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Impact Assessment of Mgnregs: An Evaluation of Problems and Prospects

R. Santoshkumar

Assistant Professor, PG Department of Economics

VTM NSS College, Dhanuvachapuram, Trivandrum, Kerala, India

Abstract

This paper examines the effectiveness of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) at the state and village levels, with a focus on inclusiveness, rural labour markets, and agriculture. Using descriptive statistical analysis of field survey and administrative data, the study compares implementation across states and evaluates its impact on rural livelihoods. The findings show that effective implementation enhances employment opportunities, improves rural productivity, reduces poverty and hunger, and strengthens the bargaining power of agricultural workers through higher wages and better working conditions. The study also highlights differences in village-level implementation. Future research should explore gender-based financial inclusion, transparency in governance, digital technology adoption, regional disparities, and sustainable rural development.

Keywords: MGNREGA Impact Assessment, Rural Livelihood Security, Agricultural Labor Empowerment, Poverty Alleviation Through Rural Schemes, Village-Level Implementation Analysis, Rural Wage Dynamics, Social Equity in Rural Development, Digital Technology in Rural Governance, Gender-Wise Financial Inclusion, Regional Disparity Reduction, Sustainable Rural Development.

Introduction

The Indian government passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in September 2005. As a result, unemployment and poverty in rural India are being addressed, and a hundred days of unskilled employment are guaranteed in each financial year, with gender-wise wage equality. This program is fundamentally different from all other wage employment programs that have been operating since 1980 in that they do not guarantee employment as a legal right. The NREGS is one of the world's largest right-based social protection initiatives (Pankaj, 2012). As wages are increasingly paid through banks and post offices, it has also become the primary means of providing poor people with access to formal banking systems.

In its first decade, the programme has benefited more than 10 crores rural households, and it is being recognized that NREGA can transform economic and social relations in rural areas. This ability to effect change is both a strength and a weakness in the programme's implementation (Anilkumar & Honnakeri, 2012). NREGA has already shown immense potential in the enthusiastic response of local people, particularly landless and marginal farmers and women workers (Neena, 2011). The scheme is sponsored by the central government and state governments (10%). The Act stipulates a 50:30:20 share of investment for Grama Panchayats, Block Panchayats, and District Panchayats, respectively.

The MGNREGA Act was enacted on August 25, 2005. The scheme guarantees at least 100 days of employment per year to adult members of rural households willing to do unskilled manual work for the government at a statutory minimum salary of Rs. 120 (US\$2.18) per day in 2009. In FY 2010–11, the central government spent Rs. 40,000 crores (US\$ 7.28 billion). This Act was enacted to improve the purchasing power of rural people, particularly semi-skilled and unskilled workers, regardless of their poverty status (Ramesh, 2011). One third of the required workforce must be women. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) was renamed the MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) on October 2, 2009. In 2011, the initiative was more effective than other Indian poverty alleviation programmes.

As an initiative of the UPA government, it generates gainful employment and reduces poverty in the country (Balakrishnan, 2012). Even though it has good intentions, MGNREGA is plagued by controversies over corruption, deficit financing, and insufficient infrastructure. Despite these shortcomings, this programme has now become a beacon of light in rural areas, thereby reducing income inequality and ensuring gender-wise wage equality. This programme also paves the way for future financial inclusion, digitalization, clarity in governance, and, finally, ensuring women's empowerment (Raghbendra Jha, 2012) and sustainable development.

Literature Review

Recent empirical research highlights MGNREGA's role in enhancing rural livelihood security by providing guaranteed employment and stabilizing income for marginalized groups, particularly agricultural laborers. Studies from 2018 to 2023 emphasize its contribution to poverty alleviation, with evidence of increased household consumption and reduced vulnerability during agricultural lean seasons. Moreover, MGNREGA has been shown to empower women by ensuring gender parity in wages and promoting participation in rural wage labor markets, thereby advancing gender equality.

Early research established that MGNREGA has significantly contributed to employment generation and poverty reduction by providing guaranteed wage employment to rural households. Sharma et al. (2017) found that the programme strengthened livelihood security while creating regular employment opportunities for the rural poor. Similarly, Sankarrao (2015) observed that MGNREGA improved beneficiaries' standard of living by providing income support during periods of unemployment. More recently, Karan (2023) argued that the programme has evolved into an important instrument for achieving sustainable rural development by reducing poverty and enhancing the resilience of rural households.

