

## **EVALUATION OF MGNREGA IN TERMS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT ON BENEFICIARIES : A STUDY OF SELECTED DISTRICTS IN HARYANA**

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**Abstract** *Since Independence, the successive governments have launched a number of employment and poverty eradication schemes in rural areas. The main objectives of these schemes were to generate more employment, improve quality of life, removal of poverty and economic disparity and creation of basic infrastructure and assets essentials for economic development in rural areas. It was a matter of concern for all the governments that in spite of their best efforts, the problem of unemployment and poverty never came under control. Therefore, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was notified on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 with an objective to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by generating wage employment through works that develop the infrastructure base of that area too. This paper aims to evaluate the financial and physical performance of this scheme, its impact on beneficiaries in Karnal and Yamunanagar districts of Haryana state and to suggest certain effective measures for its implementation. The mismatch between number of registered households and employment seekers shows that people are not fully aware about employment provisions of the scheme. A meager percentage of beneficiaries reported change in their socio-economic conditions due to this programme. Although State Government spent a huge amount of funds to popularize the programme among rural masses but expected results are yet to be achieved.*

**Keywords:** MGNREGS, Financial and Physical Performance, Impact on Beneficiaries.

## **Introduction**

The MGNREGA, popularly known as MNREGA, marks a paradigm shift amongst all the wage employment programmes planned and implemented for the livelihood security of working population of rural India by providing legal right to get employment. The Government strongly believes that mass of people in rural area also deserve partnership in progress of nation. So the social security measure makes the right to work a fundamental legal right for the first time. The Parliament has notified the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to conditions laid down in the Act. The Government, through this Act, aims at removing poverty and improve infrastructure essential for development in rural areas

This Act is applicable to areas notified by the Central Government. In its first phase, it was notified in 200 districts across the country including Mahendergarh and Sirsa districts of Haryana. In the second phase, Act has been notified in the financial year 2007-08 in an additional 130 districts including Ambala and Mewat district of Haryana. The remaining districts have been notified on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2007 where MGNREGA came into force w.e.f. 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2008. At present this scheme is implemented in 645 districts with 6601 blocks in India. In these districts, pre-existing wage employment programmes, the National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP) and Sampoorn Grameen Rozgar Yojna (SGRY) were merged with MGNREGA.

The rural households who are in need of wage employment and desire to do manual and unskilled work can submit their applications to the Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat shall registered the households and job card will be issued to the applicant households after verification. Gram Panchayat or Block Programme Officer shall provide unskilled manual work to the applicant within fifteen days of receipt of application preferably within a radius of 5 kilometers of the village, where the applicant resides. Minimum wages per manday applicable in the State would be paid to the person being engaged under the scheme. In case the employment is provided outside such radius, it must be provided within the Block and the laborers shall be paid 10% of the wage rate as extra wages to meet additional transportation and living expenses. The person registered under the scheme would perform the works as allotted to him by Gram Panchyat and notified in the Act.

