



# IMPACT OF MGNREGS ON FOOD SECURITY: EVIDENCES FROM SELECTED DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA STATE

**Dr. Sunitha V Ganiger**

Assistant Professor

Department of Studies and Research in Sociology

Tumkur University, Tumakuru

Kanataka state

E-Mail: [suvega2007@rediffmail.com](mailto:suvega2007@rediffmail.com)

## **Abstract:**

Food Security, poverty reduction and socio-economic well being can be considered as backbone of development. This can be achieved by enhanced education, employment generation, access to infrastructural facilities and increased purchasing power. However, to-date getting a required nutritious diet, clothing and shelter is challenging task and to curtail this MGNREGS was introduced with enormous objectives and policies. Thus, this paper makes an attempt to understand the impact of MGNREGS on food security and employment. This paper is a part of the major research project funded by UGC. The study is based on Primary study conducted in the districts of Bellary, Davangere, Gulbarga, Mandya and Shimoga in Karnataka state through a structured interview schedule comprising of 2500 samples. It is said that the development of a nation depends on the development of rural areas and this strategy can be achieved through MGNREGS. Thus, this paper makes an attempt to realize the intensity of the scheme in addressing food security issues.

**Keywords:** *Food security, livelihood, food and fodder for animals.*

**DOI Number:** 10.48047/nq.2021.19.9.NQ21160

**NeuroQuantology 2021; 19(9): 895-901**

## **Introduction:**

The concept of food security pertains to economic accessibility, availability, vulnerability, utilization, the necessary purchasing power to buy food and also the biological absorption of food in the body. A large population of the world is underfed and is suffering from malnutrition. Under nutrition is more than just access to food. Women and children from the weaker sections of population are the worst sufferers. The major reasons of food insecurity are increase in population, low rate of growth in agricultural sector, over-exploitation of natural resources, malfunctioning of the public distribution system and natural calamities such as droughts and floods. Therefore, food security

can be enforced by ensuring increase in production and productivity of agricultural sector, better targeting of the public distribution system, increase the purchasing power of the weaker sections, control of population explosion, to peck environmental degradation, liberal food export-import policy etc.

Food security, climate change, employment, agricultural development and sustainability are presently being debated as emerging issues in rural development. Sociological and economic issues are becoming pertinent in the process of socio-economic development and particularly in agriculture and rural development



After independence India launched massive agricultural and rural development programmes. However, the traditional institutions of caste, family, village, tribe and other loyalties were on the process of conflict with the process of economic development. There was slow growth and the desired results in rural development could be achieved but at a slower pace. Thus, thriving of agriculture and rural sector is critical for India's growth and global competitiveness. At present, agriculture growth has reached to the optimum level of its land and water resources availability. The rate of growth in this sector is lagging behind the other sectors of the economy. Experts are now suggesting the need for second green revolution to make agriculture an attractive and a viable economic activity.

The sustainable development can be achieved only through sustainable agriculture and rural development. The main objectives of sustainable agricultural development include a steady increase in agricultural productivity, enhancement of food production and security of food supply, development of rural economy, increase in income and improvement of backward conditions in rural areas.

#### **MGNREGS: Ab-initio**

MNREGA is the most important and ambitious of all the rural development programmes. Guarantee of employment, involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and creation of productive assets are the main features of MNREGA - These programmes are being periodically reviewed to remove the defects and introduce new measures.

In the words of Bagchi KK "The MNREGA is a multiplier—based demand stimulus in this time of recession. To explain, multiplier is the Keynesian concept where the money put in the hands of the people results in greater output through each consecutive round of spending. The rural population has a higher propensity to consume; so, the effect of the multiplier is greater. This, combined with public investment through the NREGA would stimulate private investment through the accelerator. The accelerator is another Keynesian concept where a spiraling output

also ends up resulting in higher rates of private investment. This typical multiplier accelerator interplay would affect the impact of NREGA. Such synergy would lead to a spiral of growth that is sustainable in economic and ecological terms".

#### **Backdrop of MGNREGS:**

Jean Dreze, a Belgian Economist, who is currently with the Delhi School of Economics, is the Chief author of the scheme.

