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MGNREGA'S IMPACT ON INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT IN SEAWEEDS CULTIVATING HOUSEHOLDS: PAMBAN VILLAGE OF RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT: India has vast experience in implementing the rural employment generation programmes after independence. In 2006, India launched a flagship programme called MGNREGS further it was transferred into the MGNREGA. This programme aims to providing 100 days of employment to rural households, it made a lot of positive economic aspects of rural households based on this background this paper is examine the MGNREGA'S Impact on Income and Employment in Seaweeds cultivating Households in Pamban Village of Ramanthapuram District of Tamil Nadu. This study undertaken in 2019-2020, the primary data were collected from 100 households, the households were selected randomly. The best performing village from the block was selected and the analysis has used simple percentage and average methods to find the variations in the sample household's data. Both quantitative and qualitative surveys have been conducted for this study. The study results show that the MGNREGA has created more employment days and the earnings of households have also increased. Majority of the respondents participated in the programme and particularly, a higher percentage of female respondents worked in this scheme. It is found that the average number of days of employment have increased after the introduction of MGNREGA. It is also clear that with the implementation of the MGNREGA scheme, the income has significantly increased to all the participating households, and the monthly expenditure has increased constantly. The impact on income resulted to increased savings, repayment of loans and ultimately reduction in indebtedness. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a positive impact on employment, wages and income generation after the implementation of MGNREGA. To be continuously successful, a sustained monitoring and social audit of the scheme is inevitable.

KEY WORDS: MGNREGA, Income, Employment, Seaweed

I. INTRODUCTION

India has vast experience in implementing the rural employment generation programmes after independence. From 1970 onwards the concept of creating employment in public works is not new: the Maharashtra model of rural employment has existed since the 1970s. The most critical difference now is that people's entitlement, by law, to employment, is mandated through MGNREGA for the entire country. Not much has changed in the form and substances of the public work programmes in the past 30-odd years, however. In many ways the MGNREGA is a replication of earlier schemes in letter and spirit, of course, with a legal guarantee. So, past failures do haunt the MGNREGA. The first set of programmes, the National Rural Employment Programme and the Rural Landless Employment Programme, began in the 1970s as clones of the Maharashtra EGS.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF MGNREGA

MGNREGA aims to achieve the objective as enunciated in article; 41 of the Indian constitution - *giving citizens the right to work*. The act is significant due to the following reasons; while the earlier wage employment programmes did not provide any guarantee of job, this act provided guarantee for wage employment is now uniformed all over the country like never before. It is a development initiative, chipping in which essential public investment for creation of durable assets, without which the growth can't be possible in the most backward regions of rural India. Almost the previous programmes were allocation based rather than demand based NREGA, which was launched in 2006, is considered to be unique from this standpoint.

III. OVERVIEW OF MGNREGA

One of the flagship poverty alleviation programmes contacted by the Government of India is MGNREGS. It was enacted by legislation on 25 August 2005. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for at least 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. 120 per day in 2009 prices. If they fail to do so the government has to pay the salary at their homes (Krushna et al. 2015).

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The numbers of studies were taken up by NGOs, researchers, institutions etc., which looked into the impact of MGNREGA on different parameters and also examined its number of implementation issues. Some studies found substantial positive impact of MGNREGA on wage rate, food security, migration whereas some studies reported minimum and delayed wage payment, non-payment of unemployment allowances, failure in halting migration, errors in wage calculation, number of operational bottlenecks, corruption etc. Most of the studies were centered on systemic defects rather than probing the impact on beneficiaries. Thus, a mixed bag of opinions was reported for the level of impact and function of MGNREGA. These conflicting views on implementation procedure, level of corruption and degree of impact of MGNREGA etc. Indicate that clear picture on function and effectiveness of act has yet to emerge. Further, there are many issues, implementing agencies right from faced by the state to district to village Panchayat.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rangarajan et al. (2011) the survey provides evidence of a significant improvement in wages of both rural-urban and male-female. The launch of the MGNREGA also had an impact on private sector wages which have increased much faster than the increase in the wages offered by the government for public works. Thus, the authors opined that the increase in incomes has possibly led to huge withdrawals of women from the labour force. Klaus Deininger and Yanyan Liu (2017) found that the benefits are most pronounced for the poor and scheduled castes and tribes households. They also concluded that increased income from casual labourers the primary channel through which the effects are realized. And no evidence that MGNREGA participation has resulted in higher private investment in land improvement. Rakesh Tiwar et al. (2019) the activities undertaken under the MGNREGA in Chitradurga district, Karnataka, were assessed for their potential to enhance and provide environmental services. The status of environmental services before and after implementation of the activities was examined and vulnerability indices were constructed and compared. The activities were found to have reduced the vulnerability of agricultural production, water resources and livelihoods to uncertain rainfall, water scarcity and poor soil fertility.

