

The Impact of MGNREGA on Economic and Environmental Sustainability in West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable development is the contemporary concept regarding the way of development. It refers to the economic prosperity should be sustain from present to future without the hampering of environment. It is the way of better utilization of resources to satisfy the present demand and save the resources for future generation to sustain the growth of development. Logically, it is based on economic, social and ecological principals to enhance the human development in sustainable manner. The MGNREGA, a policy of Indian government for the sustainability of rural livelihoods. The MGNREGA is not only a poverty alleviation program in rural area through reducing unemployment. Rather, it is the set of plans which is enhancing the rural development on the basis ecological principals. The present paper wants to examine the role of MGNREGA on employment generation which is indicating the economic dimension and the role on sustainability of environment of West Bengal. To understand the objectives I have used the some basic schemes of MGNREGA those are highly related with the objectives. Finally, I have suggested some recommendation for better implementation of MGNREGA.

1. Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is known as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme (MGNREGS) which came into legislation enacted on August 25, 2005. The main objective of this scheme is improving the rural economy providing hundred day's employment in a financial year. This program is not only improving the economic aspect in grassroots level also enhancing the social and environmental dimensions through different schemes. Like, Traditional Water Harvesting, Social Frosty, Flood Control, Rural Sanitation development, Drought proofing, Land Development, improvement of Rural Connectivity, Improvement of Irrigation etc. those schemes are the landmark of Socio- economic and environmental sustainability of rural India. In this present paper, we want to find out the impact of MGNREGA on sustainability of environment and the employment generation for economic growth of rural area in west Bengal.

2. Review of Literature in Brief

Literature review is an important part of research work; the previous related works are very beneficial to present research work. It helps to get idea about the topic and motivate to researcher to find out the research gap. It leads a new track for further research in related topic. In India near about 70% of the total population live in rural areas. It is clear to everyone without the development in grassroots level overall development of the country cannot be possible. For that democratic government of India has taken many action plans after independence for rural development. The MGNREGA is a multidimensional scheme which is able to enhance the social, environmental and economic sustainability in rural areas. Many researcher has been identified the multidimensional impact of MGNREGA in rural livelihood. In this present paper I want to find out the impact of MGNREGA on employment generation which is sustaining the economic

empowerment and environmental sustainability in rural area of west Bengal. Different scholar has been published the research work in this field. For this research work few relevant journals have been selected which are directly or indirectly related with the present topic.

Pandey, R. (2017), in this paper "MGNREGA and Its Role in Rural Development" mentioned the role of MGNREGA on economic development, asset creation and infrastructural development of rural India. He showed that four states (Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) accounted for 50% of the total expenditure made under the scheme. It was also seen that three states, Viz. Bihar, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh accounted for 46% of the rural poor but utilized about 20% of the funds and consequently only 20% of total households were provided employment under the scheme. This indicates that there was little correlation between poverty level in a state and the implementation of MGNREGA. K.T, Kiarthika(2014), in the paper "Impact of MGNREGA on Socio- Economic development & Women Empowerment", mentioned that MGNREGA enhanced the mobility, increased confidence and decision making skill among women. It is reducing the gender inequality through equal wages for men and women. Majhi, S. (2017), "Role of MGNREGA in rural development", in this paper, she identified the problems of rural India and mentioned the impact of MGNREGA in rural development. Pamecha,s. &Sharma,I, (2015), They studied in Rajasthan of 20 villages beneficiaries of Dungarpur district to understand the socio-economic impact of MGNREGA. The study reveals that MGNREGA is able to increase the income by providing employment, 51% households reported jobs have contributed Rs 5000 to 10000 in the yearly income of their family. The study examined that MGNREGA is an important factor to reduce the migration from rural to urban. Chakraborty,B. & Das, S(2014), they studied on impact of MGNREGA on water management in 10 revenue villages of Chistipur-I grampanchayat area of East Medinipur in west

Bengal and 16 revenue villages of Kharikamathani grampanchayat of west Medinipur in west Bengal. They had examined the different schemes of MGNREGA are improving the water management and developing the agriculture system through irrigation expansion. Sinha, A. Basu, A. and Katiyar, S, studied the "Adapting to Climate Change : Opportunities under MGNREGA" , in this paper showed the relationship between MGNREGA and ecology. They identified the contribution of MGNREGA on food security, Water scarcity management, ecological sustainability, health hazard management and extreme weather events through different schemes.

It is very clear to us that MGNREGA is a combination of different schemes and it has multiple functions. Proper application of the scheme can able to change the socio-economic and ecological setup of rural India. From above discussion it is clear that many scholars already published the so many articles using the different aspects of MGNREGA. This paper is not different from others. In this paper want to examine the role of MGNREGA on employment generation which is indicating economic dimension of MGNREGA and want to discuss the relationship between MGNREGA and Environment which is indicating the ecological dimension of MGNREGA. Our paper is totally based on secondary data necessary data have been collected from "Ministry of Rural development, Government of India".

3. Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are stated below.

1. To understand the role of MGNREGA to promote the environmental sustainability of rural area in West Bengal.
2. To study the impact of MGNREGA in economic development through employment generation of rural area in West Bengal

4. Research Methodology

The study will be based on secondary sources of data. For completing the study necessary information will be collect from the department of "Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India "also relevant articles, magazines will be followed.

5. Discussion

India is a second larger populated country in the world. Nearly 70% of total population of the country lives in rural areas. So, rural development is the most important factor for the overall development of the country. Many institutional reforms and plans had adopted after independence for the rural development .The set up the Panchayati Raj system was one of the most significant event in Indian democracy system for the development of grass roots level. It is taking significant role for the all kinds of development in rural India. Another side many plans had been adopted during the different five years plan for the improvement of rural socio- economic status. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act", (MGNREGA), an employment granted scheme which effected by legislation on August 25, 2005 as a name of "National Employment Guarantee Act. The main objective of this scheme is to provide employment for economic empowerment of the rural people at least 100 days in a financial year. The basic

economic activity of rural areas is that agriculture but it affected by seasonality. After completing the crop showing and harvesting in a year three or four months people are facing unemployment. So the seasonal unemployment and the disguised unemployment are the main forms of unemployment. From this experienced government was understood that create the employment facility in rural areas able to remove the unemployment. The MGNREGA is not only able to generate of employment facility also applicable to change the socio-economic, political and ecological set up of a particular region. It is a combination of various schemes those have multidimensional applicability and potentiality to change the existence situation in rural India. In this present we want to understand the impact of the MGNREGA on economic setup through employment generation and the role on environmental sustainability, in West Bengal.

Impact of MGNREGA on Environmental Sustainability:

The socio-economic and cultural life of people in rural areas is directly related with nature. Basically agro base economic activities and traditional cultural setup of the rural societies are directly related with various natural factors, such as seasonality, topography, forest, soil, river etc. The different schemes of the MGNREGA are highly correlated to protect the natural resources and enhancing the potentiality of natural resources in sustainable manner. To understand the impact of MGNREGA on environmental sustainability of west Bengal we have used the six important schemes and it expenditure in various financial year from 2014 -15 to 2018-19. The major important schemes are Water Conservation and water Harvesting, Land Development, Drought Proofing, Flood Control and Flood Protection, Micro Irrigation and Plantation. The water Conservation and Water Harvesting is a one of the most important scheme under MGNREGA. The main objectives of the scheme to protect the traditional wet land and its ecological environment, to conserve the surface runoff which is beneficial for recharge the ground water, sustaining the irrigation system during dry season and the water bodies are using for pisciculture. In different financial year total expenditure in this scheme of West Bengal was Rs2926564643.86 (2014-15), Rs3327580260.89 (2016-17) and Rs.347053128.97 (2018-19). The main aims of the Land Development is that to promote the land for ecologically, economically and socially suitable for sustainability. The main functions of the scheme are that to control the soil erosion, to reclamation of barren land, to protect the ecological environment of land and better utilization of land for economical sustainability. The expenditure in this scheme in different financial year of West Bengal was Rs.3142541043.78 (2014-15), Rs3206763010.2 (2015-16), Rs.4549383825.87 (2016-17) and Rs.536326422.03 (2018-19). A drought is a natural disaster when a region is getting below rainfall from its average precipitation. It may be short or long duration. Long term drought condition is very much harmful for the ecosystem, economy, agriculture and livelihood security of human beings of a particular region for the crisis of surface and ground water. In west Bengal near about 20 percentage of the total area are affected by drought. For the livelihood security of the drought affected region the MGNREGA was prescribed may plans such as Plantation, excavation of pond, emphasizing on tradition water harvesting and conservation and better management of

