



BETTERMENT OF SC AND ST COMMUNITIES IN VILLAGES OF ANDHRA PRADESH WITH REFERENCE TO MGNREGA (A Case study of Chadalavada village in Guntur District)

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ABSTRACT

The Paper presents the data-based research undertaken to assess the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) implemented in Andhra Pradesh. It also advocates the need to link agriculture with MGNREGA. The social economic and political development of selected households of Schedules Castes (SCs) and Scheduled tribes (STs) communities is presented as an evidence. A village called Chadalavada that falls under the Vemuru constituency in Guntur district, reserved for the Scheduled Castes is taken up for study. A sample of 120 job card holders belonging to SC communities called Mala and Madigas and ST communities known as Yerukalas and Yanadis was taken.

The main findings of the study are that the labour shortages during harvesting which are a serious challenge can be addressed by linking MGNREGA with the main activity of agriculture which is the bedrock of Indian economy. The MGNREGA led to a thirty per cent rise in the incomes of the families of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes communities selected for the study. The programme along with the main economic occupational activities and agricultural activities of the families influenced and elevated the political, social and economic status of these communities. The political elevation is that a member of the SC community stood for election to the office of the village sarpanch and the results showed that out of the ten members of the panchayat board eight are from the SC communities in the year 2011. The rise in economic standards are measured in terms of removal of distress caused by indebtedness to the village money lenders and pressure to sell away their agricultural products for any rate dictated by middlemen and selfish buyers. These communities are now able to undertake business activities like selling fish and maintaining piggeries. Seventy per cent of the ST households and seventy five per cent of the SC households possess electronic gadgets like television sets and other modern household appliances. Fifty per cent of the ST women and sixty per cent of SC women in the selected households possess small golden ornaments. They are now treated as equals with all other communities. These two communities have attached themselves to land the primary factor of production. Agricultural goods needed for consumption as food items and raw materials for agro-based industries are available in villages like Chadalavada.

The implementation of MGNREGA aimed at improving the cropping pattern and strengthening the competitiveness of the communities would go a long



way bringing about the ideal economic development with equal opportunities and living conditions for all; as the village is blessed with assured irrigation facilities like canal water from Nagarjunasagar canals and bore wells dug by individual farmers.

The paper is organised in four parts. The first part contains Introduction in which the research problem is presented and its importance and need are explained along with a small review of literature. The second part focuses on objectives and methodology. The third part analyses the data. The fourth part deals with findings of the study and offer suggestions.

Part-I : INTRODUCTION

The paper presents an assessment of the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) implemented in Andhra Pradesh on the social economic and political development of selected households of Schedules Castes (SCs) and Scheduled tribes (STs) communities from a village called Chadalavada that falls under the Vemuru constituency in Guntur district, reserved for the Scheduled Castes. A sample of 120 job card holders belonging to SC communities called Mala and Madigas and ST communities known as Yerukalas and Yanadis was taken. The study was undertaken in the month of July 2014. The selected communities are found in agriculture also.

Need for the Study

It is observed that the Government's National Rural Employment scheme has further worsened the situation with many villages facing severe manpower shortage. The scheme need be interlinked with the main agricultural activities. In this background, projects aimed at helping the poor families to improve off-farm incomes along with farm incomes through participatory technological interventions, application of eco-technologies, ICT enabled knowledge system, value chain and market linkage, and building their capacity which are being implemented now proves to need. This underlines the need for the study.

Importance of the Study

In the context of many farmers deserting their fields and becoming workers to lay roads or desilt canals and development benefits not reaching the targetted groups with only 5 per cent of them receiving benefits while 95 per cent are unable to gain benefits, studies of the present type assume great importance. Research programmes conceived recently are designed to use agriculture along with other interventions to address poverty and malnutrition.

Review of Literature

Development Planning in India has primarily been an exercise in poverty alleviation. The guiding principle of poverty alleviation found its expression in the anti-poverty programmes undertaken in the Five-Year Plans.



The strategies and programmes for rural development are the instruments of developmental planning in India. The programmes for rural development can broadly be classified as under.