VI. OBJECTIVES

- To study the socio-economic profile of the respondents before and after the introduction of MGNREGA.
- To study the level of involvement and participation of households in MGNREGA.
- To analyze the MGNREGA's impact on employment, wage and asset generated in the study area.

VII. METHODOLOGY

The study undertaken in 2019-2020, the primary data for the financial year December 2019 to January 2020 were collected from 100 respondents. The secondary data were compiled from www.nrega.nic.in. Ramanathapuram district was selected where MGNREGA was implemented during its 1st phase (2006). The

study was conducted in the Ramanathapuram District of Tamil Nadu State. Ramanathapuram District consists of eleven blocks, the study carried out in the Mandapam block of Ramanathapuram district, Tamil Nadu. Pamban village were selected for the study, the sample size was 100 rural households, and the households were selected randomly. The best performing village from the block was selected by using the study and used simple percentage and average methods to find the variations in the sample household data. Both quantitative and qualitative surveys have been conducted for this study. The study was carried out with the help of both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from Pamban village of the Ramanathapuram district. The secondary data were collected from the published source of central and state government reports and documents of NITI Aayog data on rural development.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

MGNREGA is aimed to give employment opportunities to any Indian above the age of 18. Anybody above 18 years of age can enroll himself / herself in this scheme. They are entitled 150 days of employment for a year. The age of the working population directly influences the output of the economy. The scheme will benefit people who are unemployed seasonally and structurally from the evidence of the table even old people can contribute their earnest efforts in rural building.

Table-1: Classification of Age (in years)

Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
11-20	12	12
21-40	33	33
41-60	46	46
60 and above	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

In the present study, the age of the respondents has been grouped into four categories, such as <20, 21-40, 41-60 and 60 years. This pattern of classification would help in examining the ages of the respondents and their involvement in taking up the employment through this scheme. In general, the younger age groups which take up the employment in the local areas as well as in the far-away places. Of the surveyed 100 respondents, 12 per cent of them belong to the age of less than 20 years, 33 per cent of the and 46 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group of 60 and only 9 percent of the respondents are belong to above 60 years.

Table-2: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Educational Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	20	20
Primary	51	51
Secondary	19	19
Higher Secondary	10	10
Total	100	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

From the data presented in table 2 the education status is broadly grouped into three categories inclusive of illiterates. In total 100 respondents, 20 per cent of them are illiterate, 51 per cent of them belong to the level of primary education and 19 per cent of them in Secondary education, 10 per cent of them Higher Secondary

education level, Illiterate and level of education basic indicators of the level of development achieved by a society. Spread if Illiterate is generally associated with important traits if modern civilization. Hence it is concluded that Higher Secondary and Secondary are not willing to join this schemes, because this schemes introduced by the government for illiterate and rural poor.

Table-3: Employment of the Beneficiaries

Particulars	Before MGNREGA		After MGNREGA	
	Man days	Percentage	Man days	Percentage
Farm Works	80	30.77	60	19.68
Non Farm works	180	69.23	160	52.45
Other works	0	0	85	27.87
Total	260	100	305	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

The main objective of implementing MGNREGA programme is to promote employment opportunities for rural people so as to ensure their livelihood security. Accordingly, under MGNREGA programme, different works have been identified by the government on a prioritization basis in all the districts. Thus, employment is provided to several poor people to perform unskilled manual work. As evident from the results that there was altogether a significant positive impact on generation of employment opportunities to the rural poor from the activities identified under MGNREGA programme. As these activities are entirely new when compared to the earlier situation before implementation of MGNREGA programme and moreover these activities involve less drudgery and provide assured employment, there is a huge demand for these works among the rural poor. This rise in demand to work under the MGNREGA activities is further indicated by the drastic fall in the number of man days of employment both in agriculture and non-agricultural works. The results of employment details are presented in Table 3. As shown in Table 3 the total employment in many days before MGNREGA was 260 days and after the introduction of MGNREGA the employment days increased by 27.87 per cent to 305 days in Pamban village of Ramanathapuram District. In the village of sample beneficiaries derived 52.45 per cent of employment from Non Farm works that was mainly due to Fisheries related works.

The worst affected crop was paddy of labour employment generation was lost with high wage and labour scarcity. Non-Farm works like construction, painting and carpentry work had faced labour scarcity due to MGNREGA. Non-agricultural works as whole were impacted positively before and after MGNREGA and other then major MGNREGA works were directed towards digging ponds, road maintenance, digging channel, and tree plantation on land owned by BPL families or beneficiaries or land reform beneficiaries. The increase in the number of man days of employment under MGNREGA outweighed the fall in the number of man days in Farm and non-Farm works together. This contributed a positive impact regarding the net increase in the number of man days due to the execution of MGNREGA. The net positive impact of MGNREGA regarding generation of employment opportunities was highest in the Pamban village. This highlights an important finding that the impact of MGNREGA on generation of employment opportunities varies positively with the backwardness of the district.