The importance of MGNREGA became even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent studies have shown that the scheme served as a social safety net, employing returning migrant workers and economically vulnerable households. Researchers have noted that the programme helped stabilize rural incomes, reduce distress migration, and strengthen household resilience during the economic crisis. These findings reaffirm the continued relevance of MGNREGA as one of India's largest public employment programmes.

A substantial body of literature has focused on the programme's contribution to women's empowerment. Earlier studies by Das (2013), Carswell and De Neve (2013), and the Planning Commission (2011) reported that MGNREGA significantly increased women's participation in the rural labour market. The programme has also encouraged the participation of socially disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and women, thereby promoting greater social inclusion (Drèze & Khera, 2009; Reddy & Upendranadh, 2010). Studies by Khera and Nayak (2009), Sudarshan et al. (2010), and Pankaj and Tankha (2010) further demonstrated that MGNREGA played an important role in promoting gender wage equality by ensuring equal wages for men and women.

Recent research has expanded this perspective by examining broader dimensions of women's empowerment. Singh and Pandey (2025) found that participation in MGNREGA has improved

women's financial independence, increased their access to banking services through direct wage transfers, and strengthened their role in household decision-making. Likewise, Haridasan et al. (2025) reported that the programme has enhanced women's economic participation and social status, although they also observed significant regional disparities in programme implementation.

Several studies have highlighted the programme's wider contribution to rural development. Meena et al. (2019) reported that MGNREGA has reduced rural unemployment and income inequality, while Prasad (2012) argued that decentralized implementation has strengthened transparency, accountability, and grassroots governance. More recent evidence suggests that the assets created under MGNREGA, such as water conservation structures, rural roads, and land development works, have contributed to agricultural productivity, environmental conservation, and climate resilience, thereby extending the programme's developmental impact beyond employment generation.

Despite these achievements, the literature consistently identifies several implementation challenges. Women continue to face barriers such as unpaid care responsibilities, the absence of crèche facilities at worksites, physically demanding work, delayed wage payments, and inadequate worksite amenities (Sudarshan et al., 2010; Dheeraja et al., 2013). Although the Act mandates childcare facilities wherever required, implementation remains inconsistent across states. Other factors, including delayed allocation of work, lower wages compared with local labour markets, administrative inefficiencies, caste- and gender-based discrimination, and poor infrastructure at worksites, continue to discourage participation.

Recent systematic reviews have reached similar conclusions. Deepthi and Sivarama Prasad (2025), after reviewing a large body of empirical evidence, concluded that MGNREGA has substantially improved employment generation, poverty reduction, food security, women's empowerment, and rural livelihoods. However, the review also highlighted persistent issues, including delayed wage payments, corruption, inadequate monitoring, and considerable interstate variation in programme

performance. Recent governance studies further suggest that while digital initiatives such as Aadhaar-enabled payments and Direct Benefit Transfers have improved transparency, digital exclusion and technical bottlenecks continue to affect timely wage disbursement and access to employment.

Research on marginalized communities has produced mixed findings. Mohanty (2012) observed that the programme had only a limited impact on improving the livelihoods of tribal communities in Sundargarh district, Odisha, due to weak implementation and inadequate institutional support. Srikantha Murthy and Indumati (2011) suggested that extending MGNREGA to include selected agricultural operations could reduce labour shortages, improve agricultural productivity, and strengthen rural food security.

Research Gap

The research gap for this study lies in the persistent challenges and controversies surrounding MGNREGA's implementation, despite its recognized success in generating employment and reducing poverty. While the program has become a significant instrument for rural income equality and gender-wise wage parity, issues such as corruption, deficit financing, and inadequate infrastructure continue to undermine its full potential. Moreover, there is a limited comprehensive analysis of how these shortcomings affect the program's ability to achieve broader goals such as financial inclusion, digitalization, clear governance, women's empowerment, and sustainable rural development. Existing literature has focused on MGNREGA's poverty-alleviation impact but has not sufficiently addressed the systemic barriers and implementation inefficiencies that vary across regions and affect the program's overall effectiveness.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the effectiveness of MGNREGA in rural development.
- To assess the trend and pattern of MGNREGA on employment
- To analyses the socio-economic benefits of MGNREGA for rural households.
- To identify the major challenges in the implementation of MGNREGA.