- I. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)
- II. Wage Employment Problems (WEP)
- III. Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)
- IV. Food for Work Programme (FWP)
- V. Rural Housing (RH)
- VI. Social Security Programme (SSP)
- VII. Land Reforms (LR)

Part-II : OBJECTIVES, SOURCE OF DATA AND METHODOLOGY

Objectives

The study is undertaken with the following objectives.

1. To present briefly the implementation of the MGNREGS in the selected area.
2. To assess the impact of MGNREGS on the SCs and STs by estimating the improvement in the total incomes of the households from the SC and ST communities.
3. To establish the need for linking agriculture with MGNREGS changes in the socio-economic and political status of the SCs and STs.
4. To suggest measures for better implementation of the schemes to benefit the SCs and STs based upon the findings of the study.

Methodology & Selection of the Sample

In order to assess the impact of MGNREGS in the village of Chadalavada, a representative sample is taken from among the job card holders belonging to the SC and ST communities. The village profile is obtained from the Mandal Revenue Office and the details of the schemes implemented are obtained from the Mandal Development Office situated at Vemuru, the Mandal Headquarters. Chadalavada village comes under the purview of Vemuru mandal which is a reserved constituency for the SCs. The technique of judgement sampling is employed to select the respondents.

As per the Additional Programme Officer, Mahatma National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, Chadalavada, number of job cards issued were 428. From among these 426 job card holders, a sample of 120 is taken for study. The method of judgement sampling and purposive sampling are used to select the sample. The sample consists of 100 SC and 20 ST job card holders.

Part-III : ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

As per the information provided by the Mandal Development Officer 426 job cards were issued since the inception of MGNREGA. These cards were given to 64 households with 126 number of labourers. The wage component of the



expenditure is 1.34 lakhs. The employment generation is 1066 person days and the number of households completed 100 days is nil. This shows that the scheme has to be made known to many job seekers and its popularity can be increased by enlisting those who seek employment.

MGNREGS covers programmes like, Upliftment of Weaker section, Employment generation, Creation of Assets, Economic Extension, Real wage rate, Full utilisation of efficiencies.

The scheme envisages different types of works to be completed in an year. The works include water conservation, drought proofing, irrigation canals, provisional irrigation facilities, Renovation of traditional water bodies, Land Development and Rural connectivity. Table 1 details financial aspects and work performance during 2007-2011.

Table 1: Financial aspects and work performance of MGNREGS in Chadalavada village during 2007-2011

S.No.	Description of Work	Value in Rs.
1	Water Conservation	14,897
2	Drought proofing	Nil
3	Irrigation Canals	1,69,533
4	Provision of Irrigation Facilities	Nil
5	Renovation of traditional water bodies	Nil
6	Land Development	1,79,200
7	Rural connectivity	1,14,843
	Total	4,78,473

Source: Mandal Computer Centre, Vemuru.

Note: The data available is obtained to present the description of work.

Table 1 reveals the description of the work of seven types with the value of works in Rs.4,78,473.

2. Employment Generation

The aim of the MGNREGA is to generate employment to the job seekers. The job seekers are given job cards. Job card holders are from different communities such as, Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Backward Communities (BCs) and others. The employment generation in terms of person days is shown in table 2.



Table 2: Employment Generation under MGNREGA, A.P. Act during 2007-2011

S.No.	Community	Employment Generation	
		Potential demand	Person days generated
1	SC	31,000	3,788
2	ST	2,400	160
3	BC	2,200	120
4	Others	7,200	640
	Total	42,800	4,708

Source: Mandal Computer Centre, Vemuru.

Note 1: Potential demand indicates number of person days entitled to the respective households (100 days to each households)

Note 2: The data available is obtained to present the employment generation.

Table 2 puts forth employment generation during 2007-2011. The potential demand and percentage are 42,800 and 4,708 respectively for communities like SCs, STs, BCs and others.

3. Details of Progress of MGNREGS during 2007-11

Table 3 details progress of MGNREGS during the years 2007 and 2011 in Chadalavada village. The progress of the scheme is shown in table 3.