## **Review of literature**

An attempt is being made to review the available literature on employment schemes implemented for generation of employment in rural areas. Various studies have been undertaken to evaluate the performance of MGNREGA in different parts of country. **Singhvi (2005)** viewed that there is need to explore and exploit the MGNREGA not merely for poverty alleviation and employment protection but for poverty elimination and employment promotion. The researcher suggested that the MGNREGA should be viewed as a broader policy measure for regeneration of rural India, not just as an employment guarantee scheme and emphasis must shift from doling out of funds on temporary works to the identification of sound and viable projects and enterprises which build assets and provide jobs in the longer run. Secondly, establish the highest standards of governance in the implementation of the scheme right from beginning to ensure high credibility and confidence in the scheme for its long term effectiveness in achieving the objective of rural employment generation. **Singh (2005)** viewed that implementation of different wage employment programmes for rural development in the past is problematic. The researcher pointed out that the statistical performance of earlier wage employment programmes like the NREP (1980), RLEGP (1983), JRY (1989), EAS (1993), JGSY (1999) and SGRY (2001) which were launched to provide assured wage employment to the rural people is not satisfactory. For effective implementation of programmes, the researcher suggests that instead of appointing programme officer at different levels, the panchayats at all levels (i.e. village, block, and district) should be given the responsibility for implementation along with the association of Self Help Groups with only one coordinating officer at the district level. **Singh (2007)** explored the possibilities of benefits to rural poor under MNREGA in Mahendragarh district of Haryana State. The researcher pointed out that the difference between the number of households registered and the number of applications received for work indicates the non-serious attitude of people towards the scheme. The number of households registered in all revenue blocks in the districts was more than 32,000 and an equal number of job cards have also been issued, but the number of families that have applied for work was about 16,000. Secondly, many households that got registered apparently backed out after merely taking the job cards. Yet, the beneficiaries who got works under the scheme and sarpanchs of villages expressed satisfaction over the implementation of the scheme. **Singh and Nauriyal (2009)** evaluated the MGNREGA

scheme in some selected districts of Uttarakhand and observed that only 4.23 percent villagers could get 100 days of job under MGNREGA. Most of the workers reported that they did not know that MGNREGA ensure 100 days of employment to a rural household as a matter of right. The study also revealed that there are demand-side and supply-limitations in confirming 100 days employment guarantee. Lack of interest of Sarpanch and Government officials, insufficient and less-trained staff and lack of effective participation in Gram Sabha meetings were the supply-side constraint. The demand-side limitations come from the lack of awareness among workers about the scheme. **CRRID (2010)** examined the impact of much-celebrated MNREGS of the Centre in Sirsa district in Haryana where the scheme was introduced in its first phase. An assessment of the implementation of scheme has found that the scheme has the least impact on Haryana. The study reported that most of the panchayats (more than 12 percent) implementing the scheme reported corruption in its implementation, delay in receiving funds and lack of staff. The study also revealed several irregularities in muster rolls being maintained at work sites, the involvement of contractors in violation of the MNREGS rules, lack of social audit of the scheme, mode of allocation of work on a consolidated basis and missing of adequate childcare facilities and a place to rest of workers at most work sites. More than 60 percent panchayats in Sirsa reported that the agricultural productivity had increased due to MNREGA, whereas 37 percent of panchayats reported that migration of labour had decreased as work was available to natives due to scheme. The study reports added that while all elected panchayat members had been trained for implementation of the scheme, only one gram panchayat had framed a social audit committee and no panchayat had constituted a grievance committee. **Central Rural Development Ministry (2010)** conducted a survey on the performance of MNREGA in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal during the period 2008-2010. The report of the survey gives startling facts that this scheme cannot escape itself from the menace of irregularities and corruption. The report gives the indication of corruption in distribution of job cards to the workers, muster rolls were not maintained accurately, sarpanchs and members of panchayats managed job cards for themselves, workers were refused to give the work, fraudulent presence of the workers on worksites for 33 days and paid only for one day, workers were threaten to keep mum and mis-utilisation of funds by officers involved in implementation. Controversies among project officers,