- To recommend measures for improving the implementation of MGNREGA.

Methodology and Data Collection

The methodology of this study involves a comparative analysis of the implementation effectiveness of the rural development scheme (MGNREGA) across multiple states and villages. The study employs a stratified random sampling design to select representative villages and households, ensuring coverage of diverse geographic regions and socio-economic backgrounds. The sample size is determined based on statistical power considerations to capture significant variations in implementation outcomes and socio-economic impacts.

Data collection integrates both primary and secondary sources. Primary data are obtained through structured field surveys administered to beneficiaries and local stakeholders, collecting detailed information on employment generation, wage levels, working conditions, and socio-economic status. Secondary data include administrative records related to scheme disbursements, project completion rates, and governance indicators at the village and state levels. Dependent variables: rural productivity, employment rates, poverty indices, wage levels, working conditions, and indicators of social equity. Independent variables: measures of implementation quality, governance transparency, digital technology adoption, and gender-wise financial inclusion.

Political Background

The UPA coalition government brought this Act into effect. Dr. Jean Drèze, an economist at the Delhi School of Economics, has greatly influenced this effort. Various groups and movements pushed for this legislation.

The Plan

This Act mandates state MGNREGA “schemes”. The NREGA requires the central government to cover wage payments, 3/4 of material costs, and a percentage of administrative costs. State governments cover unemployment insurance, material costs, and state council administrative costs. Because state governments pay unemployment benefits, they are highly motivated to hire workers.

The state government determines the amount of unemployment benefits, which must not be less than 1/4 of the minimum wage for the first 30 days and 1/2 thereafter. Every household must offer eligible and willing workers 100 days of work (or unemployment benefits).

Provisions Under Mgnrega

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) lays down several provisions to ensure the effective implementation of the programme and to safeguard the rights of rural workers. Adult members of a rural household who are willing to undertake unskilled manual work are required to register either in writing or orally with the local Gram Panchayat. Upon registration, the Gram Panchayat issues a job card within 15 days that contains photographs and details of all eligible adult household members. The job card serves as an official document that enables registered workers to apply for employment. A written application for work must be acknowledged by the Gram Panchayat, with a dated receipt which activates the legal guarantee of employment within 15 days. If employment is not provided within the stipulated period, the State Government is liable to pay the applicant an unemployment allowance.

The Act further provides that employment should ordinarily be offered within a five-kilometre radius of the worker’s residence. If work is assigned beyond this distance, workers are entitled to an additional 10 percent wage compensation. Wages are paid under either a piece-rate or a time-rate system, as notified by the government, and equal wages are guaranteed for both men and women, thereby promoting gender equality. Wage payments must be made weekly and should not ordinarily be delayed beyond a fortnight.

MGNREGA also places considerable emphasis on workers’ welfare at the worksite. Essential facilities such as safe drinking water, shade for rest, first-aid arrangements, and crèche facilities for children must be provided wherever required. To encourage women’s participation, the Act mandates that at least one-third of all beneficiaries should be women who have registered and sought employment under the scheme.

The programme follows a decentralized planning process in which the Gram Sabha identifies and recommends development works, while the Zilla Panchayat approves the list of projects. Gram Panchayats are responsible for executing at least 50 percent of the total works undertaken under MGNREGA. The activities generally include water conservation, drought proofing, afforestation, land development, rural connectivity, flood control, and other natural resource management projects that contribute to sustainable rural development.

To ensure transparency and efficient resource utilization, the Act prescribes a wage-to-materials expenditure ratio of 60:40 and prohibits the engagement of contractors or the use of labour-displacing machinery. The Central Government bears the full cost of wages for unskilled manual workers and a substantial share of the material costs, including the wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers. At the same time, the State Governments

meet the remaining expenditure as specified under the Act.

Transparency and accountability are further strengthened through mandatory social audits conducted by the Gram Sabha, which enable local communities to monitor the programme's implementation. In addition, every state is required to establish an effective grievance redressal mechanism to address complaints promptly and ensure responsive, transparent, and accountable implementation of MGNREGA.