Table 3: Progress of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, A.P. during the years 2007 and 2011 in Chadalavada village

S.No.	Description	Number
1	Job cards registered (Households)	428
2	Job cards issued (Households)	428
3	No. of households which demanded employment	122
4	No. of individuals who demanded employment	95
5	No. of household given employment	122
6	No of individuals given employment	195
7	No. of works completed	10
8	No. of works in progress	16

Source: Mandal Computer Centre, Vemuru.

The table 3 is self-explanatory.

4. Crops grown by sample Respondents

The main crops grown in the village are rice, maize, red gram, turmeric, lemon and roots. In addition to these crops, jowar is grown to a level so that it can be used as cattle fodder. The most profitable crop grown in the village is maize. It is emphatically said that maize raised the standards of living of the farmers in the village.

The yield per acre of different crops in the village is shown in table 8, along with the prices ruling in the market.



Table 4: Yield per Acre and the economic value of the crops grown in Chadalavada

S.No.	Name of the crop	Quantity	Price in Rs.
1	Rice	35 quintals (75 kgs)	750 (75 kgs)
2	Maize	50-60 quintals	1,100 (100 kgs)
3	Turmeric	20-22 quintals	10,000 (quintal)
4	Lemon	20 quintals (70 kgs)	5,000 (quintal)
5	Red gram	4-6 quintals	4,000 (quintal)
6	Roots	25 quintals	3,000 (quintal)
7	Animal feed	20,000 kgs	100 (200 kgs)

Source: Computed. From the details provided by the Sarpanch and the respondents.

The improvement of social status can be explained by the members belong to these communities became capable of running for election for the post of the Sarpanch of the villages.

The implementation of the scheme provided impetus to increased yield of different crops. The details are provided in Table 4.

5. Growth of Income of the SC and ST Respondents

After explaining the increasing yield of different crops both the physical and financial terms the increase incomes of the communities are presented in table-5.

Table 5: Increase in Incomes of the respondents after the implementation of MGNREGS and other programmes

S.No	Increased incomes in the SC and ST households (in percentages)	No. of households
1	15-20	20
2	20-30	85
3	30-40	10
4	40-50	5
	Total	120

Source: Computed.

Table 6 reveals that 85 respondents are benefitted with increased incomes ranging from 20 to 30 per cent, followed by 20 whose incomes rose by 15 to 20 per cent. Only 10 households increased their incomes from 30 to 40 per cent. While only 5 had an increased income with a tune of 40 to 50 per cent.



Part-IV: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The main Findings of the study are:

1. The MGNREGS led to a thirty per cent rise in the incomes of the sample families. If the scheme is linked to agriculture the incomes would further rise.
2. Seventy per cent of the STs and seventy five per cent of the SCs possess electronic gadgets like television sets and other modern household appliances.
3. Fifty per cent of the ST women respondents and sixty per cent of SC women respondents possess small golden ornaments like earlets and rings weighing from 4 to 6 grams.
4. 60 per cent of the sample respondents are found elevated either as agriculturists or tenant cultivators from the status of agricultural labourers.
5. There is no child labour and children of SC and ST families are in schools.
6. In Andhra Pradesh, there are 327 market committees under its control 891 notified agricultural markets are functioning. They are intended to ensure profitable prices by avoiding middlemen, but it is found the minimum support price is not implemented.
7. It is observed that is Millers/Middlemen and commission agents are a menace for the upcoming farmers in the study area.
8. Scarcity of jute bags is another problem found out in the study area which causes distress to the small and marginal farmers who are mostly tenants.

SUGGESTIONS

1. It is necessary to link MGNREGA with agriculture to improve village economy
2. The farmers are to be trained to maintain crops and cropping pattern in an impeccable way to sustain International competitiveness of the crop yields.
3. A restructuring of village economy is needed to adopt to environment for survival in the era of global competition.
4. Some of the cultivators point out that supply of labour is comparatively less while compared to demand during peak agricultural seasons.
5. New strategies for rural development and new technologies for agricultural growth are required as globalisation leads to emergence of cut throat competitive environment.
6. Any strategy that has no linkage with agriculture would not bring forth the expected welfare of farming communities in the villages of Andhra Pradesh.



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