivankundam, Villathikulam and Ottapidaram. Al the four regions have registered a greater probability. In Villathikulam, it is 501 percent, in Udankudi it is 61 percent in Srivaikundam

it is 41 percent and in Ottapidaram it is 51 percent. This analysis clearly reveals that the area under cumbu the declined heavily during 2010 and pulses like black gram and green gram have reached rapidly the main reasons for the shift of the farmers from cumbu to the cash crops are the farmers in the study area receive high returns from the cash cropping.

- Among all the crops pulses and sunflower are the important competing crops of cumbu chillies and sorghum
- Further, the national sample survey (NSS) data clearly show that the average percapita consumption of sorghum has dropped steadily for the last three decades.
- The physical environment provides a wide range of choices for growing crops, In Thoothukudy district the farmers exercises his judgement for a most favorable selection of crops from a number of possible combinations on the basis of his experience.

SUGGESTIONS

- Since cropping pattern depends upon the nature and availability of irrigation facilities, the state should construct new irrigation facilities in all the states. When new irrigation facilities are provided to the farmers the whole practices of agriculture will change.
- Secondly, the creation of basic infrastructural facilities like transport, health, education are essential for widespread the process of agricultural development and crop diversification.
- Thirdly, the development of technology, market potential and institutional mechanism cropping pattern changes fulfils the increasing demand and matches the changing conditions.
- Economic viability and ecological sustainability of agricultural diversification process requires continuous technological up gradation.
- Committed state intervention and adoption of development strategies are the essential pre-requisite for creating enabling conditions for the future development of Indian agriculture.
- Continuous break through of technology is also required to generate alternative resources for the sustainability of the development process.

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Water Resources in Tamil Nadu With Special Reference To Thoothukudi District

Introduction

Water is the most common thing in the world and the most massive liquid stuff available on earth surface in one form or another. It is one of the vital resources of life and hence it is something more than what we drink. The relationship between man and water is long intimate even mystical. No single factor other than water could improve the well being of any country.

The uses of water differ from kind to kind and any use of water is always and necessarily competitive with respect to other uses that are competitive with it. Major sources of demand are public water supplies, agriculture, industry, navigation power and recreation.

Primarily competitive for water can be between present uses and future needs. In the present uses competition is in between different regions. These competing claims make water an economic good scarce in relation to demand. Hence the water is a prime natural resource a basic human need and a precious national asset.

Macro and Micro studies relating to various facets of water sources have been carried out not only in the country as a whole but also in various states and Districts of India. This study analyses the water resources of Thoothukudi District of Tamil Nadu.

Water Resources of Thoothukudi District

Thoothukudi is situated in the southern part of Tamil Nadu. There are 12 blocks in Thoothukudi District. This study discusses the block-wise water resources and the block-wise and source wise net area irrigated.

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TABLE 1

NUMBER OF IRRIGATION SOURCES IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT – BLOCK WISE

S.No.	Name of the Block	2000-2001			2009-2010		
		Canals	Tanks		Canals	Tanks	
			Number	Rank		Number	Rank
1.	Thoothukudi	-	50	8	-	50	5
2.	Srivaikundam	1	101	1	2	86	3
3.	Karungulam	1	59	6	1	96	2
4.	Tiruchendur	1	18	10	1	5	11
5.	Alwarthirunagari	1	75	4	-	42	8
6.	Udangudi	-	-	12	-	1	12
7.	Sattankulam	-	57	7	-	86	3
8.	Ottapidaram	-	100	2	-	49	6
9.	Kayathar	-	100	2	-	100	1
10.	Kovilpatti	-	66	5	-	49	6
11.	Vilathikulam	-	22	9	-	41	9
12.	Pudur	-	7	11	-	29	10
Total		4	655		4	634	

Source : Records of Assistant Director of Statistics, Thoothukudi.