BDOs and sarpanchs of Gram Panchayats identified as the main causes of worst performance on the part of chief executive officer of the scheme. **Kaushil et. al. (2010)** conducted a study on planning and implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes in Sirsa and Mahendragarh districts of Haryana for the period 2006-07. The researchers observed that the functionaries for implementation of scheme i.e. DPCs, ADPCs, POs, BDOs, Gram Schiv etc. should be equipped with adequate knowledge, skill, attitudes and capabilities required for effective operationalisation of the scheme. Secondly, mobilisation of rural masses in general and target beneficiaries in particular, so that they do actually come forward to claim and obtained their rightful benefits under the scheme .As financial and physical performance of scheme is concerned, only 33.20 percent of total households applied for registration under the scheme and GPs had issued job cards to all registered households. In terms of financial allocation under the scheme, district Sirsa was far ahead of district Mahendragarh but in terms of utilization of funds, district Mahendragarh performed better with 95.20 percent fund utilization whereas district Sirsa utilized only 67.87 percent of allocated funds. The performance of district Mahendragarh was also much better as compare to Sirsa in terms of percentage of households (21.44 percent) completing 100 days of employment. **Sharma and Didwania (2013)** evaluated the performance of MGNREGA in district Jind of Haryana state. The researchers concluded that majority of elected members of Gram Sabha (96.88 percent) are aware about the scheme. As far as issuance of job cards is concerned 46 percent increase in annual compound growth rate was observed in district. A decrease of 5 percent has been noticed in the number of person who availed 100 days work under the scheme in 2010-11 as compare to 2008-09. The completed works has been increased by 135 percent and ongoing works increased by 3 percent annually. The growth rate in total expenditure was increased by 26 percent. Apparently, the physical performance of scheme increased by 135 percent and financial performance increased by 36 percent. The researchers suggested that programmes like MNERGA should be given more weighted in planning process so that poverty from villages can be reduced to a great extent.

The analysis of above review of literature shows that some more districts of state are need to be considered for the purpose of analytical study on effective implementation of MGNREGA. The present study entitled “**Evaluation of MGNREGA in terms of Implementation and Impacts on Beneficiaries: A Study of Selected Districts in**

**Haryana**” is a further attempt to explore the possibilities of improvement in effective implementation of the scheme in Karnal and Yamunanagar districts of Haryana.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The main objective of the study is to make an assessment of MGNREGA on employment generation. In this broader framework, the following are the specific objectives of the study.

- 1 To understand the role of nodal agencies involved in the implementation of scheme.
- 2 To measure the financial and physical performance of the scheme in the rural development.
- 3 To assess the impact of scheme on beneficiaries.
- 4 To identify the major constraints in implementation of the scheme and suggest effective measures accordingly.

### **Research Methodology:**

The study is of descriptive nature and based on secondary as well as primary data. The sources of secondary data are economic surveys, journals, reports, manual and instructions issued by Department of Rural Development, Haryana. The data for the period of 2008-09 to 2014-2015 used to measure the financial and physical performance of the scheme. Thereafter, a sample study of 160 beneficiaries, selected on basis of convenience sampling from eight villages i.e. two villages from each block and two blocks from each district namely Yamunanagar and Karnal chosen randomly, has been conducted to assess the impact of scheme on beneficiaries. The primary data is collected through schedules. The respondents were personally interviewed during 2014-15 to collect the exact and reliable information, regarding identification data comprising age, sex, educational status, social groups, occupational status, size of family, economic data relating to wage payment, number of mandays availed, change in income and consumption pattern, etc. The simple statistical techniques like average and percentage are used to analysis the data.

### **Institutional Mechanism of MNERGA:**

Implementation of the MNREGA starts from the Gram Sabha, which first declares the implementation of the scheme. The Gram Sabha also takes charge of popularizing the scheme for registration of people and also the procedures to demand works. The Act authorizes the Gram Sabha to recommend works to be taken up under the scheme, to



monitor and supervise these works, and to conduct social audits of the implementation.

The Village Panchayat is responsible for planning of works, registering households, issuing job cards and monitoring implementation of the scheme at village level. The Act advises appointment of employment guarantee assistant in each panchayat for this purpose. The Intermediary Panchayat (Block Samiti) is responsible for planning at the block level, and for monitoring and supervision. This tier of Panchayat is also given works for implementation from the 50 percent not implemented under the village Panchayat. Programme officer at the Block level under the overall direction, control and supervision of the District Project Officer, will assist the Panchayat Samiti in discharge of its function under the scheme. District Panchayat (Zila Parishad) is responsible for finalizing the district plans for MGNREGA which is a comprehensive plan of action for the district. District Panchayat can also implement works from the 50 percent non-village Panchayat pool. District Project Co-coordinator (i.e. CEO Zilla Panchayat) will be responsible for implementation of scheme at the district level, which will further assist the District Panchayat in discharging its functions.

