

**A STUDY ON SELF EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN UNDER MGNREGA SCHEME IN  
SIVAGANGAI DISTRICT**

**S. Muthukumar**

*Ph.D Research Scholar, PG & Research Department of Commerce, Arumugam Pillai Seethai Ammal  
College, Tiruppathur*

**Dr.R.Kalidoss**

*Research Supervisor & Assistant Professor, PG & Research Department of Commerce, Arumugam Pillai  
Seethai Ammal College, Tiruppathur*

**Abstract**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is the flagship program of the Government of India that directly touches the lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth and development. The Act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural part of India by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every households whose adult members volunteer to do an unskilled manual work. The Act came into force in Sivagangai district on the 2nd February, 2006 as a first phase of its implementation among the 200 most backward districts of the country. It was later implemented in addition to 130 districts in phase II on the First April 2007. Under the MGNREGA facilitate a lot to attain the socio-economic empowerment of the women workers. It is also said that two-third of the women come out of poverty and attained food security. The sample size for the study is 100. The researcher had chosen only one block from sivagangai district i.e Thirupavanam Taluk. For choosing the taluk multi stage sampling method had been chosen and for selecting the sample beneficiaries proportionate sampling had been chosen. Therefore, this paper tries to study the self empowerment under the MGNREGA scheme in sivagangai District.

**Keywords:** Women, Self empowerment, MGNREGA scheme, Rural Poor.

**Introduction:**

Former Prime Minister Mr. Manmohan Singh launched the NREGs in 2006. In the same year the scheme was implemented in Palakkad and Wayanad districts. In 2008, it was extended to 14 other districts. The rate of wage has been raised from Rs229 to Rs240 this year. The local government plays a central role in planning and implementing the scheme. MGNREGA is enforced by gram panchayats. The preferred labor intensive tasks are water harvesting, soil erosion, flood control and drought relief, canal renovation, road development, tree plantation, land development for harijans and widows, helps in protecting environment, empowering the rural women and promoting social equity. The law lay downs that gram panchayat must have single bank account for NREGA works. The NREGA deputed social audit as a key implementation to make sure public accountability.

**Implementing NREGA has offered high levels of women empowerment like:**

1. As nearly 80% of the workers have been women, they feel comfortable working along their neighbours.
2. The earning capacity of women has boosted.
3. As the wages are paid through accounts the women could control cash materials and withdrawals by her own decision.
4. Even the savings have also been raised. NREGA is a 'green' and 'decent work'. Through conservation of natural resources, it protects farmers.

Unemployment continues to be the barrier for the poor to escape the poverty trap. The Act aims to provide a safety net to the poor and unemployed from the '**Poverty that Kills**'. The auxiliary objective of MGNREGA is regeneration and augmentation of natural resource base thereby to address the growing concerns of food security with emphasis on water and soil conservation through increasing squeeze on water availability and new irrigable land for expanded crop production, facilitating dual cropping and crop diversity which in turn Facilitates employment hence multiplier effect of MGNREGA. From the inception of MGNREGA the average daily wage rate has increased from Rs 75 (approximately \$ 1.66) to 179 (approximately 3.96 \$ in financial year 2017-18 at the national Level).

**Review of Literature:**

**Arya.A.P, Meghana.S (2017)<sup>1</sup>**, in their article examined that "Study On Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) And Women Empowerment With Reference To Kerala" the main objectives of the study is to identify the satisfactory level of women under NREGA. The researcher concluded that the study it can be summarized that the benefits occurred in the place under the scheme is high. Thus the women are empowered. There is no satisfaction among the workers regarding the wage rate. Facilities provided under Work site are satisfactory. There is a change in income after working under NREGA and even an improvement in living condition

**Dr. G. Xavier, G. Mari (2014)<sup>2</sup>**, in their article examined, "Impact of MGNREGA on Women Empowerment with Special Reference to Kalakkanmoi Panchayat in Sivganga District, Tamil Nadu" the main objectives of the study is to evaluate the impacts of MGNREGA on socio-economic empowerment of women in Kalakkanmoi Panchayat of Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu. The researcher concluded that NREGP is widely acclaimed that it provides employment, income and help the rural people to come out of the poverty. In Sivagangai district, MGNREGA generated 31, 30,809 cumulative person days during the

FY2013-14, out of it, majority of the beneficiaries 86.06 per cent are women. The study finds that in Kalakkanmoli Panchayat, majority of the women respondent (43.3%) earned Rs.3072 income during the late harvesting (April 2013). This increased income through MGNREGA helps to fulfill the regular needs of the household viz., food items, soap, cloth, utensil and essential healthcare items like painkiller, tablets. The majority of the women respondents 68.3 per cent are using MGNREGA income to satisfy their family food consumption.