Table 1 shows the number of irrigation sources in Thoothukudi District. As per the table there is no change in the number of canals in 2000-2001 and 2009-2010. It is only four in both the periods.

In the case of tanks, there were 655 in 2000-2001 and 634 in 2009-2010. Number of tanks has increased in three blocks namely Karungulam, Sattankulam and Vilathikulam. The number of tank sources remains constant in both the periods in Thoothukudi and Kayathar blocks whereas in other blocks the number has decreased in 2009-2010 compared with 2000-2001.

Conclusion

In Thoothukdi District there is no change in the number of canals during the study period whereas the number of tanks has fallen from 655 to 634. Similarly the number of wells has fallen from 28026 to 22489 in 2009-2010. But the number of tube wells has increased from 206 to 684 in the study period. Total area irrigated by canals, tube wells and wells has increased whereas the area irrigated by tanks has decreased.

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SOCIO ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF WOMEN LABOUR IN CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN TIRUCHENDUR TALUCK

INTRODUCTION

In earlier days women were confined to the four walls of house and led a protected life. In the present modern society they have come out of four walls and take part in all forts of activities for satisfying economic needs like rising cost of living due to rise in prices, higher aspirations for a better standard of living coupled with an inadequate income of the principle earner have been creating a need to force women to come out to work.

The participation of women in economic activity in India is very common form time memoriat. In the traditional economy, women had played integral and protected roles in agriculture, industry and services. During the process of globalization and liberalization of the economy, women community though equal men in population and women is treated as the second citizen or subordinate to men. According to I.L.O. report 2000, " Women are 50 per cent world's population, do the two-thirds of the world's income and own less than one percent of world property". Indian women find it increasingly difficult to adjust to the dual role, as they have to play as traditional housewives and compete with men in the field of business. The women workers who are employed usually on daily wage system in construction sector.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study is to know the socio-economics status, working conditions and problems of women labour in construction sector.

- To examine the socio-economic background of women labour in construction sector.
- To examine the working conditions of women labour.
- To study the problems of women labour in construction sector.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on field work carried out by the author in Tiruchendur taluck over three months. The study period was September 2010 to November 2010. Simple random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of sample units. The sample respondents were 150. The respondents were elicited through a detailed interview schedule personally administered. The

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required data were collected through personal interview method. In the questionnaire asked questions pertaining to their social and economic status.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age: Women do boot generally take up employment before they are about twenty years of age. It is likely that the religious and social traditions in this country which do not allow young girls and more particularly unmarried girls to mix with men account for this. From the survey it is observed that out of 150 respondents, 54.5 per cent are in the age group of 30 – 39 years and only 3 per cent are in the age group of below 20 years of age.

Education: Education is basic human right which increases the economic, social and political opportunities available to women. It empowers women to take control of their lives and create opportunities and choices to improve their lives. A study on data reveals that over 80 per cent of women labourers are illiterate, though 6.5 per cent have actually studied upto class five and 13.5 per cent of whom have studied beyond class five.

Marital Status: Marital status, can be taken as an important social characteristics of a women labours. An individual's responsibilities increase after marriage. She has to provide for her family, besides food, clothing and shelters she has to provide other social facilities for the member of her family. Hence 'married state' create situations to force women to come out to work. A study on data indicates 95 per cent of the women labour are married and 5 per cent are unmarried.

Family Size: A study observed that a large proportion i,e., three – fourth of the women labour were have a family size of 1 - 4 members, 20 per cent have a family size of 5 -6 and the rest have a family size of above 6 members.