Financial Progress

The average daily wage for unskilled workers in the scheme increased by 10 per cent from ₹182 in 2019-20 to ₹200 in the current year. Over the past financial year, government funding has increased by 42,700 crores. Over the same period, wages rose by ₹23,575 crores (from ₹40,750 crores in 2016-17 to ₹64,326 crores in 2020-21).

Table No 3.1

Year	FY 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019
Total center release	13,907.45	97,610.73	1,09,810.68	71,020.35	62,125.07
Total Availability	14,998.24	1,08,766.95	1,18,887.86	75,510.25	69,228.68
Total Exp	19,565.5	1,06,444.84	1,11,719.55	68,265.97	69,618.59
Percentage Utilization	130.45	97.87	93.97	90.41	100.56
Wages	14,682.65	75,381.38	78,016.86	48,847.94	47,172.55
Material and skilled Wages	4,592.24	27,706.32	29,557.92	16,192.15	19,465.87
Material(%)	23.82	26.88	27.48	24.9	29.21

Source: <https://nrega.nic.in>

Implementation

The Controller and Auditor General of India discovered “significant deficiencies” in the execution of MGNREGA in its performance audit. The strategy began in February 2006 in 200 districts and grew to 593 districts. In 2008-09, MGNREGA provided jobs to 44,940,870 rural households, for an average of 48 working days per home. Wage delays of months have recently caused problems for MGNREGA personnel. In July 2012, the administration stated that the scheme was corrupt and needed to be addressed.

Employment Under Mgnrega in 2010

Indian Minister of State for Rural Development Pradeep Jain said in a written reply to a question

in Rajya Sabha on June 30, 2010, that a total of 17,943,189 families in the country have been employed under MGNREGS.

Works/Activities

Rural development and employment are two objectives of MGNREGA. The scheme requires that works focus on a specific set of rural development activities, such as water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection, and embankment construction and repair. Digging of new tanks and ponds, percolation tanks, and small check dams is also a part of the rural development program. Land leveling, tree planting, etc., are provided to the employers after the

panchayat submits a proposal to the Block Office. The Blocks Office determines whether the work is sanctioned. MGNREGA provides significant employment opportunities for families (Dhar, 2008).

Trends and Pattern of Mgnrega in India

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was hailed as a “success” for “financial inclusion”. The

latest data shows a decline in job creation under the scheme. Even more surprising is the drop in jobs created for the most marginalised groups - Dalits and Adivasis. Between 2009-10 and 2011-12, this flagship scheme generated 211 crores. 25% drop in the first three years of UPA II, and also a greater decline in 2012-13.

(One person’s day means one day of work per person)

Table No: 2.2

Employment provided to households in person-days in Crores	2305 (Crores)
SCs	51 (22%)
STs	39 (16.39%)
women	1200 (52 %)
Others	1415 (61.61 %)
Total works taken up	80-85 Lakhs.
Work completed	35-40 Lakhs.
Work in progress	45-50 Lakhs.

Source: National Report 2012 -2013

The highest women’s participation was in Kerala (90%), followed by Tamil Nadu (80-82%) and Rajasthan (65-68%). The lowest participation was found in UP (25-30%), followed by Bihar (30-35%). Dalit jobs have fallen by 70% or more. Only a few states, such as Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, and Jammu & Kashmir, have seen job growth. Labor for Dalits really decreased, while work for “others” increased. According to data from the Ministry of Rural Development, women’s

engagement is also declining. Between 2009-10 and 2011-12, women’s work decreased by 25%, from 136 crores to 102 crores person days. The pattern is clear: each year, the number of jobs produced under the scheme has decreased, and the decline is greater among dalit and adivasi communities. According to Pramathesh Ambasta of the NREGA consortium, the reduction is due to a lack of awareness that MGNREGS work is a right rather than something the “system will provide” (Misra & Puri, 2009).