**D Narasimha Reddy (2014)<sup>3</sup>**, in their article examined that “Impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on Rural Labour Markets”, the main objectives of the study is to analyze the Impact of MGNREGA scheme. The researcher concluded that the peak period labor shortages in agriculture are observed in several regions and are resulting in a number of changes - in the working hours, working day and MGNREGA work calendar. The ongoing process of agricultural mechanization is hastened especially in certain operations like ploughing and harvesting of paddy. A clear response to peak season agriculture labor shortage is the negotiated MGNREGA calendar that avoids implementing works during agricultural peak season and provides developmental works during the lean season. Such a time schedule though not universal is welcomed by farmers as well as workers wherever adopted.

**Statement of the Problem:**

Sivagangai District is basically an agricultural one. There are only few Industries present. The district has a vast waste land untapped ground water and large member of traditional storage structures of small and big water tanks are under badly poor maintenance. As a result many employment generation programs have been attempted in the state. The MGNREGP has really provided livelihood and income security decreased the incidence of poverty, increased food intake, reduced mental depression, and positively improved health outcomes. The main of the study is to identify the level of awareness and women empowerment among the household workers in villagers about MGNREGA scheme and Impact of MGNREGA scheme.

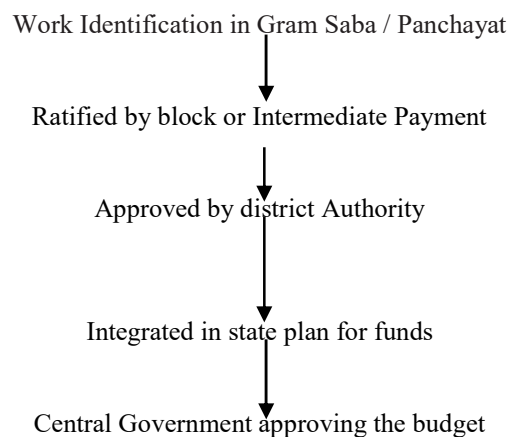
**Need for the study:**

NREGA helps in protecting environment, empowering the rural women and promoting social equity. The law lay downs that gram Panchayat must have single bank account for NREGA works. The NREGA deputed social audit as a key implementation to make sure public accountability. Implementing NREGA has offered high levels of women empowerment like as nearly 80% of the workers have been women, they feel comfortable working along their neighbours. The earning capacity of women has boosted. As the wages are paid through accounts the women could control cash materials and withdrawals by her own decision. Even the savings have also been raised. NREGA is a ‘green’ and ‘decent work’. Through conservation of natural resources, it protects farmers. Therefore, there is need to study the women empowerment of MGNREGA Scheme.

**Objectives of the study:**

The main objective of the study is to analyze the self empowerment of women under MGNREGA scheme in sivagangai district.

**Process Flow of MGNREGA Work**



**Research Methodology:**

The study comprises of registered beneficiaries of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee scheme. The researcher has chosen Sivagangai district in Tamil Nadu. Sivagangai District comprises of Nine Taluks, Twelve blocks, and that given below. There are 405 Panchayat under these 12 blocks. The total number of registered beneficiaries under this MGNREGA Scheme was 4, 94, 431. The researcher selected only Thiruppavanam taluk for the study because in thirupavanam taluk only more number registered beneficiaries under MGNREGA scheme. The total population under thirupavanam taluk 69090.

**Sample Size:**

The sample size for the study is 100.

**Sampling Technique:**

Proportionate Random sampling Method random sampling method is used to draw required samples for the study.

**Tools used for the analysis**

The tools used for the analysis is Correspondance analysis and Multiple Regression.

**Data Analysis & Interpretation:**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and Women Empowerment, May 2016 reveals that proper implementation is the success of this Act. The main aim is to reduce alleviating poverty, migration, limiting child labor.

