

Women Empowerment and Social Inclusion Through Mgnrega in Haryana

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ABSTRACT

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (NREGA) guarantees to provide 100 days wage employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to participate in unskilled manual work and first time Government accepted the responsibility of providing employment to the people. 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 livelihood on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. This is renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) from 2010 onwards. It is an Act that aims to strengthen the women employment by enforcing that about 33 per cent of total work force should be women and also that there will be equal wages for men and women. It is playing an important role in generating employment for women and empowering them by creating greater independence and self-respect among women. The present paper has made an attempt to study the participation of women in rural employment through MGNREGA in India and also in Haryana. It is appreciable that more than one third of employment generation provided to women at Haryana and national level, which indicate women empowerment in rural areas through MGNREGA.

- **KEYWORDS:** Economic Independence, Empowerment of women, Gender bias, Economic justice, Social Inclusion and MGNREGA

INTRODUCTION

Social inclusion and gender equality are the priorities of India's development agenda. But the skewed Indian progress is causing the developed regions and sections of the society to grow further and the deprived ones getting marginalized day by day. To overcome this duality we need the programs that effectively enforce a balanced growth across the regions and genders. Gender parity is a far cry for Indian socio-economic system due to the absence of commitment and time bound action plan to this end. Women are perhaps the largest disadvantaged group in Indian society. Indian Constitution like any other developing country guarantees to all the citizens, women or men, equality in opportunities and payment for a work. Things are changing fast in many parameters including the position of women in the society. In spite of the given provisions in our constitution, the harsh reality of deprivation and degradation continues. The old system of considering women as the property of men is still deep rooted as an instinct in the society. The changes have taken place in a significant portion of urban women, but their counterparts living in rural areas are only marginally affected by these changes. Male dominance in the villages even in panchayat governance, which is now represented by men and women both, is seen evident.

Women Empowerment refers to the creation of an environment for women where they can make decisions of their own for their personal benefits as well as for the society. Moreover women empowerment refers to increasing and improving the social, economic, political and legal strength of women, to ensure equal opportunity, equal rights to women and to make them confident enough to claim their rights such as:

- Freely live their life with a sense of self –worth, respect and dignity.
- Have complete control of their life, both within and outside of their home and workplace.
- To make their own choices and decisions.
- Have equal rights to participate in social, religious and public activities.
- Have equal social status in the society.
- Have equal rights for social and economic justice.

- Determine financial and economic justice.
- Get equal opportunity for education
- Get equal employment opportunity without any gender bias.
- Get safe and comfortable working environment.

All the above mentioned rights required for women empowerment can be ensured by providing financial independence to women. Financial independence of women can be ensured through generation of employment opportunity for women at nearby area of their residence. Rural area employment scheme MGNREGS create employment opportunity for rural women and empower them.

MGNREGS: AN OVERVIEW

The Government of India has initiated Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) which is not only a scheme but an Act that provides legal guarantee to work. The objective of this scheme is to improve the purchasing power of the people living below poverty line and to rural people by providing them semi or unskilled work in rural India. It aims to bridge the gap between the rich and poor in the country. MNREGA also aims to strengthen the women employment. The Act stipulates that about one third of the stipulated work force should be women and also that there will be equal wages for men and women. Thus MNREGA is playing a substantial role in improving women economically, thereby leading to greater independence and self respect. Under this programme (National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme), the government provides a legal guarantee to adult members of any rural household for one hundred days of employment in a financial year at the statutory minimum wage. The persons should be willing to do any type of unskilled manual work provided to them. The adult members of rural household have to submit their identity information with their name, age and address with photo to the gram panchayat thereafter, the gram panchayat registers the households after making enquiry and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of adult members enrolled and his or her photo. The registered person has to submit an application for work in writing for at least fourteen days of continues work either to panchayat or to programme officer. The panchayat or program officer will accept the valid application and issue receipt of

application and inform the relating to work to be performed by them. This information will also be displayed at panchayat office. The job card is the legal document that entitles person to apply for employment under the MNREGA. The employment will be provided within a radius of five kilometers, and if it is more than five kilometers, then extra wage will be paid. Registration is open throughout the year. If an applicant is not provided with the employment within fifteen days of receipt of his application, he shall be entitled to daily unemployment allowance. The kind of work to be performed by the people is notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Governments. the work taken up under the scheme shall be in rural areas and the State Council shall prepare a list of preferred work for different areas based on their ability to create durable assets, which include water harvesting, water conservation, irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works, renovation of traditional water bodies, drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation, flood control including drainage in water logged areas. Objectives of the study is analysed the women participation in employment generation under MGNREGA in India and Haryana.

Objectives of the study: The objective of study is to examine the women empowerment and social inclusion through MGNREGA in Haryana.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on Primary and secondary data which has been collected from the MGNREGA Portal. The present paper has made an attempt to study the participation of women in rural employment through MNREGA in India and also in Haryana. Indicators used in the study is trends in participation in employment, wage difference, role in decision making, to make their own choices and decisions, safe and comfortable working environment. Simple statistical tool per cent, ratio, table growth rate used to analyse the data.

WOMEN EMPLOYMENT THROUGH MGNREGA IN INDIA:

Presently, the MGNREGA is being implemented in the all rural districts of the country. MGNREGA has resulted into major financial inclusion where in bank/post office accounts have been opened for the families getting employment. Ministry has advised all the states to ensure payment of wages fully through the accounts. Table 1 presents the data relating to women

employment through MNREGA in India during various financial years. The data reflected an impressive participation of women in the employment generated through MNREGA.