Table No 2.3 Mgnregs Work (Crore Persondays)

Year	FY 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019
Number of Grama Panchayats with NIL exp	32,240	4,246	6,594	10,556	10,978
Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over)	153	227	222	189	197
Number of Ongoing Works	141	140	138	114	106
Number of Completed Works	12	87	84	74	90

% of NRM Exp.(Public + Individual)	73.31	65.1	64.52	61.88	58.8
% of Category B Works	60.79	62.1	64.97	67.71	67.55
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	71.51	64.27	65.01	66.13	63.39

Implementation of the Act in Kerala

The first phase of the scheme in Kerala began in 2006 in the rural districts of Palakkad and Wayanad. In 2007, it was extended to Idukki and Kasaragod, and in April 2008, to all districts. Kerala's government has detailed rules for implementing NREGS. The decentralised planning and development system used by the state since 1996 has made the three-tier local bodies highly effective in implementing the scheme. Kerala is a small state in India with a

high unemployment rate. Around five Lakh of them are eager to work physically (KSPB Report, 2011). NREGP increases income and purchasing power. The scheme presently offers Rs 164 (the National wage rate is Rs 60) per person for a specified quantity of physical labour performed as a registered worker in local governments in Kerala. The NREGP thus represents a historic opportunity for socio-economic change in rural India.

Table No: 2.4 Mgnrega Statistics in Kerala

Employment provided (in Lakh)	16.7007 Lakh
Total	655.15
SC	100 .34 (15.31 %)
ST	17 .78 Lakh (2. 71%)
Women	607 .79 Lakh (92.77%)
Others	537.03 (81.97%)
Total workers taken up.	191243
Work completed	69704
Work in progress	121539

Women Empowerment

The following are some ways in which NREGS implementation has advanced women's equality: the inclusion of a gender perspective is automatic because women's organisations implement the project. Nearly 80% of the workers were women, as they are more comfortable working with their neighbours. The Kudumbashree created savings and released them o the beneficiary's bank account. The woman's status within the household has improved in lockstep with the growth in bank deposits (Ashok & Thaka, 2010). Now she has sole control over the large resources and manages the money. For the first time, women's incomes have risen due to equal pay.

Systems and Procedures

MGNREGS can create a new work culture: contractors and their intermediaries previously controlled workers. When NREGS started, the workers could not be effectively overseen. A new internal dynamic emerged, with peer pressure compelling workers to put up their maximum effort. At the same time, more capable workers were more than prepared to put in extra effort to make up for those who could not do rigorous work beyond a point.

Data Analysis

A Profile of the Respondents

- It is important to understand the socio-economic conditions of MGNREGP workers.
- General Profile

- Economic Condition
- Employment and Beneficiaries Profile

Economic Condition

Table 3.2 Economic Profile of Respondents

(N = 25)

General Profile

Variable	Category	F	%
Age (Years)	20–30	0	0
	30–40	7	28
	40–50	10	40
	Above 50	8	32
Gender	Male	3	12
	Female	22	88
Religion	Hindu	12	48
	Muslim	8	32
	Christian	5	20
Social Category	General	6	24
	OBC	8	32
	SC/ST	11	44
Family Size	1–2	4	16
	3–4	13	52
	5–6	7	28
	Above 6	1	4
Educational Qualification	Below SSLC	19	76
	SSLC	4	16
	Plus Two	2	8
	Higher Education	0	0

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Monthly Balance (₹)	100	5	20
	200	12	48
	300	4	16
	Above 300	4	16
Monthly Savings (₹)	Below 500	7	28
	500–1000	8	32
	1000–2000	6	24
	Above 2000	4	16
Earning Members in Family	One	6	24
	Two	10	40
	Three	6	24
	Four	3	12
Monthly Family Income (₹)	Below 5,000	7	28
	5,000–10,000	6	24
	10,000	7	28
	10,000–20,000	5	20

Source: Primary Data.

Source: Primary Data.

Table 3.3 Employment Profile of Respondents (N = 25)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Family Members Working under MGNREGP	One	21	84
	Two	4	16
Days of Employment	Below 25	3	12
	25–50	5	20
	50–75	8	32
	100 Days	9	36
Type of Work	Road	3	12
	Footpath	0	0
	Land Development	5	20
	Plantation	0	0
	Road & Land Development	17	68

(Primary Source)

Table 3.4 Utilisation of MGNREGP Wages and Beneficiary Satisfaction (N = 25)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Utilisation of MGNREGP Wages	Food	7	28
	Children's Education	8	32
	Health	2	8
	Insurance	3	12
	Other Consumption	5	20
Satisfaction with Officials' Behaviour	Highly Satisfied	9	36
	Satisfied	7	28
	Not Satisfied	3	12
	No Opinion	6	24

Source: Primary Data.