The Maharashtra government was the first to introduce an Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS) in the 1970s, which guaranteed work at slightly below the minimum wage. In 1980, the national version of the EGS programme was named National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) without the guarantee element included. The enactment came out partly as a result of the sustained campaign by academics and activists across India. Significant efforts were made by campaign groups to highlight the crisis of food and work availability being faced by large numbers of the marginalised communities in rural India. The NREGA, as finally enacted was a diluted version of the "citizen's draft".

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is an Indian job guarantee scheme, enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005. The scheme notified on 7th September 2005, one of the flagship programmes of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has become operational throughout the country from first of April 2008. It aims at better 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 choice of works suggested in the Act addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment is maintained on a sustainable basis. State Governments, Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) as well as non-government organizations would be involved in implementing the law.

#### **Coverage**

The Act was notified on 200 districts in the first phase with effect from February 2<sup>nd</sup>

2006 and then extended to additional 130 districts in the financial year 2007-2008 (113 districts were notified with effect from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2007, and 17 districts in UP were notified with effect from May 15<sup>th</sup> 2007). The remaining districts have been notified under the NREGA with effect from April 1, 2008. Thus NREGA covers the entire country with the exception of districts that have a hundred percent urban population.

#### **Impact of MNREGA on Rural People's Food security and livelihood:**

Any policies and programmes have three types of impact on the society-short term, medium term and the long term. It may also affect a given society at three levels-the value system, the institutions, and the processes. MGNREGS is one of the most recent Acts of India and there are limited empirical evidences to present any observation regarding the medium term and long term effects as it is still in infancy stage. We also have insufficient basis to discuss the nature of impact of this Act upon the values or institutions. But there are enough studies to help us in finding out the short term as well as the procession aspects of the impact this step by the Indian state in the context of empowerment of the rural poor particularly the more vulnerable sections like women, SCs and STs. 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. Generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural- urban migration and fostering social equity, among others. MNREGA fosters conditions for inclusive growth ranging from basic wage security and recharging rural economy to a transformative empowerment process of democracy with its rights-based frame work and demand driven approach the impact of MNREGA on Rural People as tremendous there by giving a pivotal role to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in planning, monitoring and implementation in the process of rural development.

The major dimensions of the impact of NREGA can be summarized as the following that there is increased legitimacy on their

rights to work and this can be a challenge to poverty as there is increased employment opportunities even during the lean or non-seasonal time. Due to no discrimination, we can find that men, women, irrespective of caste or creed there is higher participation. The better wages compared to market rate and flexible timings and choice of their time encourages various people to participate in the scheme. This scheme has declined migration as the jobs are at your door step and all basic amenities are provided at worksite along with medical facilities. Since the villagers are involved in various developmental activities, they can give their fuller potentiality and thereby can create assets and this also propels the village to develop extensively. Thus, MGNREGS has not only improved the livelihood but also contributed to the rural development by involving the local people in all its endeavours.

#### **Review of Literature**

A survey of literature places a significant role in establishing the backdrop for any research work in social sciences. It is felt that justification of present study can be made by reviewing the available literature on the subject. MGNREGA has attracted a considerable amount of academic interest because of its features, size and implications for rural India. The main purpose of the review of literature pertaining to the evaluation of performances of NREGS is to give a proper orientation and perspective to the present work.

Based on secondary data in the study conducted by Sarah Choudary ( 2021) asserts that MGNREGA has created dignified jobs and has ensured productive and secure employment, social protection, rights, and participation in planning and are green in that they contribute to environmental sustainability, such as protection of the ecosystem, reliance on renewable sources of energy and thus they are directly related to climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. The study identifies that among the eight aims of MGNREGA, the most popular goals for MGNREGA to work towards in order to achieve sustainable goals in Assam are securing livelihoods, providing wage

employment, empowering women, and creating assets. The study found that the performance of the MGNREGA in the state of Assam is not nearly as satisfactory as one would want. When the figure for the state is compared to the figure for the country, the scheme might not work correctly in several dimensions.

A study conducted by Priyanshu and Nikitha (2017) entitled impact of NAREGA to achieve food security among rural household reveals that the scheme has brought out a significant change to children's wellbeing by reducing hunger, improving the health status of the family and also reducing the poverty and increasing of purchasing power. The study is based on secondary data.