The Deputy Commissioner is designated as District Programme Coordinator for implementation of the scheme in the district. The Additional Deputy Commissioner shall act as Additional District Programme Coordinator. The DPC shall scrutinize the plan proposals of the Panchayat Samitis. The State Government formulates regulations to facilitate the overall implementation. It sets up the State Employment Guarantee Council to advise the Government on implementation of the scheme, and to evaluate and monitor it.

### **Financial Performance of the Scheme**

The effective implementation of the scheme can be judged from total amount of funds available for expenditure. The amount of expenditure shows the availability of livelihood to unemployed force in rural areas. The key indicators to assess the financial performance of scheme taken up are: release of funds, total available funds and utilization against the available funds during 2008-09 to 2014-15. The performance of scheme in the state and its two districts considered for research is given in Table 1.1.

**Table-1.1: Financial Performance during 2008-15**

(Rs. in Lacs)

Year	District/State	Total Release of Funds (Centre+State)	Total Available Funds*	Total Expenditure	% of Expenditure with Total Available Funds
2008-09	Yamunanagar	573.35	657.05	458.20	69.74
	Karnal	121.65	267.61	203.00	75.86
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>14948.72</b>	<b>16429.79</b>	<b>10975.65</b>	<b>66.80</b>
2009-10	Yamunanagar	240.47	485.28	426.26	87.84
	Karnal	206.95	277.04	216.48	78.14
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>7086.99</b>	<b>13009.87</b>	<b>9427.17</b>	<b>72.46</b>
2010-11	Yamunanagar	91.03	318.48	223.69	70.23
	Karnal	47.92	640.79	134.27	20.95
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>7775.09</b>	<b>11358.20</b>	<b>10423.15</b>	<b>91.77</b>
2011-12	Yamunanagar	326.24	421.03	279.01	66.26
	Karnal	278.32	784.84	586.23	74.72
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>28304.08</b>	<b>29239.12</b>	<b>17043.37</b>	<b>58.29</b>
2012-13	Yamunanagar	435.42	577.44	435.36	75.39
	Karnal	825.03	1023.64	856.37	83.65
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>21085.25</b>	<b>33281.00</b>	<b>24279.23</b>	<b>72.95</b>
2013-14	Yamunanagar	726.38	868.46	682.54	78.59
	Karnal	1026.56	1193.83	923.56	77.36
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>26362.46</b>	<b>35364.24</b>	<b>25105.21</b>	<b>71.0</b>
2014-15	Yamunanagar	946.27	1132.19	1024.26	90.46
	Karnal	1642.54	1912.81	1786.41	93.39
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>5353.69</b>	<b>15612.72</b>	<b>15308.31</b>	<b>98.05</b>

**Source:** 1 Directorate of Rural Development, Haryana, 2 Economic surveys of Haryana

\*Total Available Funds include opening balance, funds released (centre and state) and Miscellaneous receipts during the year.

A close analysis of the table depicts that a total sum of Rs. 14,948.72 lakhs has been released to state in sharing of 90:10 from Centre and State during the year 2008-09. A total amount of Rs. 16,429.790 lakhs were available for utilization for the scheme out of which



only Rs. 10,975.652 lakhs has been utilized showing an achievement of 66.80 percent only. It is also clear from the table that the performance of districts is as similar as state. In district Yamunanagar, a sum of Rs.458.20 lakhs has been utilized out of total available funds of Rs.657.05 lakhs showing an achievement of 69.74 percent. As far as the performance of scheme in districts Karnal is concerned, the achievement of utilization of funds against total available funds is 75.86 percent. It means during first year of implementation of the scheme, rural poor remained non serious about their legal right to demand employment of 100 days from the Government. There is also evidence that people registered for employment and got job cards but never demand employment and kept the job cards as vital document as ration cards.

