

MAPPING THE RURAL LIVELIHOODS AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS: A CASE OF GUNTUR DISTRICT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract: The present paper is to understand the centrally sponsored scheme of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005, a Government of India has passed (Central Act No.42 of 2005). This Act gives legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work. The Act is applicable in the Districts notified by the Government of India. This scheme shall be called as National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Andhra Pradesh. This Scheme has come into force with effect from 01.04.2007 Guntur in Phase-II. Since the program was started almost 10 years back there is a need to conduct the study whether all entitlements and infrastructure was created or not to the marginalized groups in the rural areas i.e. SC,ST,BC and Minority people.

Keywords: Rural Livelihoods, MGNREGA, Marginalised Sections, Economic Development.

Introduction: The conceptual understanding of the *Marginalised Groups* can be viewed historically that comes from the social background attached to them had led by the constitutional government through welfare measures and policy intervention in the early 1960s and 1970s worked strongly for the powerlessness of explicit marginalised collection in the society. Most of the social work professional are worried for the growth and development of their patrons and specifically victimized and suffered from oppression.¹ Interestingly the people involved in the social work profession they themselves experience the suffering from their own development.² There has been number of studies focused on the aspect of measuring welfare policies in general and **Mahatama Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme** MGNREGS historically³ but there have not much of the studies focused on the marginalised sections with the background of caste, class, region and language as interrelated variables that play an important role for the development of the marginalised sections.

The social work profession in India traditionally confined to a portion of social development projects concerning to the *non-Dalit* sections and there is a growing population of *Dalits* and *Adivasis* and other

¹ Brown, H. D., & Lee, H. (1994). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (Vol.1, p. 994). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.

² See also Callahan, M., & Lumb, C. (1995). My cheque and my children: The long road to empowerment in child welfare. *Child Welfare*, 74 (3), 795; Denning, J. D., & Verschelden, C. (1993). Using the focus group in assessing training needs: Empowering child welfare workers. *Child Welfare: Journal of Policy, Practice, and Program*; Schuurman, F. J. (Ed.). (1993). *Beyond the impasse: New directions in development theory*. Zed books; Guterman, N. B., & Bargal, D. (1996). Social workers' perceptions of their power and service outcomes. *Administration in Social Work*, 20 (3), 1-20.

³ For More details Holden, G., Cuzzi, L., Rutter, S., Rosenberg, G., & Chernack, P. (1996). The hospital social work self-efficacy scale: Initial development. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 6 (3), 353-365; Leslie, D. R., Holzhalt, C. M., & Holland, T. P. (1998). Measuring staff empowerment: Development of a worker empowerment scale. *Research on social work practice*, 8 (2), 212-222.

minorities who are striving for the development. While the early history of social work is dominated by Upper caste, modern social workers comprise abundant from folks of the lower strata of the social groups. The present thesis is intended to understand the question of powerlessness of the lower castes, communities, and other minority groups in the society are due to historical social problems existed in the society are still carrying the burden of social stigma are tent to be weak and powerlessness even in the social work profession. How did the social work professional perceive their level of development positively related to the social caste and class structure that they construct the very conception of the welfare state? 'or' the identity and cultural construction of the *Marginalized Groups* perceived through MGNREGA.

It is here that the social work professional created new space in studying the process of *Marginalized Groups* historically given its socio-cultural backgrounds of the different caste, class and genders constructed as a community of powerlessness working for the growth and development of their own in one sense and also working for the community as a whole. This process of enabling and developing ability or potential in development so that they can think and act freely, exercises their choice and control their lives and thereby reducing discrimination and exploitation towards them. It brings about upliftment of *Marginalized Groups* in social, economic and political spheres where they are able to play an equal role at par with others social groups in society. But *Marginalized Groups* who constitute considerable population in India yet they have been subjected to the oppression and suffered from fewer rights and lower social status than other social groups for centuries. This widespread discrimination and exploitation of *Marginalized Groups* evoke the need for welfare development.