**Rationality of the study:**

The present study aimed at understanding the prospects for Agricultural Revival through Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREG) programme in selected districts of Karnataka state. The need for such a study is imperative and relevant, and is continuous one and an ever-present challenge to sociologists and interdisciplinary. This study is of great help to planners, administrators and politicians to make the programme more successful.

**Statement of the problem:**

The present study has inter-disciplinary approach in identifying the socio-economic development of the farmers in terms of accessing for nutritional food, providing fodder to animals etc. The present study intends to examine the impact of MGNREGS on beneficiaries in addressing their agrarian crisis in terms of how the scheme helped in alleviating rural people livelihood, food security, reducing poverty alleviation and their impact on the socio-economic and educational empowerment of farmers and

their family members particularly in Karnataka State.

**Objective:**The major objective of the study is to examine the impact of MGNREGS on the accessibility of food security to both human beings and animals

**Research Design:** Descriptive Research Design

**Study Universe and Population:** Based on the reports of MGNREGS from 3 phases 5 districts is selected for the study, from each district 2 taluks with each 2 Panchayats and in each Panchayath 2 villages are selected for the study. So, over all 20 villages were selected for the study covering 10 taluks. Equal importance has been given to select backward and developed districts and geographical variations in the selection of universe. Accordingly, the study area comprises of Bellary, Davangere, Gulbarga, Mandya and Shimoga districts of Karnataka state.

**Sampling:** Stratified random sampling method is used for the study

**Sample Size:** Sample size comprises of 500 samples from 5 districts accounting to 2500 samples.

**Tools of data collection:** The researcher has made use of qualitative tools in the study. This study comprises of primary and secondary data. The primary data is collected through the in-depth interview method and participant observation by using Structured interview schedule.

**Analysis design:** An analysis design of the study is prepared in accordance with the research design and the objectives set for the study. Further, the primary and secondary data obtained from different groups involved for the study is entered into the computer and processed and analyzed with the help of SPSS package. Cross Tabulation and suitable statistical techniques relevant for the study is used to analyze the relationship among the variables under purview.

**Days of employment given in last year:**

**Table No: 1 Days of employment given in last year**

Name of the Districts		Bellary		Davangere		Gulbarga		Mandya		Shimoga		Total	
SL NO	Last year	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
3	Nearing to 50 days	76	15.2	175	35	134	26.8	93	18.6	146	29.2	624	24.96
4	51-75 days	271	54.2	228	45.6	234	46.8	243	48.6	206	41.1	1182	47.28
5	76-100 days	153	30.6	97	19.4	132	26.4	164	32.8	148	29.6	694	27.76
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work Survey

The Table No: 1 gives details regarding the days of employment provided in the previous year. About half of the beneficiaries, i.e. 47.28 percent (1182) have got 51 to 75 days of employment of which Bellary is the highest (54.2%) followed by Mandya (43.6%), Gulbarga (46.8%), Davangere (45.6%) and

Shimoga (41.1%) is the least. While 27.76 percent (694) have worked for 76 to 100 days, 24.96 percent (624) have worked nearly for about 50 days. The above table reveals that the scheme has been successful in generating employment which can be a path way to access various basic issues.

899

**Table No.2 : Sufficiency of wages for livelihood:**

**Table No: 2 The wages given by is sufficient for livelihood**

Name of the Districts		Bellary		Davangere		Gulbarga		Mandya		Shimoga		Total	
SL NO	The wages given by	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Always	360	72	362	72.4	308	61.6	354	70.8	131	26.2	1515	60.6
2	Sometimes	95	19	93	18.6	153	30.6	104	20.8	234	46.8	679	27.16
3	Never	45	9	45	9	39	7.8	42	8.4	135	27	306	12.24
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work Survey

The Table No: 2 tries to explore the sufficiency of wages for livelihood given by the scheme. About 60.6 percent (1515) have replied that the wages given are always sufficient. Under this, highest percent is found in Davangere – 72.4 followed by Bellary – 72, Mandya 70.8, Gulbarga 61.6 and least in Shimoga – 26.2. While 27.16 percent (679)

said that the wages are sufficient only sometimes and 12.24 percent (306) have replied that the wages given are never sufficient for livelihood. However, it can be noted that there is a difference of opinion between the group of four districts and Shimoga on the other side. The wages earned by the scheme benefit for accessing livelihood.