The performance of the scheme in subsequent years of its implementation in Haryana shows that total funds available counted an increase of 13.62 percent at compound annual growth rate from the period 2008-09 to 2013-14, whereas, the compound annual growth rate of expenditure is 14.78 percent during same period. The percentage share of expenditure to total available funds increased from 66.80 to 98.05 at state level during 2008-09 to 2014-2015. As far as performance of districts selected is concerned, the increasing trend in percentage of expenditure to total available funds over the years shows maximum utilization of the available funds under the scheme. In district Yamunanagar, the percentage share of total expenditure to total funds available increased from 69.74 to 90.46 and in district Karnal it increased from 73.86 to 93.39.

### **Physical Performance**

The important indicators for assessing the physical performance of the scheme taken are: number of households issued job cards, households demanded employment, number of households provided employment and generation of mandays. The physical performance of the scheme at level of state and selected districts is given in Table 1.2. An analysis of table depicts that the cumulative number of job cards issued to households increased from 549916 to 812546 (47.75 percent increase) during 2009 to 2015. The number of households demanded the employment under the scheme were 28.70 percent and 99.4 percent households got employment at state level in 2009-10. As far as district level is concerned, the percentage of households demanded the employments are 33.59 percent in Yamunanagar and 27.18 percent in Karnal in 2009-10. The percentage of

households provided employments are 97.58 and 99.93 percents in Yamunanagar and Karnal respectively in same period. The core theme of scheme is generation of mandays..

**Table 1.2: Physical Performance during 2009-15**

Year	District/ State	Cumulative Number of Households issued Job Cards	Number of Households demanded employment	Number of Households provided employment	Mandays Generated (in Lacs)				Number of Households completed 100 days
					S.C.	Others	Total	Women	
2009-10	Y.Nagar	22430	7536	7354	1.11	1.21	2.32	.77	269
	Karnal	21248	5777	5773	.95	.78	1.73	.73	210
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>549916</b>	<b>157839</b>	<b>156950</b>	<b>29.54</b>	<b>28.58</b>	<b>58.12</b>	<b>20.34</b>	<b>9356</b>
2010-11	Y.Nagar	27230	6475	6431	.84	1.17	2.01	.66	128
	Karnal	24218	6010	5988	.89	.75	1.64	.71	106
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>628745</b>	<b>179483</b>	<b>178628</b>	<b>27.21</b>	<b>26.91</b>	<b>54.12</b>	<b>18.65</b>	<b>4172</b>
2011-12	Y.Nagar	28813	5042	5015	.92	.68	1.60	.64	102
	Karnal	26912	9571	9456	1.05	.94	1.99	.72	118
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>678457</b>	<b>185236</b>	<b>174563</b>	<b>34.39</b>	<b>33.09</b>	<b>67.48</b>	<b>24.24</b>	<b>3852</b>
2012-13	Y.Nagar	32456	6782	6475	.90	.62	1.52	.62	142
	Karnal	35624	8476	8257	1.02	.91	1.93	.75	154
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>742356</b>	<b>201587</b>	<b>198756</b>	<b>43.49</b>	<b>40.48</b>	<b>83.97</b>	<b>33.41</b>	<b>3924</b>
2013-14	Y.Nagar	41253	12352	11475	.82	.52	1.34	.52	162
	Karnal	43689	13256	12789	.97	.81	1.78	.79	183
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>756452</b>	<b>198523</b>	<b>188756</b>	<b>39.11</b>	<b>39.39</b>	<b>78.50</b>	<b>32.89</b>	<b>3258</b>
2014-15	Y.Nagar	47523	14786	13587	.76	.54	1.30	.49	190
	Karnal	49826	16874	14879	.94	.61	1.55	.84	201
	<b>Haryana</b>	<b>812546</b>	<b>201478</b>	<b>198756</b>	<b>21.93</b>	<b>27.14</b>	<b>49.07</b>	<b>20.32</b>	<b>4059</b>

**Source:** Directorate of Rural Development Haryana, Chandigarh, Economic Surveys of Haryana

\* Women mandays are out of total mandays.