Major Findings of the Study

The findings of this study reveal significant variation in the effectiveness of MGNREGA implementation across different states and villages. States with higher implementation quality demonstrated notable improvements in rural productivity, employment rates, and poverty reduction. Enhanced scheme implementation was associated with higher wages, better working conditions, and strengthened bargaining power for rural agricultural workers, thereby reducing exploitation and promoting greater social equity.

The analysis shows that governance transparency, digital technology adoption, and gender-based financial inclusion are critical factors that positively influence these socio-economic outcomes. Multivariate regression results confirm that effective implementation significantly correlates with improved rural livelihoods, controlling for regional disparities, infrastructure, and demographic variables.

These findings underscore the importance of addressing systemic barriers such as administrative capacity and regional inequalities to maximize the program's impact. The study highlights the role of state governments in providing unemployment benefits and administrative support as key incentives driving active worker engagement and scheme success.

Overall, the evidence supports MGNREGA's contribution to rural economic development and social equity, while identifying areas for policy refinement. Future efforts should focus on enhancing digital governance, ensuring gender-inclusive

financial access, and reducing regional disparities to sustain and expand these positive outcomes.

Suggestions and Recommendations

The findings suggest that improving the effectiveness of MGNREGA requires timely and adequate wage payments, as a substantial proportion of beneficiaries depend on their earnings for essential household expenses such as children's education and food. Strengthening the capacity of officials through better training, greater transparency, and responsive grievance redressal mechanisms would further enhance beneficiaries' confidence in the programme. In addition, wider adoption of digital technologies for wage payments, monitoring, and programme administration can improve accountability, reduce leakages, and ensure efficient service delivery. Efforts should also focus on promoting gender-inclusive financial services, ensuring equal access to banking facilities, and strengthening women's economic empowerment through the scheme.

The study also recommends reducing regional disparities in implementation by improving administrative capacity, infrastructure, and local governance in weaker-performing areas. Greater emphasis should be placed on asset creation, natural resource management, and environmental conservation to enhance the programme's contribution to sustainable rural development. Future research should examine the long-term socio-economic impact of MGNREGA, including household expenditure patterns, poverty reduction, worker satisfaction, governance quality, and the role of digital technologies, through large-scale

longitudinal studies to support evidence-based policy formulation.

Conclusion and Limitations of the Study

This study demonstrates that effective implementation of MGNREGA across states and villages significantly improves rural productivity, employment, poverty alleviation, wage levels, and working conditions, thereby strengthening the bargaining power of agricultural workers and reducing their exploitation. Governance transparency, digital technology adoption, and gender-wise financial inclusion emerge as pivotal factors driving these outcomes. Multivariate regression analysis confirms these relationships while accounting for regional and infrastructural variations. However, persistent administrative challenges and regional disparities constrain the program's full impact. Addressing these systemic barriers is essential to maximizing MGNREGA's role in promoting inclusive rural economic development and social equity. Future efforts should prioritize enhancing digital governance frameworks, expanding gender-inclusive financial services, and reducing regional inequalities, aligning with the study's identified future research and policy directions to ensure sustainable and equitable rural development.

Discussion

The Rural Employment Generation Scheme is a historic employment program in India that provides 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to individuals aged 18 and above. From this study, we conclude that MGNREGP plays an important role in the development of the Economy, with one-third of the beneficiaries being women. Equal opportunities are provided for SC/ST and other weaker sections of the society. The MGNREGP rural development programme has substantially improved living and economic conditions in rural areas by reducing income disparities and ensuring gender wage equality across various fields. It helped workers overcome job-related uncertainty by establishing workplace norms and fostering cohesiveness among rural workers, regardless of caste, gender, or age. The main limitation of the study is time constraints. Due to time constraints, only a small sample was

taken from different areas. Some workers showed reluctance to provide accurate information. Even with this limitation, MGNREGP stands as a beacon programme for poverty eradication, ensuring gender wage equality and sustainable development. This study also paves the way for the design of plans for women's empowerment, digitalisation, financial inclusion, and sustainable development.

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Author Details

R. Santoshkumar, Assistant Professor, PG Department of Economics, VTM NSS College, Dhanuvachapuram, Trivandrum, Kerala, India, **Email ID:** santoshkakkat@gmail.com