



**ANALYSIS OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAMME:
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MGNREGA.**

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Abstract

Employment generation in rural India has emerged not only as one of the most crucial socio-economic issue in India but also the most pressing political concern. Bulk of India's unemployed population live in rural areas and providing employment to them has been the recurring theme of all major five year plans.

The government had initiated a number of rural development programme including employment generation programme since the 80's. Different innovative scheme and programme have been initiated time to time in different plan period. Some have achieved goals in short or long term but others have faced technical and implementation difficulties. Therefore, now the time to bring better legislation and implemented pro people development policies in the country.

Keywords: Employment, Population, Poverty, Job Cards

Introduction-

Employment generation in rural India has emerged not only as one of the most crucial socio-economic issue in India but also the most pressing political concern. Bulk of India's unemployed population live in rural areas and providing employment to them has been the recurring theme of all major five year plans.

Since independence rural employment has been the prime agenda in India's development strategy. Poor employment opportunities are one of the key reasons for the growing rural and urban poverty in India. Despite decades of planned development and poverty eradication programme at the national and state levels, poverty continues to persist in India.

The government had initiated a number of rural development programme including employment generation programme since the 80's. Different innovative scheme and programme have been initiated time to time in different plan period. Some have achieved

goals in short or long term but others have faced technical and implementation difficulties. Therefore, now the time to bring better legislation and implemented pro people development policies in the country.

Review of rural employment generation programme-

The review of different rural employment generating programmes over the last half a century has brought out the varied modes of intervention and methodologies from time to time to address the growing need of generation employment opportunities and poverty eradication in rural India. At different point of time different approaches were adopted and in their totally, it appears that no-component that would be normally included in a poverty reduction programme have been over-looked. The Indian approaches has been visionary, recognizing mistakes of earlier programme and modify the approaches with feed back from ground level, suggestion of expert group and experience of different parts of country.

It was during the 5th five year plan that removal of poverty and generating employment opportunities was recognized as one of the principal objectives of economic planning in the country. That govt. of India started several employment generating and poverty alleviating scheme in India from 5th plan onwards as listed below:-

1. National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)-Launched in Oct. 1980 to use unemployed and under employed workers to build community assets.
2. Rural landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) – Launched in 1983 to provide 100 days of guaranteed employment to one member from each land less rural house hold.
3. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) - Launched in 1989 by merging NREP and RLEGP to create supplementary employment opportunities and create social assets. For the first time in this scheme fund were directly disbursed to the village institution for implementing the scheme.
4. Employment Assurance scheme (EAS) – But in the year 1993 EAS was introduced to provide employment during lean season.
5. Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojna (JGSY)- was started in 1999 to provide sustained employment.
6. Sampoona Gramin Rozgar Yojna (SGRY) – by merging EAS and JGSY, SGRY was launched in 2001. The programme aims was providing wage employment and implemented through the PRI.

7. National Food for Work Programme (NFWP) – After SGRY the national food for work programme was launched with an exclusive focus on the 150 identified backward districts. Its aim was to assure a minimum level of employment and incomes to the poor.

Although different schemes were launched by the government from time to time providing relief to the rural population. These programmes never guaranteed employment to every household in the village, but they were just allocation based programmes. It is apparent that most of the schemes were incapable of bringing out a desired impact on rural employment growth due to (a) lack of need based planning (b) lack of active participation of large groups (c) irregular fund flow and (d) misutilization of funds. Across the entire scheme, involvements of the local self government in implementation were not satisfactory.

Taking into consideration the limitations of these programmes the government of India has taken a historic move by enacting the MNREGA. This is perhaps the largest employment generating programme in the country ensuring guaranteed work.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

Employment is the primary requirement for prosperous villages. Poverty and unemployment are inter-related and form a vicious circle. Villages, themselves are unable to break it and people are migrating from villages towards cities for searching employment. Therefore, the central government launched a strategic employment plan i.e. NREGA to eradicate rural poverty and prevent rural migration from 2005 and subsequently renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

MGNREGA makes the government legally accountable for providing employment to those who ask for work. A very significant feature of this act is that if a worker who has applied for work under the scheme is not given work within 15 days, unemployment allowance shall be payable by the state government. It is a revolutionary scheme for rural poor and helped in empowering rural women. Moreover, it is an integral part of rural development.