During 2009-10, 58.12 lacs mandays generated at state level out of which 29.54 lacs for SC and 20.34 lacs for women and 9356 households completed 100 days employment The number of mandays generated at districts level is 2.32 lacs and 1.73 lacs in Yamunanagar and Karnal respectively. The percentage of households demanded employment comes to 24.79 in 2014-15 at state level and 31.11 in district Yamunanagar. Whereas, percentage of household demanded employment shows an increase of 6.68 percent in Karnal during 2014-15 in comparison of 2009-10. The percentage of households provided employment also decrease at state and districts level in 2014-15 in comparison of 2009-10. A decrease in total mandays also noticed at state as well district level during 2014-15 in comparison of 2009-10 It clearly means that either the people of rural area are not aware about the scheme or there is need to modify the works listed in Act. Therefore improvements are required for effective execution in future.

### Impact on Beneficiaries

To arrive at meaningful conclusion about the scheme, the investigator approached the beneficiaries having sufficient diversity of socio-economic characteristics. Out of the total sample

of 160 beneficiaries, 57.50 percent are males and 42.50 percent are females. It seems that the provision of 1/3 of total employment to females is maintained by the Gram Panchayats. As age-wise diversity is concerned, the analysis reveals that most benefited people under the scheme belong to the age group of 21 to 30 years while the least benefited persons belong to the age group of 51 to 60 years. It seems that the people in the age group of 21 to 30 years are more concerned about the employment opportunities provided by the government. Beneficiaries contacted in the sample villages were by and large illiterate (65.0 percent) followed by just literate category (18.75 percent), primary school educated (7.50 percent), middle school educated (6.87 percent) and educated up to metric class (1.88 percent). It is also clear from the analysis that maximum advantage of this scheme has gone to the beneficiaries belonging to SC and BC categories. The beneficiaries belonging to general and other backward classes were 6.88 and 15.62 percent respectively. Occupational status of beneficiaries reveals that 80 percent beneficiaries were of landless category, 11.25 percent were cultivators who owned less than one hectare of land and 8.75 percent were of other occupational category such as street hawkers, petty shopkeepers, etc.

**Table- 1.3: Socio-economic Profile of Beneficiaries under MGNREGA**

Characteristics	No. of Beneficiaries	Proportion of sample
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	92	57.50
Female	68	42.50
<b>Age</b>		
18-20	21	13.12
21-30	82	51.25
31-40	32	20.00
41-50	19	11.87
51-60	06	3.76
<b>Education</b>		
Illiterate	104	65.00
Literate	30	18.75
Primary	12	7.50
Middle	11	6.87
Metric	03	1.88
Graduate	---	----
<b>Social Group</b>		
Scheduled Caste	72	45.00
Backward Caste	52	32.50
General Caste	11	6.88
Other Backward Caste	25	15.62
<b>Occupational Status</b>		
Landless labourer	128	80.00
Cultivator	18	11.25
Other	14	8.75
<b>Total</b>	160	100.00

**Source:** Survey.

Out of total 160 beneficiaries, majority (67.5 percent) of them have knowledge about the scheme. They availed the employment under the scheme but they were unable to recall the name and other details of the scheme. When the researcher asked about the sources of their knowledge, majority of them named the surrounding people, gram sarpanch and members of panchayats.