Table-4: Details of Wage under MGNREGA

Wage per day	No. of Respondents	Percentage
170-220	100	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

The table 4 shows that almost all workers in Pamban village know the basic provisions of the scheme such as 150 days employment 80 per cent, minimum wages 180 and equal wage for men and women 100 per cent one third of job seekers are women they should receive wages monthly. Visits to the worksite revealed the range of wages realized by workers, the details of the same are given in the table below most stringently it can be seen that in each of the states, there were no observable differences in the wages received by male and female MGNREGA workers. Thus establishing that the clause of equal wages for men and women under MGNREGA

is in fact being adhered to nevertheless, the disparity in the wages across states is stark. A recent notification given by the Central Government has made it necessary for states to ensure that the minimum daily wages that are to be given under MGNREGA workers. 100 per cent of them reported that they got the wages from 170-220 Pamban Village respondents who got the wages through this scheme.

Table-5: Level of Earnings (in Rs.)

Earnings	Before MGNREGA		After MGNREGA	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 1000	5	5	00.00	00
1001-2000	38	22	10	10
2001-3000	31	25	19	24
3001-4000	19	33	62	62
4001 and above	7	19	9	9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

The above table 5 shows that sources of annual income respondents before and after MGNREGA Scheme in Pamban Village concerned the majority of the respondents did not earn from the sources of daily wage self employment the highest percentage of respondents income earned from aquaculture wages.

After the implementation of MGNREGA, household income gradually increased, especially within the landless or agricultural workers families. The table explains that the annual income has increased after joining MGNREGA. It shows that 78 per cent of respondents get less than. Hence it is concluded that in Pamban village respondents after joining MGNREGA scheme, they are having that much of income from all sources particularly MGNREGA Scheme. The respondents said that the scheme is help to us in different and help to overcome from the economical crisis.

Table-6: Level of Expenditure (in Rs.)

Expenditure	Before MGNREGA		After MGNREGA	
	No. of Respondents	Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Below 1000	0	0	0	0
1001-2000	17	17	18	18
2001-3000	38	38	30	30
3001-4000	36	36	38	38
4001-5000	9	9	14	14
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

Level of expenditure of the household before and after MGNREGA in Pamban Village overall particulars consumed from all the respondents. The table 6 explains that the workers are satisfied with the amount of food and others that they take, but none of them are aware of the quality and this has been identified to be one of the important reasons for the different types of ailments which they suffer. It also found that there is a relationship between before and after level of expenditure and among the MGNREGA respondents, before level of expenditure higher than after level of expenditure. In the above table 6 shows the amount of non food items of respondents in before and after MGNREGA. The respondents have paid more after MGNREGA between the amounts of Rs. 2000-4000. After the MGNREGA the respondents will get more income from MGNREGA and

their standard of living has increased. Due to this reason the respondents have bought more nonfood items compared to before MGNREGA.

Hence it is concluded that most of the respondents spend much more for food expenditure. The difference between food expenditure and wage rate of before and after implementation on MGNREGA. In both Blocks highly amount was spent on vegetables, pulses, grocery, tea/milk, and fruits rice bought from PDS in Pamban village respondents. Only this wage mostly is spent on drinking water because of some areas under the coastal region. After implementation of MGNREGA in Pamban village, respondents have worked in this scheme. Got some wages and spent an amount of money after MGNREGS increased food expenditure and water consumptions.

Table-7: Level of Saving (in Rs.)

Savings	Before MGNREGA				After MGNREGA				
	Bank	Post office	Self	Total %	Bank	Post office	Self	Total %	
Below 500	11	10	17	38	1	1	3	5	
500-1000	4	1	17	22	15	4	6	25	
1000-1500	13	0	5	18	18	0	10	28	
1500-2000	8	0	4	12	9	0	4	13	
2000-2500	5	0	5	10	11	0	8	19	
Total				100	Total				100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

Saving pattern of the people of the rural area is very much unorganized and the rural savings is also very low. The amount of money that an individual can save is directly related to his/her income. In rural areas the average per capita income is very low. The lower level of purchasing power among individuals will lead to lower savings. The pattern of lower purchasing power among rural masses is a basic characteristic of developing nations. The table 7 shows that only 11 per cent of respondents were able to save and repay debt before MGNREGA, but after MGNREGA 100 per cent were able to save. Apart from the wages the impact of the works undertaken in MGNREGA would also show impact in the household's overall income. Further, the table shows that all the respondents reported every month they are able to save and repay debt amounting Rs. 2000-2500 per month.