Progress of MGNREGA-

The national rural employment guarantee act started in 200 districts in the first phase with effect from 2nd Feb 2006 and then extended to 614 districts covering all states and union territories from 1st April 2008. From 2nd Oct. 2010 NREGA is renamed as MGNREGA. The main aim of this act is to enhance the purchasing power of rural people.

Budget Allocation and Issue of Job Cards

Under this act it is mandatory for employment seekers to have a job card. Central government bears the entire costs of wages of unskilled labour and 75 percent cost of the material and wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers. The budget outlay and issued job card during 2006 to 2012 shown in table 1.

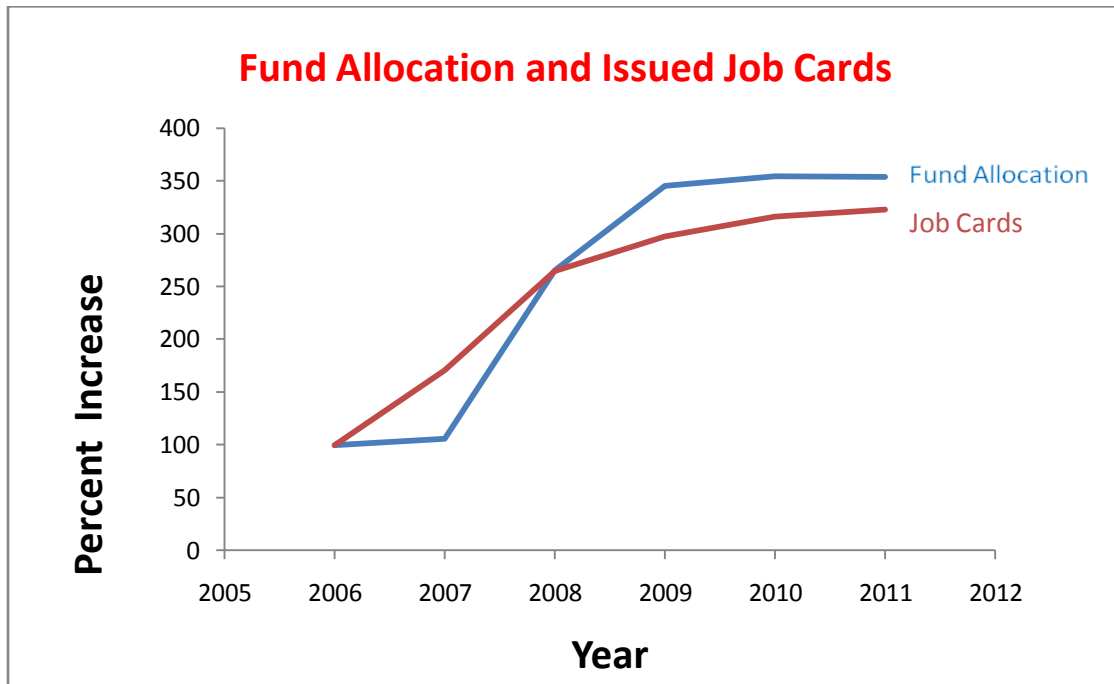
Table-1
Fund Allocation by Central Govt. and Issued Job Card
(2006 to 2012)

Year	Fund Allocation Rs Crore	% increase	% of Total	No.of Job Card Issued in Lakh	% increase	% of Total
2006-07	11300	100.00	6.55	37850390	100.00	6.79
2007-08	12000	106.19	6.59	64740595	171.04	11.61
2008-09	30000	265.49	17.39	100145950	264.58	17.96
2009-10	39100	346.02	22.66	112550610	297.35	20.19
2010-11	40100	354.87	23.24	119824438	316.57	21.49
2011-12	40000	353.98	23.18	122266045	323.02	21.93
Total	172500		100.00	557378028		100.00

Source-www.nrega.nic.in

The data presented in table no.1 shows that budget outlay increase from Rs 11300 crore to Rs 40100. The scheme budget allocation shows negative trend from Rs 40100 crore in 2010-11 to Rs 40000 crore in 2011-12. Job card is the most important instrument in this scheme that can ensure the workers for their wage payment. The cumulative figures of the job cards issued by the government are also presented in table no.1. The job card data analysis shows that government issued 3.79 crore job cards in the year 2006-07 which increased up to 12.23 crore in 2011-12. A percentage indeed shows that continuous growth during in budget and job card.