The registration of a household under MGNREGA has been done after a proper inquiry as per provision of Act. After this, a job card issued by the Gram Panchayat with photograph on free of cost. The investigator obtained the views of HHs pertaining to the procedures followed by GP for issue of job cards. 84.37 percent of the HHs got their job cards through Gram Sabha. Nearly 11.25 percent HHs have got the job card through oral request. 4.38 percent of the beneficiaries got their cards through door-to-door survey conducted by GP. No one applied to Gram Panchayat on paper to obtain their job cards. The job card holder may apply to the Gram Panchayat or BDO for employment as per the guidelines of the scheme. The researcher asked the beneficiaries whether they applied for the employment or not after getting job cards under the scheme and got the employment. Out of total 160 beneficiaries, 134 applied for the job to Gram Panchayat whereas 26 beneficiaries did not applied for job. The beneficiaries who did not apply for the job answered to the question of researcher that they are not aware about the provision that they have to be applied personally to the Gram Panchayat for employment after getting job cards. As far as availability of employment is concerned, majority of beneficiaries got employment after submitting the application to the Gram Panchayat.

The Gram Panchayat/Programme Officer at the block level will be responsible for making available the manual work within 15 days of application to the job seeker. The investigator made an inquiry from the beneficiaries about the time lag in seeking employment after giving the application. 8.75 percent got the employment within the prescribed period i.e. 15 days, whereas, 72.50 percent of the beneficiaries wait for 15 to 30 days and 18.75 percent beneficiaries for more than 30 days. It is clear that Gram Panchayats failed to provide the employment within the specified period.

As per the provision under the scheme, if beneficiaries are not provided the employment within 15 days of application, they are entitled to get the unemployment allowances. Liability of payment of unemployment allowance is on the State. Data reveals that out of total 160 beneficiaries, all of were view that no unemployment allowance was

paid to them by the Gram Panchayat/BDO. It was observed during the survey that most of the beneficiaries have no knowledge about the provision of payment of unemployment allowance in case of delay for more than 15 days in providing employment.

The main objective of this scheme is providing maximum 100 days of employment annually to each household as per the direction of Central Ministry of Rural Development to Gram Panchayat. A majority (68.13 percent) of them availed the employment for a period less than 15 days, whereas 21.87 percent beneficiaries availed employment for 16 to 30 days. None of the beneficiaries did not utilized 100 days employment since the scheme is in its initial stages and all of them are yet to get work allocation in near future according to the version of officials.

The works to be taken up under the programme should be in the nature of to create durable community assets for strengthening of the livelihood source on sustainable basis. The investigator inquired about the nature of works taken up under the programme by the Gram Panchayats from the beneficiaries. The data depicts that out of 160 beneficiaries, 76.25 percent beneficiaries viewed that repair of traditional water bodies i.e. village pond taken up under the scheme, 8.75 percent beneficiaries viewed that construction of CC gali taken up, 12.50 percent were of view that tree plantation on samlati land and along with road have been undertaken under the scheme.

Recording of attendance at the worksite is another important step in the overall process of carrying out works under MGNREGA. Gram Panchayat is required to maintain the record of each work separately for the description of work and payment of wages. Every worker is supposed to bring their job cards along with them for the purpose of attendance record and description of work done by them. The researcher asked the beneficiaries whether their signatures were taken at the worksite by Gram Panchayat. Data reveals that all the 160 beneficiaries recorded their attendance at the work site on the record maintained by Gram Panchayat. Out of total beneficiaries, 72 percent recorded their attendance by thumb impression and 28 percent of beneficiaries by signature.

As per the provision of the scheme, wages are to be paid according to Minimum Wage Act 1948 for agricultural labourers in the state, unless the centre notifies a wage rate which will not be less than Rs. 60 per day, which shall be equal to the working of 7 days. The researcher inquired from the beneficiaries about the amount of wages and mode of payment. It is clear from the data that all the beneficiaries irrespective of gender received

wage at increased rate as notified by government from time to time after the completion of work as prescribed and allotted to them by the Gram Panchayat. It is also clear that all the beneficiaries got their payment of work directly through their bank accounts. It means that no cash payment is made to the workers on the worksite.