Expenditure and Savings: It has been found that a majority 68 per cent of the respondents spend their income on meeting family expenditure. Only about 15.25 per cent of them keep their income with themselves. After meeting the expenditure, 74.5 per cent are not able to save money because their expenditure is more than their earnings and the remaining 25.5 per cent said that they have some savings.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Women labourers are not on the master rolls. Working conditions also play a significant role in accepting and in continuing their job in outside. This is more so in the case of women. Women labour in construction sector work with primitive tools and equipments that damage their body and

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health. They are naturally much physical strength which for the married women is difficult task. A study indicate 42 per cent of the respondents said that the working conditions are not satisfactory. However, 58 per cent expressed happiness. Working hours are between 9A.M. to 6 P.M. Sunday holiday of every week for which no payment is made. There is no bonus or no provident fund, no gratuity, no medical benefits, no maternity leave.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENTATIONS:

- Majority of the respondents are in the age group of 31-39.
- Majority of the respondents are illiterate.
- Most of the women labour are married.
- About three fourth of women labour were in the range of 1-4 persons.
- Majority of the respondents are working due to economic compulsions and their contribution to the family income inevitable.
- The attitude of the respondents in helping their wives in family work is absent.
- Owing to their dual responsibility, very frequently they fall sick.

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According to the prevailing family role norms in India household duties are regarded as the sole responsibility of the housewife and also a employee constitute a heavy work load. In such a situation, women labour housewife requires some help in household from their husband. With good encouragement from the family women labour strikes the balance between work and family.

Poverty is the prime reasons for lack of education. Education is basic human right which increases the economic, social and political opportunities available to women. It empowers women to take control of their lives and create opportunities and choices to improve their lives.

Most of the women labours are illiterate. They are not aware the savings about their future. So bankers go to women, meet them and suggest them to keep the money in the banks and some times advise them on different modes of savings.

Energy Consumption Pattern of Rural Households in Radhapuram Taluk of Tirunelveli District

1. Introduction

India has become the 6th largest energy consumer in the world. But there is a prediction that by 2010, it would emerge as the 4th largest energy consumer (domestic oil consumption and production). The real fact is that the country imports 70 percent of the total oil consumed. The country is one of the highest energy intensive economies in the world and the expectation is that the annual demand for oil will rise with time. Energy intensity is the measure of energy required by an economy to produce a unit of (Gross Domestic Production) GDP growth.

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), the energy intensity of the economy is nearly 2.88 times of the developed countries. India's dependence on imported oil is more within the recent four decades. Global development has shown a definite negative correlation between the energy intensity of an economy and its growth trends (The Hindu, 2005).

In recent years, the role of developing countries has grown rapidly in the global energy market. On the supply side, energy is a serious constraint in many of the developing countries. On the demand side, the shares of the developing countries in global energy consumption and the average energy intensity have shown a steady upward trend. But the movement in energy intensities has been significantly dissimilar across sectors as well as developing regions.

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3. Statement of the Problem

Despite the use of varied sources of energy, rural households are not in a comfortable position in meeting their requirements. In most of the cases, the demand for energy in the rural households exceeds the supply leading to energy shortage, with drastic consequences. Non-availability, rising prices and rationing of fuel are some of the ramifications of this supply demand gap. So, most of the rural households of developing countries have been striving hard to meet their fuel requirements. In their competition to acquire fuel, they use crop residues, trees and animal dung as fuel. This has resulted in the deprivation of the soil leading to an overall decline in food and fuel availability in most of the developing countries.

However, only in the recent past, the growing shortage of fuel wood for domestic purposes has received attention in India. Therefore, it is felt that the energy problems confronting the rural households must be examined with a view of developing a more efficient energy system.

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The energy use pattern in a village is greatly influenced by the type and extent of forest cover, access to forest, availability of common lands, proximity to urban areas, density of population, agrarian relations and local traditions. Hence energy use pattern is region specific in nature implying diversity among different village eco-systems.

This study is a micro level exercise and for this purpose, the Radhapuram taluk of the Tirunelveli district is chosen. This selection was prompted by the presence of a number of special features, which have a direct bearing on the rural energy scenario. Firstly, the taluk has a vast rural area. Secondly, over a period of time the extent of land in this taluk, which is the main source of bio-fuel supply, has shown a sharp decline due to transfer of agricultural lands to industrial, commercial and infrastructural purposes. This may also increase the dependence of households on fossil fuels and electricity. Therefore, a study of the rural households of the taluk is expected to suggest changes in pattern and level of energy use to solve the problems of scarcity.

4. Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. to understand the present pattern of energy use in rural households;
2. to identify the determinants of energy consumption in rural households;
3. to suggest a rational pattern of energy use and solutions to problems associated with it.

5. Scope of the Study

The present study pays attention to investigate the existing patterns of energy consumption of the rural households, determinants of energy consumption of the rural households and to give policy suggestions for substantially reducing energy consumption. Attempt has also been made to suggest an energy use pattern that can be eco-friendly and helpful in reducing the energy consumption.

6. Methodology

The present study was carried out in the Radhapuram Taluk of Tirunelveli district. The study is a cross-sectional one, mainly based on primary data. The field investigation was carried out during the period April 2009 to March 2010, which is the normal period.

The Tirunelveli District is comprised of nine taluks out of which the Radhapuram taluk was selected for this study. In the Radhapuram taluk there are three revenue villages namely Panagudi, Vedaku Vallioor and Tisaiyanvillai and all the three were taken for the study.

This study is based on both primary and secondary data. The questionnaire was so designed as to overcome recall bias to the possible extent with various checks. The required primary data were collected from the selected households with the help of an interview schedule, accomplished through personal interview method. Due care was taken to avoid bias and to ensure accuracy of data.

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The primary data for the study were collected by the simple random sampling technique, i.e., taking at random from every revenue village a sample of 40 rural households. Thus, a total of 120 rural households were selected for statistical investigation. The data collected were carefully processed, edited and tabulated for analytical purposes. The secondary data were collected from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, the District Collector's Office, the Taluk Office, various journals, books and websites.

In this study, various statistical tools such as correlation, 't' test, Multiple Regression Analysis are used.

7. Results and Discussion

Purpose of Fuel Use

The purpose of use of different commercial fuels like kerosene, petrol, diesel, L.P.Gas and electricity are explained as follows:

Table: 1 – Purpose of Fuel Use

(in Numbers)

Fuel Type	Not-using	Lighting	Cooking	Lighting & Cooking	Transport	Total
Kerosene	16 (13.33)	18 (15.00)	24 (20.00)	44 (36.67)	18 (15.00)	120 (100)
Petrol & Diesel	56 (46.67)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	64 (53.33)	120 (100)
L.P.Gas	18 (15.00)	6 (5.00)	79 (65.83)	14 (11.67)	3 (2.50)	120 (100)
Electricity	6 (3.87)	114 (73.55)	12 (7.74)	15 (9.68)	8 (5.16)	155 (100)

Source: Field Survey

Note : Figures in parentheses show percentages to the row-wise total

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Out of the total sample size, the category not using kerosene is 16 (13.33 percent). Those who use it for lighting are 18 (15 percent), for cooking 24 (20 percent), for both lighting and cooking 44 (36.67 percent) and for transport 18 (15 percent).

Out of the total sample size, 56 (46.67 percent) respondents do not use petrol and diesel at all. Only 64 (53.33 percent) respondents use them for transport purpose. In the total sample size, only 112 respondents (85 percent) use L.P.

Per Capita Use of Fuels

Bowonder et al., (1988) found in their study that a household used about 10 kg of firewood or agricultural wastes per day in the villages of Andhra Pradesh. In the villages of Karnataka also, the ASTRA study observed firewood consumption of more than 10 kg per day per household (Reddy et al.,1982). Table 3 shows that per household and per capita consumption of different fuels.