Figure-1



Status of Fund Utilization-

The utilization of resources available with the government is also an important indicator to measure the success of the scheme. The proper utilization of resources reflect that on an average state able to generate more person days of work and create more infrastructure in villages. The utilization of funds presented in table 2.

Table -2
Available Funds and Actual Expenditure in MGNREGA
(Rs Crore)

Year	Funds Available	Actual Expenditure	% of Utilization
2006-07	12074	8823.36	73.10
2007-08	19279	15858.84	82.26
2008-09	36300	27250.68	75.07
2009-10	45682	37909.78	82.99
2010-11	52649	39377.27	74.79
2011-12	41545	27710.00	66.70

Source-www.nrega.nic.in

The utilization of available funds data shows that national average is merely 77 percent during 2006-07 to 2011-12. It was highest during 2009-10 as compared to other years.

Generation of Employment

The employment generation in man days under the MGNREGA presented in table 3.

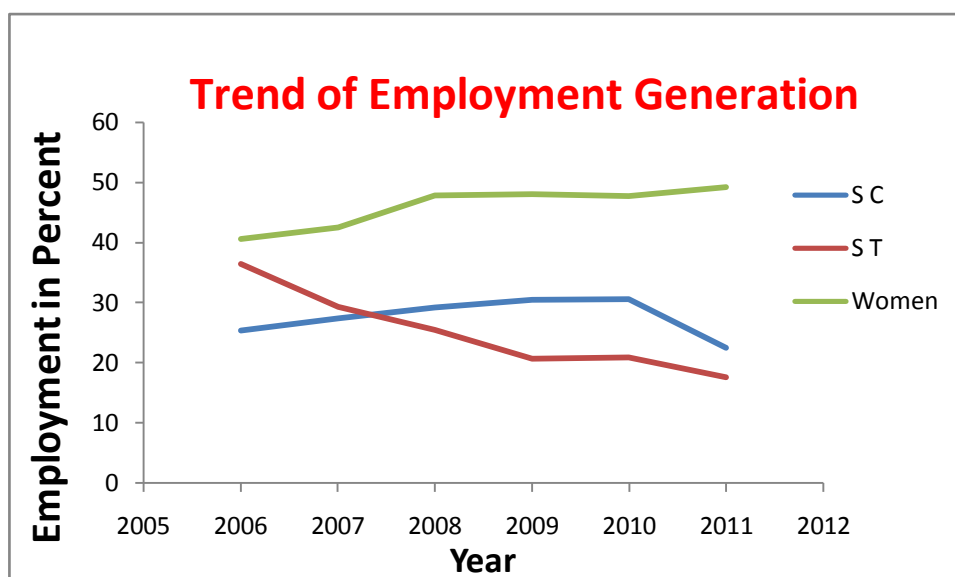
Table-3
Employment Generation in Mandays
(in Lakh)

Year	S.C	%	S.T	%	Others	Total	Women	%
2006-07	2295.23	25.36	3298.33	36.44	3456.59	9050.54	3679.01	40.63
2007-08	3942.34	27.44	4205.60	29.27	6219.98	14367.95	6109.10	42.52
2008-09	6336.18	29.28	5501.64	25.43	9795.06	21632.86	10357.32	47.88
2009-10	8644.83	30.48	5874.39	20.71	13840.35	28359.57	13640.51	48.10
2010-11	7875.65	30.62	5361.80	20.85	12477.81	25715.25	12274.23	47.73
2011-12	3616.70	22.52	2822.61	17.58	9615.86	16055.17	7909.35	49.26

Source-www.nrega.nic.in

Analysis of the table no.3 shows that average share of women in person days generated was 46 percent during 2006 to 2012. It is the big achievement of the scheme for rural women empowerment. A perusal of the table indicates that scheme has also been benefited to schedule cast and schedule tribe.

Figure- 2



Conclusion

In the context of planning in India, the issue of employment has always assumed critical significance as employment generation in rural India. The eighties and nineties saw emergence of special scheme in the rural development sector to provide employment opportunities and eradicate poverty. Government started several programme to provide employment opportunities in rural areas but most of the programmes were incapable to bring out desired employment growth. Then central government started MGNREGA to enhance purchasing power in rural area and generate employment at local level. To conclude that MGNREGA is yielding better result as compared to earlier programme except in few states. Though some shortcomings like misutilization of funds at some places, this scheme is really a boon for the rural people.