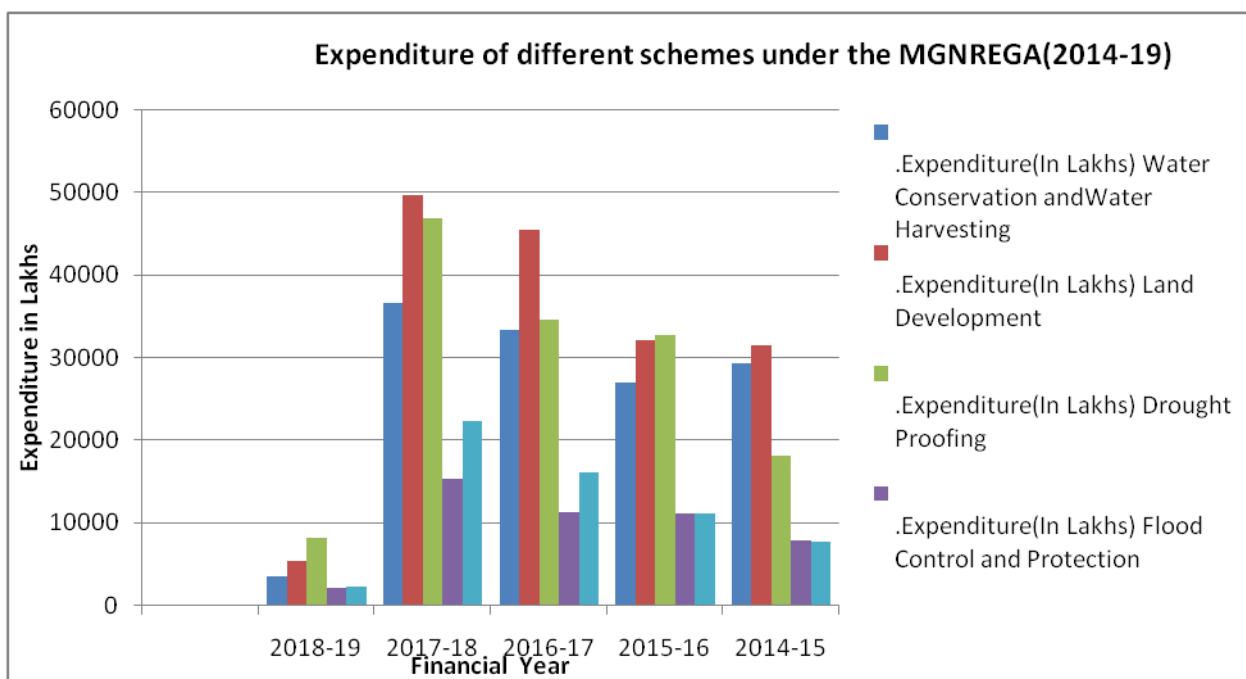
irrigation through micro irrigation system. For the implementation of the in west Bengal in different financial year expenditure was Rs.1803215091.36 (2014-15), Rs.3206763010.2 (2015-16), and Rs.814096095.26 (2018-19). A flood is a natural disaster which indicates the overflow of water and submerges vast area of a particular region. It has bad impact on economy, environment and people. According to irrigation department of West Bengal near about 37660sq.km flood prone area spread over 111 blocks. For the flood control the MGNREGA is taking different types of plans and programs, such as construction of flood control bandh(embankment) both side of river and along the costal line, plantation on flood control band which reduce the soil erosion, excavation of rivers and construction of check damp etc. For the implement of this scheme in different financial year

in west Bengal expenditure was Rs.784122721.77 (2014-15), Rs.1107135707.52920 (15-16), Rs.1119842449.3 (2016-17), and Rs.196367797.28 (2018-19). The "Micro Irrigation" is one of the important schemes under the MGNREGA; the main objectives of the scheme are better management of water, sustainability of agriculture through management of irrigation. This scheme is significantly effective in dry region. The major plans under the scheme are construction of irrigation channels, conservation of water through water bodies and construction of traditional water tanks. For the implement of the scheme in different financial year in west Bengal expenditure was Rs.759116914.72 (2014-15), Rs.1106438349.03 (2015-16), Rs.1603252179.09 (2016-17) and Rs.225154241.22 (2018-19).

Table.1 Details expenditure of different schemes in West Bengal

S.N O	Financial year	Expenditure(In Lakhs)				
		Water Conservation and Water Harvesting	Land Development	Drought Proofing	Flood Control and Protection	Micro Irrigation
1	2018-19	347053128.97	536326422.03	814096095.26	196367797.28	225154241.22
2	2017-18	3661541844.43	4966074176.76	4689427382	1534657518.09	2232251937.63
3	2016-17	3327580260.89	4549383825.87	3461738674.56	1119842449.3	1603252179.09
4	2015-16	2690448284	3206763010.2	3279731923.89	1107135707.52	1106438349.03
5	2014-15	2926564643.86	3142541043.78	1803215091.36	784122721.77	759116914.72

Source: Ministry of Rural development Government of India, MGNREGA.