Table-8: Assets Creation (in Rs.)

Amount	Before MGNREGA				After MGNREGA				
	Jewellery	Home Appliance	Motor	Total %	Jewellery	Home Appliances	Motor	Total %	
20000	6	4	2	12	5	1	1	7	
40000	10	17	3	30	11	3	1	15	
60000	13	7	6	26	17	9	3	29	
80000	9	4	2	15	22	10	1	33	
1,00,000 & above	4	2	1	7	7	5	4	16	
Total				100	Total				100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

The above table 8 shows that the assets and liabilities of respondents in after and before MGNREGA, it's reported that after MGNREGA the assets predation was increased 100 per cent. While the amounts of Rs.60000-80000 respondents have bought the Jewellery in after MGNREGA because the majority of MGNREGA workers

are women they have a tendency to save Jewellery. Hence it is concluded that, before and after asset creation of the household highly increases on after MGNREGA most of the respondents spend on high amount of bought Jewellery. Because, the number of income earned in the category of one lakh and above was increased from 7 to 16.

Table-9: Liabilities (in Rs.)

Liabilities	Before MGNREGA				After MGNREGA				
	Bank	Money lenders	Friends	Total %	Bank	Money lenders	Friends	Total %	
1000	6	4	2	12	5	1	1	7	
2000	10	17	3	30	11	3	1	15	
3000	17	9	3	29	13	7	6	26	
4000	22	10	1	33	9	4	2	15	
5000 & above	7	5	4	16	4	2	1	7	
Total				100	Total				100

Source: Field data 2019-2020.

The above table 9 reported that liabilities of respondent in before and after MGNREGA in which the people have less liability in after MGNREGA while the respondent have an amount of Rs. 2000-4000 have liability in before and after MGNREGA. Hence it is concluded that most of the respondents before implementation of MGNREGA liabilities at the time of its not saving from any institution. Liabilities of the respondent before MGNREGA most of the respondent borrow from the Bank.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the primary data observation we make some suggestions for the future improvement. A multiple scheme and multi agency approach could also be a fruitful idea for the same purpose. The study has revealed that the socio-economic condition of the households working regularly under the MGNREGA scheme is relatively better than the other similar households in the rural area. Though the socio-economic conditions have been improving gradually, to fasten the rate of improvement some developmental initiatives can be integrated with the scheme for long periods. A multiple scheme and multi-agency approach could also be a fruitful idea for the same purpose. Convergence of MGNREGA with other schemes of public works would certainly improve the skill levels among workers.

Some training sessions may be organized to train the workers, to generate awareness about the MGNREGA. They may also be trained on payment procedures of banks or post offices to make the process less hectic. Incorporation of some special provisions for the elderly persons within the scheme is the immediate need to mitigate the problems being faced by the old persons. To make payments smooth a specialized section in banks and post offices to deal with MGNREGA works should be developed.

A proper monitoring mechanism should be developed that can assure correct procedure in job cards and Social Audit should be carried out in regular intervals. There should be the ability and willingness of the local government and panchayat to plan the implementation of works and programmes effectively. The panchayat officials, Block officials and other members of the Executive Committee have to be well-trained so that the MGNREGA guidelines can be followed properly. The MGNREGA is basically a poverty-eradication and employment-generation programme. So, it has to be kept into focus that the genuine poor and deserving people get the benefit of the scheme. The formation of an effective monitoring body is very much necessary for this purpose.

X. CONCLUSION

The study has been carried out in Pamban Village, Mandapam Block of Ramanathapuram District in Tamil Nadu. This village was chosen purposely because MGNREGA has been implemented for a long time. From this village, a total of 50 sample beneficiaries were chosen randomly. The primary data was collected through the in-depth interview, participant observation and through observation by using an interview questionnaire. Descriptive analysis has been carried out in this study. It has been found from the result that MGNREGA has created more employment days and the earnings of households have also increased. Majority of the respondents participated in the programme and particularly, a higher percentage of female respondents worked in this scheme. All the sample respondents particularly women utilized this scheme and worked as labourers. Most of the respondents have a primary level of education. It is found that there is an increase in the man-days of employment under MGNREGA.

It is clear that after the implementation of MGNREGA scheme the income has significantly increased to all the households. After the implementation of the scheme, the monthly expenditure had increased constantly. The increased income resulted in increase in savings and repayment of loan and ultimately reduction in indebtedness. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a positive impact on the employment opportunities, wages and income generation after the implementation of MGNREGA. To be continuously successful, a sustained monitoring and social audit of the scheme is inevitable. Hence, it is concluded that there is a positive impact on the employment opportunities, wages and income generation after the implementation of MGNREGA. If the success has to be continued, a sustained monitoring and social audit of the scheme is inevitable.

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