Table 1: Women Employment Generated Through MNREGA in India during Various Financial Years

Progress	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Total Households Worked[In Cr]	5.1226	4.2874	4.14	4.79	4.99
Total Individuals Worked[In Cr]	7.6696	6.3117	6.22	7.39	7.97
% of Men Worked	43.84	48.87	49.77	52.03	52.93
% of Women Worked	56.16	51.13	50.23	47.97	47.07
% of SC Worked	21.32	22.55	22.25	22.93	22.79
% of ST Worked	17.61	18.55	18.38	17.88	17.92
% of Disabled Persons Worked	.68	0.65	0.67	0.66	0.57

Source: http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/all_lvl_details_dashboard_new.aspx

Data presented in table no 1 show that share of women in employment was 47.07 % in 2012-13, 47.97 % in 2013-14, 50.23 % in 2014-15, 51.13 % in 2015-16 and 56.16% in 2016-17 financial year. Share of women in employment through MGNREGA was increased 19.31% from 2012-13 to 2016-17. Continuously increasing share of women in employment is a sign of women empowerment. By getting higher share in employment women can achieve financial independence and feel empowered themselves. Under MGNREGA equal wages provide to men and women, hence it is helpful in bridging wage difference between men and women.

WOMEN EMPLOYMENT THROUGH MGNREGA IN HARYANA:

Although Haryana is one of among prosperous state of India but the picture of sex ratio is shocking to us. We must worry about lowest sex ratio and tries to improve this by empowering women. Table 2 presents the data relating to women employment through MNREGA in Haryana during various financial years. The data reflected an impressive participation of women in the employment generated through MNREGA.

Table2: Women Employment Generated Through MNREGA in Haryana during Various Financial Years

Progress	2016-17	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Total Households Worked[In Cr]	2.81	1.46	2.18	3.25	2.94
Total Individuals Worked[In Cr]	4.18	2.25	3.26	5.12	5.14
% of Men Worked	54.38	53.6	57.08	58.17	58.91
% of Women Worked	45.62	46.4	42.92	41.83	41.09
% of SC Worked	47.61	53.47	46.6	48.95	53.08
% of ST Worked	.01	0.01	0	0.01	0
% of Disabled Persons Worked	.08	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06

Source:http://mnregaweb2.nic.in/netnrega/homesciti.aspx?state_code=12&state_name=HARYANA

Data presented in table no 2 show that share of women in employment was 41.09 % in 2012-13, 41.83 % in 2013-14, 42.92 % in 2014-15, 46.4 % in 2015-16 and 45.62 % in 2016-17 financial year. Share of women in employment through MGNREGA was increased 11.02 %

from 2012-13 to 2016-17. Data shows that the share of women in employment generation in Haryana is less than at national level, however growth of women share in employment generation is higher in Haryana than national level. It shows that the picture of Haryana is better than national level in relative sense. Continuously increasing share of women in employment is a sign of women empowerment. By getting higher share in employment women can achieve financial independence and feel empowered themselves. Under MGNREGA equal wages provide to men and women, hence it is helpful in bridging wage difference between men and women. It is the sign of better future for empowered women in India.

Impact of MGNREGA on women empowerment:

The impact of the program on the women workers engaged is assessed in terms of certain parameters as presented in Table no3. Data from 100 female workers out of four villages of sirsa district is collected. The impact of MGNREGA as revealed by the responses of the sampled workers is significantly positive. The overall satisfaction level of the women is quite high and the highest is found for the factor of ‘wage difference elimination’ which is undoubtedly the achievement of the program.

Table No. 3: Impact of MGNREGA on women empowerment

Indicator	Significant effect (%)	Marginal effect (%)	No effect (%)
Family Income increase	80	18	2
Role in Decision Making	60	25	15
wage difference elimination	90	10	0
To make their own choices	71	16	13
Economic freedom	78	15	7
working environment	79	19	2
Recognition as working agent	60	28	12

Source: Field Survey

The responses in the range of 0 to 15 per cent are indicating ‘No Effect’ in the matters of their development. For example, only 0 per cent women found no effect of the scheme on ‘wage difference elimination’ and 2 per cent on Family income and working environment. This percentage is slightly higher on ‘Role in decision making’ (15%), ‘To make their own choices’

(13%) and 'Recognition as working agent' (12%). A strong positive impact of program on all the indicators of economic well-being of women workers is shown by the survey.

EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN

The extensive participation of women in MGNREGA works has been discussed above. Participation in the scheme has meant that women are coming out of their homes, not only to work but also to visit banks and panchayat offices, which they may not have done previously. This enhanced mobility comes with the higher status of being income earning workers. Although this study did not find any evidence of changing gender roles within the household as a result of women working on MGNREGA sites, it did find evidence of increased confidence among women.

CONCLUSION

MGNREGA is an Act that aims to empowering women by enforcing 33 % work force should be women and also that there will be equal wages for men and women. It is playing an important role in creating employment for women. The share of women in employment generation under MGNREGA in both Haryana and national level shows increasing trend. Share of women in employment through MGNREGA was increased 8.62 % from 2012-13 to 2015-16. Share of women in employment through MGNREGA was increased 10.81 % from 2012-13 to 2015-16. Data shows that the share of women in employment generation in Haryana is less than at national level, however growth of women share in employment generation is higher in Haryana than national level. It shows that the picture of Haryana is better than national level in relative sense. Continuously increasing share of women in employment is a sign of women empowerment. By getting higher share in employment women can achieve financial independence and feel empowered themselves. Under MGNREGA equal wages provide to men and women, hence it is helpful in bridging wage difference between men and women. A strong positive impact of program on all the indicators of economic well-being of women workers is shown by the survey.

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