The plantation is taking important role to sustainability of environment. The major significant of this scheme is that to maintain the natural ecosystem, to control the soil erosion and land slide in hilly region, to fulfill the forest base demand in local region, to protect the drought, flood and desertification, to sustain the local forest based tradition and culture and maintain the local weather condition for the physical and mental wellbeing for the living species within the natural habitats. For enhancing the forest area this scheme has taken the various plans and programs. Such as afforestation in the waste land, fringe zone of the forest, plantation through

agroforestry, plantation on the both side of the road, railway, plantation in drought and desert affected area and plantation on the bund of river and costal area. In this present paper to understand the role of MGNREGA on plantation, we have selected the major three programs related to plantation. During the period of 2018-19 for the scheme of plantation 3096019 plants were planted and coverage the length was 18750.566 km through the program of Maintenance of Road Side Plantation. Under the programs of Maintenance of Block Plantation 337581 plants was planted and coverage the area 3875.738ha and under the program of Maintenance of bund

Plantation 17396 plans was planted and coverage the length 206.175 km.

Table: 2 Status of plantation under MGNREGA (2018-19) in west Bengal

S.NO	Site for Plantation	Area/ Length(km/ ha)	Number of Plants Surviving
1	Maintenance of Road Side Plantation(in k.m)	18750.566	3096019
2	Maintenance of Block plantation(in ha)	3875.738	337581
3	Maintenance of Bund Plantation(in ha)	206.178	17396

Source: Ministry of Rural development Government of India, MGNREGA.

Impact of MGNREGA on employment generation in West Bengal:

For the economic empowerment of rural areas, the government of India is taking the many plans and programs during the different five years plans. But the enactment of MGNREGA in parliament was a significant event in Indian democracy system. The MGNREGA is a labour law which aims to provide the at least 100 days employment to rural people for their economic empowerment and livelihood security. But the potential function of the MGNREGA was more than job facility. It is enhancing the people purchasing power, helping the rural

infrastructure development and creating the fixed asset. Those are indirectly related with strengthening the rural economy. In present this paper want to understand the role of MGNREGA on economic empowerment through employment generation. To understand the impact of MGNREGA on employment generation in West Bengal we have selected the major four important factors. Those are Approved Labour Budget, Person days Generated so far, Average days of Employment provided per Household and Average Wage rate per day per person (Rs). The details financial progress of MGNREGA in west Bengal is mention following table (3).

Table: 3 Financial Progress of MGNREGA in west Bengal (2014-2019)

S.N O	Progress Statement	Financial Year				
		2018- 19	2017- 18	2016- 17	2015- 16	2014- 15
1	Approved Labour Budget(In Lakhs)	2800	2600	1877.6 1	2219.7 2	1882.9 7
2	Persondays Generated so far(In Lakhs)	3321.5 4	3125.5 6	2355.5 1	2864.9 7	1696.2 9
3	Average days of Employment provided per Household	76.5	59.63	40.44	46.88	33.14
4	Average Wage rate per day per Person(Rs.)	174.32	170.66	171.24	169.91	164.06

Source: Ministry of Rural development Government of India, MGNREGA.

From the above table we find out that positive trend of approved labour budget. During the financial year 2014-15, it was 1882.97 Lakhs and in 2018-19 it was 2800 lakhs. The person day's generation means the total number of created employment in a particular financial year. During the 2014-15 created man days were 1696.29 and 2018-19 it was 3321.54. So it is also giving the positive trend in expansion of employment. The average days of employment provide per household represents is to number of day's involvement of each household in employment out of 100days of a particular financial year. During the year of 2014-15 the involvement of household in MGNREGA of West Bengal 33.14 days out of 100 days but in a 2018-19, it was 76.5 days out of 100 days. The average wage rate per days per Person (Rs) is representing the remuneration of each person for involvement in work per day. During the time of 2014-15 the average remuneration was 164.06(Rs) and 2018-19 it was 174.32(Rs). From the above discussion it is clear that the positive trend of each factor indicating the positive growth of MGNREGA in west Bengal and sustain the strength of economic growth of rural people in west Bengal.

6. Conclusion and Policy Suggestion

The MGNREGA is not only a labour act to provide the employment the rural people; it is the combination of the different schemes and bearing the multi-dimensional action plan. The proper implement of the scheme can able to enhance the socio-economic and environmental sustainability of the rural area of west Bengal .For the proper implement of the MGNREGA scheme government should be aware about following suggestions. **Firstly**, the preparation of the action plan and proper implementation of the action plan in grass roots level is the most important for the success of MGNREGA. **Secondly**, the more involvement of people in Gamsangsad level(smallest unit of the Grampanchayat) during the time of preparation of action plan and give the priority of work on the basis of necessity. **Thirdly**, to control corruption is a primary requirement for the success of MGNREGA. Fourthly, to reduce the political affairs in work field is necessary for the success of plans. Fifthly, to give the more priority to create the fixed assets on the basis of availability of local resources, this is most essential factor for the sustainability of development. Sixthly, another important factor for the success of MGNREGA is that to implementation of works in the field on the basis of plan and estimate. Seventhly, for the progress of a work, dignity of people is significant factor.

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