**Consumption of good food items:**

**Table No: 3 Consumption of good food items**

Name of the Districts		Bellary		Davangere		Gulbarga		Mandya		Shimoga		Total	
SL NO	Response	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Before	99	19.8	91	18.2	97	19.4	98	19.6	97	19.4	482	19.28
2	After	307	61.4	308	61.6	305	61	309	61.8	308	61.6	1537	61.48
3	No Change	94	18.8	101	20.2	98	19.6	93	18.6	95	19	481	19.24
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work Survey

The Table No:3 tries to analyses the change in the consumption pattern of the beneficiaries. It can be seen from the table

that after joining the scheme, 61.48 percent (1537) have been able to spend more on consumption of good food items. 19.28



percent (482) said that they were spending on consumptions of good food items even prior to the scheme and that remaining 19.24 percent (481) found no change in their consumption pattern. Out of 61.48 percent overall, highest is Mandya (61.8), followed by Davangere and Shimoga (61.6 each) Bellary (61.4) and the least from Gulbarga (61).

**Collecting wood and fodder for animals:**

**Table No: 4 Collecting firewood and fodder for animals**

Name of the Districts		Bellary		Davangere		Gulbarga		Mandya		Shimoga		Total	
SL NO	Collecting wood	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Before	10	2	11	2.2	19	3.8	10	2	70	14	120	4.80
3	After	278	55.6	268	53.6	275	55	278	55.6	355	71	1454	58.16
4	No Change	212	42.4	221	44.2	206	41.2	212	42.4	75	15	926	37.04
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work Survey

The Table No.4 extracts the changes in the time spent by the beneficiaries for collection of fire wood and fodder before and after joining the scheme. 58.16 percent (1454) of the beneficiaries said that they are able to spend more time to collect fire wood and fodder after joining the scheme, 37.04 percent (926) replied that there is no change in this activity and remaining 4.80 percent (120) replied that they were spending more

Indeed the scheme has helped the beneficiaries to avail good food items as the amount earned through the scheme was sufficient to meet their needs but not desires and thus, we can say that the scheme has quenched thirst and hunger but not the riches.

time to collect fire wood and fodder before the scheme. Those beneficiaries who could purchase fodder for animals, highest is from Shimoga (71) followed by Bellary and Mandya (55.6 each), Gulbarga (55) and the least from Davangere (53.6). Thus, scheme has helped the animals to have better fodder as the amount gained was not only used for their family members but also they could collect good fodder to animals.

**Addressing Unemployment issues:**

**Table No: 5 Unemployment**

Name of the Districts		Bellary		Davangere		Gulbarga		Mandya		Shimoga		Total	
SL NO	Response	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Before	20	4	18	3.6	18	3.6	15	3	15	3	86	3.44
2	After	101	22	116	23.2	91	18.2	105	21	101	22	514	20.56
3	No Change	379	75.8	366	73.2	391	78.2	380	76	384	76.8	1900	76.0
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work Survey

The Table No:5 explains the impact of the scheme on unemployed individuals. While 76 percent (1900) said that there is no change in the income of the unemployed, 20.5 percent (514) replied that their income has increased and the remaining 3.44 percent (86) have said that the income of unemployed prior to the scheme was better. Out of 76 percent, highest is Gulbarga (78.2) followed by Shimoga (76.8), Mandya (76), Bellary (75.8) and the least from Davangere (73.2).

**Conclusion:**

Thus, MGNREGS has been successful in creating employment through which it has also led to food security, increased standard of living, change in employment status, freedom for money lenders and sustainable development. Sociological and economical issues are becoming pertinent in the process of socio-economical development and particularly in agriculture and rural development.



**References:**

Priyanshu Tripathi and Nikitha Wadhwan (2017) “*Impact of MGNREGS to achieve Food security among rural household*” “*International Journal of Applied and Natural Sciences*, Volume-6, Issue-4, ISSN(P) : 2319-

4014 , ISSN € 2319-4022, Pp- 145-148 , July 2017

Sarah Choudary (2021) “Analysing the performance of MGNREGA in achieving sustainable development goals in Assam” *Webology*, Volume : 8, No.13, ISSN : 1735-188x, pg 2139-2147