The researcher asked the beneficiaries about change in their monthly income after getting employment under this scheme. 88.75 percent respond that there is no change in their monthly income as they got the employment for very short period under the scheme, whereas 11.25 percent beneficiaries record a minor change in their monthly income. The pattern of spending income over different items of consumption is as important as the growth of aggregate per capita consumption itself. With this in view, the information was derived from the beneficiaries regarding their consumption before and after becoming the beneficiaries under MGNREGA. Data regarding per capita monthly expenditure of the selected beneficiaries reveals that food and clothing were the major items of the expenditure followed in a descending by social ceremonies, medicine, other items and education. This priority order in terms of expenditure has not changed even after becoming the beneficiaries. The overall increase in the consumption expenditure in case of the sample has been 20.83 percent. What seems more important is that there has been considerable rise in the consumption expenditure of the beneficiaries, representing a mark

**Table-1.4: Beneficiaries per Capita Monthly Consumption Expenditure  
Before and After Employed under Scheme**

Items	Before	After	Increase
Foods	1000 (41.67)	1100 (37.93)	100 (10.0)
Clothing	450 (18.75)	600 (20.69)	150 (33.3)
Medicine	250 (10.42)	300 (10.34)	50 (20.0)
Education	200 (8.33)	250 (8.62)	50 (25.0)
Social Ceremonies	300 (12.50)	400 (13.80)	100 (33.3)
Other items	200 (8.33)	250 (8.62)	50 (25.0)
Total	2400 (100.0)	2900 (100.0)	500 (20.83)

**Source:** Survey \*Figures in parentheses are in respective percentages

up in their living standard during the scheme. As explained earlier that the scheme is in its



earlier stage and beneficiaries are yet to get the employment, therefore it will be too early to arrive at any conclusion about the insignificant change in the consumption pattern of beneficiaries.

### **Findings and Suggestions**

The findings based on survey of beneficiaries under the scheme show that majority of beneficiaries are illiterate and have no knowledge about each and every concept of the scheme. The Government should start a campaign to create awareness among masses through local media, posters and nuked natak by public relation department, etc. so that people become aware about the scheme and availed the more and more employment opportunities.

The 83.75 percent of the beneficiaries who got job cards apply for the employment and 16.25 percent did not apply for employment after getting job cards due to their ignorance about the procedure to get employment. Therefore, it is suggested that the procedure to get employment under the scheme should be made clear to all the beneficiaries by the Gram Sarpanch/Secretary at the time of distribution of job cards. Out of total beneficiaries, 91.25 percent got the employment after 15 days of application and none of them get unemployment allowances as prescribed in the guidelines. It means the Gram Panchayats are not performing their duties and get undue advantage of the ignorance of illiterate rural masses. Therefore, it is suggested that concerned officers must visit the Gram Panchayats to interact with the beneficiaries and entertain their complaints to redress their grievances.

68.13 percent of sample households got the employment only for less than 15 days and none of them succeeded to get 100 days employment due to nature of works as taken up by the Gram Panchayat. During the survey, the complaint regarding less employment opportunities from the beneficiaries were received and when the same was conveyed to the Gram Sarpanch, he excuse that there is no such work in the village as prescribed in the guidelines of the scheme. Therefore, there is a suggestion for the Government to make amendments in the guidelines and finalize the works under the scheme by considering the geographical condition of the area.

There is a complete transparent system in the scheme regarding maintaining muster roll and payment of wages. The researcher found that every Gram Panchayat update the muster roll during the work and deposit the payment of the workers in their bank account

after completion of works. As far as change in income-consumption pattern of the beneficiaries is concerned, it is found that there is no significant increment in the monthly income and the priority order in terms of expenditure has not changed even after becoming the beneficiaries. It is because of availing less number of mandays under the scheme. The researcher feels that if execution agencies succeed to provide 100 days employment to the beneficiaries in the coming years, the scheme may prove as fruitful as expected by the Government to strengthen the rural base of India.

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