**Income level of Women before joining and after Joining under MGNREGA Scheme:**

The personal income of the respondents represents the total income earned by the respondents from all possible sources during a period of one month. As the monthly income may have its own influence on the standard of living and survival of an individual, it is included as one of the profile variables. Saving is possible only when the income is surplus. In order to generate income level of women, people do various works. For these reasons, the concept of monthly income has been analyzed whether the level of income will be increased or not after Working under MGNREGA scheme.

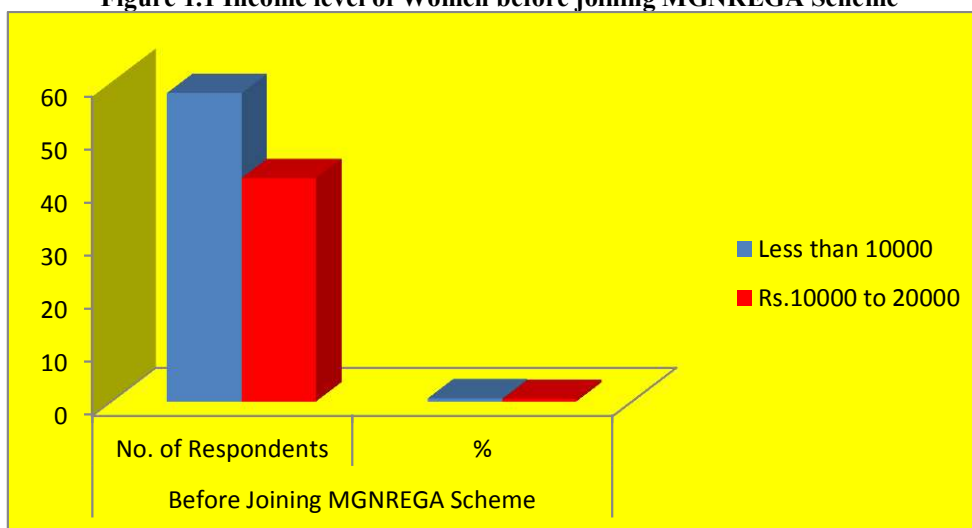
**Table 1.1 Income level of Women before joining and after Joining under MGNREGA Scheme**

S.NO	Monthly Income	Before Joining MGNREGA Scheme		After Joining MGNREGA Scheme	
		No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
1	Less than 10000	58	58%	18	18%
2	Rs.10000 to 20000	42	42%	82	82%
3	Rs. 20000 to 30000	-	-	-	-
4	Above Rs. 30000	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		100		100	

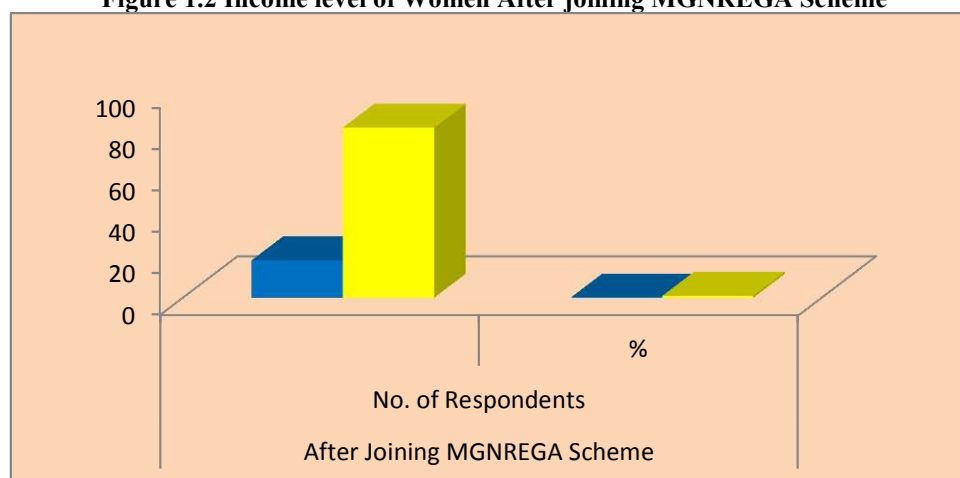
Source: Primary data

From the above Table 1.1 , the income level of beneficiaries before joining MGNREGA scheme the 58% of the respondents had earned income less than Rs. 10,000 and 42% of the women workers earned between Rs. 10000 to 20000. After working under this scheme the income level of beneficiaries had increased between Rs.10000 to 20,000. Therefore, there is positive impact for working women under this scheme.