Table: 2 – Per Capita and per household Energy use by the types of Fuels for the Whole Sample

Fuel	Unit of Measure -ment	Annual Per Household	Annual Per Capita	Per Day Per Household	Per Day Per Capita
Electricity	Kwh	301.68	105.53	0.83	0.29
Kerosene	Litres	40.14	14.04	0.11	0.04
L.P.Gas	Kgs	50.74	17.75	0.14	0.05
Petrol and Diesel	Litres	16.71	5.85	0.04	0.02
Fire wood	Kgs	776.45	271.61	2.13	0.75
Cow dung	Kgs	14.75	5.16	0.04	0.01
Agricultural waste	Kgs	90.94	31.81	0.25	0.09

Source: Field Survey

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The above table reveals that, on an average a household uses firewood (2.13 kg), agricultural waste (0.25 kg), electricity (0.83 kwh), kerosene (0.11 litre), petrol and diesel (0.04 litre), cow dung (0.04 kg) and L.P.Gas (0.14 kg) per day.

In the present study, the per household per day use of L.P. Gas is 0.14 kg which shows that only a limited number of households use L.P.Gas. The use of petrol and diesel is 0.04 litre per day. There are a very few households using petrol for transport purpose. The per day use of dung cake is 0.04 kgs due to the limited use by the households and hence their shares are negligible.

Moreover, the use of firewood is around 2.13 kgs per day, which is less when compared to the earlier studies. The reason is that households make use of agricultural waste and kerosene for cooking purposes along with firewood. A more or less similar pattern is observed in per household per annum, per capita per day consumption of various sources of energy.

Factors Determining Energy Consumption

In this part an attempt is made to study the factors determining energy consumption. Every household requires a minimum amount of energy for sheer survival. But, the actual amount of energy consumed by a household depends on several factors such as income, size of family, land ownership and the price of fuel. Culinary factors such as the type of food cooked, frequency of cooking, reheating of food and water-heating requirements, the type of stoves and the nature of vessels used also influence household energy consumption (Ramakrishnan.R., 1992). A prior income, wealth, size of family, education of the head, number of earners in a family, years of stay in urban areas, occupation etc., may affect the pattern of energy consumption of the household (Raikhy.P.S., 1990).

The energy consumption has been examined in relation to these factors and the relationship is discussed with the help of regression models.

Conclusion

At the outset, it should be stated that the empirical investigation into the energy scenario of the villages of Radhapuram taluk in Tirunelveli district has helped to take this research work.

The study reveals that in the villages of Radhapuram taluk, bio-fuels are the dominant fuels satisfying a large part of the energy requirements. In the villages of Radhapuram taluk crop residues, rather than firewood are the chief fuel. Energy purposes, in this study area household depend on forests, farm lands and home gardens for firewood.

As non-commercial energy sources are available in plenty and they are always within the easy reach of households any breakdown in the supply of electricity, kerosene or liquified petroleum gas can never destabilize the normal functioning of household.

The present study reveals the fact that the consumers of the study area prefer non-commercial sources of energy over commercial sources. The result of the regression model for all implies that among the four significant determinants household income and the size of the family are the major determinants of energy use. The correlation coefficient between the education of the head and income level of energy is as very high as 0.626. It is significant at five percent level. Secondly the correlation coefficient between price of energy and education of the head is as high as 0.564. It is significant at one percent level.

The conclusion reached is that energy consumption can be reduced using improved heating and cooking ovens with greater efficiency. Among the rural households, people belonging to high income brackets still cling to non-commercial energy sources despite their obvious disadvantages because their every day need for heat energy to prepare feed for animals and food for men and women in their employ is always on the increase.

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Recommendations

- Literacy programme, especially for women, should be organized to create awareness about energy efficiency in energy end-use. If literacy rate is improved among the family members, they can easily understand the modern energy programmes.

- A special programme for improving the construction of kitchen has to be included in the existing household energy programmes.

- Awareness of kitchen hygiene, ventilation and maintenance of store should be brought to the person responsible for cooking through audio–video visual media.

- There is also a need to provide investment support or subsidies to investment in renewable energy sources.