In spite constitutional guarantees, enactment of laws, initiations of social reformers, efforts by the government through different schemes and programmes and U.N.O.'s directives, the equal status in the labour market in India is not still achieved to the desired goals after 72 years of Independence. According to Census, 2011, 74.04% of the population is illiterate, comprising 65.46% females and 82.14% males. India is having more than 100 crores population. Many of the people i.e. 75% are living in rural areas only. They have been depending upon agriculture only. But there is no chance to get money in rural areas except agriculture. So people who are living in rural areas are eagerly waiting for alternative income sources to meet their needs. But there are no ways. Hence, village people are migrating from one place to another place. Due to this reason aged people are lost their nurture and children are lost their education, love and affection. More over migrated people are also facing health problems and discrimination. They may be cheated by unknown people and by their owners also.

The main focus of the present study is to understand the congruence between the rural unemployment and the development of the *Marginalized Groups*. The entire process of equal participation in to the work designed under the **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)**. MGNREGA is being implemented with an objective to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household willing to do manual unskilled work.

The importance of the MGNREGA scheme is to eliminate the divisions in providing work and discrimination, many NGOs and agricultural workers unions are raised their voice to get proper wage employment and work. Because of this reason Government of India has taken a great initiative for people who are living in rural areas. The Indian Parliament has passed a bill on August 23rd, 2005 for rural people to get minimum of 100 days wage employment for unskilled labour.

The MGNREGA has initiated different provisions that are directed to State Governments are expected to provide unskilled, manual work within 15 days of a person making an application, within a radius of 5 kms from the applicant's residence. Failing this, the state government has to pay an unemployment allowance to the job seekers. Workers are entitled to a statutory minimum wage for their labour, to be paid within 15 days after the work is done. Men and women are to be paid equal wages.

The MGNREGA is a rights based wage employment programme implemented in rural areas of the country. The main purpose of the programme is to enhancing the livelihood security by providing up to one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The main objectives of the scheme is to “providing up to one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every rural household in rural areas as per demand, resulting in creation of productive assets of prescribed quality and durability; strengthening the livelihood resource base of the poor people; proactively ensuring social inclusion; and strengthening Panchayat Raj Institutions”⁴.

Over View of the Program: The Government has taken a series of steps for improving quality of Planning, durability of assets, particularly those aimed at enhancing agricultural production and productivity by encouraging convergence and curbing corruption under MGNREGA such as;

- To ensure correct identification of assents through scientific planning, an Intensive Participatory Planning Exercise (IPPE) was launched in 2500 backward blocks in July 2014. This would bring greater participation and scientific methods in planning of works. 2. A clear ‘Outcome Orientation’ has been brought in the execution of works and measurement of outcomes after execution work has been made mandatory, since August 2014.
- Schedule I to the MGNREG Act, 2005 has been modified on July 21, 2014 providing that at least 60 per cent of the works being taken in a district in terms of cost shall be for creation of productive assets directly linked to agriculture. This measure will create irrigation sources, promote water conservation and improve soil fertility.
- In order to allow creation of durable assets, the 60:40 ration of labour to material will be maintained at the district level instead of block level for the works executed by implementing agencies other than Gram Panchayats.
- In August 2014, states have been facilitated to engage technical assistants for better technical planning and supervision of works by issuing appropriate guidelines.
- Guidelines have been issued for watershed management works taken up independently under MGNREGS or in convergence with “IWMP.”
- States have been financially supported to strengthen social audit structures to enhance transparency and accountability.
- States have been encouraged to formulate State Convergence Plans (SCPs) to promote convergence of MGNREGA with different schemes. So far 21 such plans have been formulated.
- The MGNREGA has also been notified under Direct Benefit Scheme (DBT for quicker and more transparent disbursement of wages and
- The Ministry is also endeavouring to ensure that all Gram Panchayats are brought under Electronic Fund Management System (EFMS) to achieve transparency in fund flow and optimization of fund utilisation under MGNREGA.

The outcome of the programme can be views by looking at the employment generation in the subsequent years. For the financial year 2014-15 accounts for 3.60 core households were provided employment and 121.25 crore person- days of employment were generated. The program and expanded by increasing outreach to the poor and marginalised, the programme had high work participation from marginalised groups like SC/ST (40 Per cent), women (56 Per cent) are evident. The program also strengthened the Natural Resource Base; in the financial year 2014-15, 95.14 lakh works were undertaken (spill over + new works) of which 31 per cent for water conservation, 14 per cent for the provision of irrigation facility on land owned by SC/ST/BPL and IAY beneficiaries, 14 per cent for rural connectivity and 6 per cent for land development.