**Figure 1.1 Income level of Women before joining MGNREGA Scheme**



**Figure 1.2 Income level of Women After joining MGNREGA Scheme**



### 1.7.1 Difference between the literacy level and Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme – ANOVA

ANOVA is the specific tool to measure the significant difference or variance between more than two groups. In order to know the level of significant difference of the Literacy Level and Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme, ANOVA has been used. It is a method used to measure the total variance of the groups. The total variances are split up into two components such as variation within a group of samples such as Literacy Level and variation between the groups of samples such as Literacy Level. The variables it is identified that recognition in the society has increased greatly after joining MGNREGA, Economic position has improved after joining MGNREGA, Respondents have acquired great skill and knowledge after joining MGNREGA, Respondents could take better decisions for the family problems after joining MGNREGA, Confidence level has increased after joining MGNREGA are considered as dependent variable. Demographic profile such as literacy level is more influence the women empowerment. Therefore literacy level is considered as independent variable.

For computing the F value the following formula has been used

$$F = \frac{\text{Between column variance}}{\text{Within column variance}}$$

Within column variance

**Hypothesis:** There is no difference between Literacy Level and Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme.

**Table 1.2 Difference between Literacy Level and Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme**

S. No	Preference Factors		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Recognition in the society has increased greatly after joining MGNREGA	Between Groups	0.8571	4	0.23	0.682	.001*
		Within Groups	121.5889	96	0.842		
		Total	122.446	100	1.073		
2	Respondents have acquired great skill and knowledge after joining MGNREGA	Between Groups	7.164	4	2.456	0.941	.001*
		Within Groups	142.547	96	0.457		
		Total	149.711	100	2.913		
3	Respondents could take better decisions for the family problems after joining MGNREGA	Between Groups	45.515	4	12.872	11.965	.000*
		Within Groups	312.675	96	0.683		
		Total	358.19	100	13.555		
4	Respondents have acquired great skill and knowledge after joining MGNREGA	Between Groups	1.337	4	12.341	6.387	.005*
		Within Groups	125.473	96	0.258		
		Total	126.81	100	12.599		
5	Confidence level has increased after joining MGNREGA	Within Groups	11.606	4	6.344	12.046	.000*
		Between group	164.248	96	0.587		
		Total	175.854	100	6.931		

\* Significant at 0.05 % level

Source: Primary Data

From the above **table 1.2** it is inferred that relating to Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme. Shows a significant difference with the Literacy level, since the significant value is less than the “P” value (0.05%). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. recognition in the society has increased greatly after joining MGNREGA, Economic position has improved after joining MGNREGA, Respondents have acquired great skill and knowledge after joining MGNREGA, Respondents could take better decisions for the family problems after joining MGNREGA, Confidence level has increased after joining MGNREGA shows no significant difference with the Literacy Level.

#### Findings of the study:

- It is observed that the income level of beneficiaries before joining MGNREGA scheme the 58% of the respondents had earned income less than Rs. 10,000 and 42% of the women workers earned between Rs. 10000 to 20000. After working

under this scheme the income level of beneficiaries had increased between Rs.10000 to 20,000. Therefore, there is positive impact for working women under this scheme.

- It is noted that Self Empowerment of Women under MGNREGA Scheme. Shows a significant difference with the Literacy level, since the significant value is less than the “P” value (0.05%). Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. recognition in the society has increased greatly after joining MGNREGA, Economic position has improved after joining MGNREGA, Respondents have acquired great skill and knowledge after joining MGNREGA, Respondents could take better decisions for the family problems after joining MGNREGA, Confidence level has increased after joining MGNREGA shows no significant difference with the Literacy Level.

#### Conclusion:

NREGP is widely acclaimed that it provides employment, income and help the rural people to come out of the poverty. The study finds that the MGNREGA increases income and expenditure of the households compared over the pre MGNREGA period and the scheme significantly enhances the social and economic decision making power to women in the men dominated rural society. ***The Researcher concluded that, there is positive impact for working women under this scheme.***

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