- The households should avoid the reheating of food to save not only energy but also the nutritional value of food.

- Effort to produce improved stoves that reduce pollutant emissions needs to be encouraged, considering the large number of women and children that would benefit from this.

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WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN KANYAKUMARI DISTRICT

What steps should be taken to overcome India's water deficit?

The challenge before India is to develop a comprehensive and Integrated Water Management Programme to reduce the possibility of floods and droughts. Local communities and Panchayats should be empowered and trained to institutionalize water management efforts.

1. The first and foremost step should be taken by the government is about linking of rivers. We can arrest the problems of floods and droughts to a maximum level by linking rivers. If we have to prevent the damage due to the flood and reduce the severity of drought, we have to harmless the surplus water and distribute it to the drought affected areas. We can also partly store it in proper storage system so that it can be available during non-monsoon months. If we succeed in doing all these, we will not only save the loss arising out of the extent of Rs.2400/- crore on an average per year and we will also save the recurring expenditure of Rs.1200/- crore incurred by the government as short term relief measure.

2. Linking Local river basins

Local rivers which flow into the sea during floods and normal conditions may be diverted into the basins areas for irrigation and drinking water purposes through step dams, irrigation canals and water storage lakes and ponds. This will increase the irrigated area and drinking water facilities. Every State should be asked to inter connect their own rivers.

3. Water harvesting

There is an urgent need for propagating water harvesting and transforming it into a mass movement. Water harvesting and water recycling should become mandatory for all the states. To improve water availability we have to build check dams, develop water sheds, desilt ponds and rivers, clear the inlets and outlets to the ponds and water bodies. Tamil Nadu government has taken the lead and made water harvesting as a mandatory requirement for all houses. Studies indicate that this has resulted in considerable improvement in ground water level.

Need for Water harvesting:

1. To improve the ground water quality
2. To raise water in wells and bore wells
3. Surface water is inadequate to meet our demand
4. Rapid industrialization and urbanization
5. Over exploitation of ground water

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6. To arrest seawater ingress
7. To reduce power consumption
8. To improve the vegetation cover
9. To avoid flooding of storm water drains.

In addition to water harvesting, water recycling is essential for large consumers such as hotels, public institutions and industries. The recycled water may be used for agricultural needs. This will reduce the per capita requirement of water to nearly 25% of the present consumption

4. Afforestation

Various civil structure like contour bunds, gully plugs and percolation tanks may be constructed over the catchment areas to conserve water for recharging into the ground. Besides, other measures like afforestation should be adopted. Trees not only increase but also conserve the rainfall of an area. The conservation of forests in catchment areas is important to curb the ongoing water crisis in the country. If the catchment forests are intact then the rivers and streams are healthy. This is a globally accepted norm.

5. Watershed Development Approach

Watershed development is one such approach which not only ecofriendly but also a hydrologically correct approach to efficient use of soil and water for more agricultural production. The total geographical area of the country is 328 million hac. Out of which 143 million hac is cultivated and 67% of the cultivated area is rain fed. Watershed development is a specific approach for sustainable development of people residing in the rain fed or drought affected areas. This approach has been one of the major intiatives undertaken by the govt., which is aimed at augmentation and stabilization of production and productivity, minimizing ecological degradation, reduction in regional disparity and opening up to grater employment opportunities and means of sustainable livelihood to the rural poor.

6. Control population Growth

Apart from this, the other easy and economical way to solve the ever increasing water problem would be to check the rapid population growth. It may provides a permanent solution to the problem. If the population of a country grows rapidly, there will be naturally be a proportional reduction in the per capita availabiltiy of water. From this point of view, India is facing a regime of stress, as the per capita availability of water declined from around 5,177 cu.m in 1951 to 1,869 cu.m in 2001. Given the projected rise in India's population by 2025, the per capita availability may drop further to below 1,000 cu.m. In terms of country – level indicators, such as situation would be considered as one of 'water scarcity'.

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