⁴ India Year Book (2016), Rural and Urban Development, Government of India Publication Division, Pp. 720-721.

MGNREGS-AP:**1. Non-Negotiables in Implementation of MGNREGS-AP:**

- a. No contractors & labour displacing machinery should be engaged
- b. Every registered rural household shall be provided not less than 100 days of wage employment in a financial year.
- c. Payment of wages shall be made at least once in a fortnight.
- d. Equal wages to men and women
- e. Works approved by the Gram Panchayat (identified in the Gram Sabha) at village level, the Mandal Parishad at Mandal Level and the Zilla Parishad at District level only shall be taken up.

2. Funding Pattern:

- a. The Central Government shall pay 100% of the wage payments, 75% of the material payment and 6% Administrative expenditure.
- b. The State Government shall pay 25% of the material payments, Unemployment allowance, and MGNREGS-AP State Council expenditure.
- c. The State Government shall bear the expenditure on the wage employment provided over and above 100 days to a household. In case of drought affected areas, Govt. of India will bear additional 50 days of wage employment.

3. Wage, Material Ratio: For all works taken up, the cost of the material component including the wages of the skilled and semi-skilled workers shall not exceed forty per cent at the district level.

4. Entitlements to the Wage Seekers:

- a. Wage seekers shall be provided with work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade and first aid box at work site.
- b. Unemployment allowance shall be paid if the work is not shown within 15 days from the date of application for work.
- c. Delay compensation shall be paid to the wage seekers, in case the wage payments are not made within the period specified.
- d. Wage seekers shall be paid with ten percent of the wage rate as extra to meet the additional transportation and living expenses, if the work is provided beyond 5 Kms from the habitation.
- e. In case of injury at work site the wage seeker shall be entitled to free of charge of medical treatment.
- f. In case of hospitalization the expenditure towards hospital accommodation, treatment, medicines and payment of daily allowance not less than half of the wage rate shall be paid to injured wage seeker.
- g. If a wage seekers engaged under work dies or becomes permanently disabled an ex-gratia of **Rs.50,000/-** shall be paid to the legal heir.

5. Institutional Arrangement:

- a. At Village level **GP** plays a major role in implementation with the support of Field Assistant (GRS) for execution of day-to-day activities and work identification.
- b. **Technical assistant** is deployed for a cluster of villages, provides technical assistance in identification of the works as well as takes measurements for the works undertaken.
- c. At the mandal level, **the Mandal Parishad is the principal authority** for planning and implementation. The MPDO is designated as **Programme Officer (MGNREGS)**.
- d. **Engineering Consultant (EC)** who is a graduate in Engineering/Agriculture/Horticulture is appointed at mandal level and is responsible for work identification, check measurements and for ensuring quality of works.
- e. For each mandal an exclusive **Additional Program Officer (APO)** is appointed to look after all MGNREGS activities, who assist the Programme Officer (PO).
- f. At **district level**, Zilla Parishad is responsible for finalizing the district plan and overall supervision and monitoring. The District Collector manages the overall implementation in the capacity of District Program Coordinator, EGS assisted by a Project Director, DWMA as Additional District

Program Coordinator, EGS. CEO, ZP and PD, DRDA have also been designated as Addl. District Programme Coordinators. In tribal areas the PO, ITDA has been Addl. District Programme Coordinators. There is an Additional Project Director (APD) in every district for administrative purposes assisted by Assistant Project Directors in-charge of cluster of Mandals.

6. Implementation Process:

- a. **Job Card:** Job Cards are issued to all eligible households who apply for Job Card, with unique Job Card ID no. having 18 digits and the individuals in the job card is given with 2 digit number. So far 84.84 lakh job cards were issued under MGNREGS all over the state.
- b. **Demand capture:** Towards making MGNREGS a demand driven scheme, **application for work** is made mandatory for groups to access work. Applications are received every Thursday/Saturday from all SSS groups by Field Assistant (GRS).
- c. **Work allotment:** Works are allocated by the FA (GRS) for those groups who have demanded work from the GP wise shelf of works.
- d. **Unemployment Allowance:** Unemployment allowance has to be paid if the work is not allotted to them within 15 days from the date of demand for work.
- e. **E-Muster/D-Muster:** Weekly muster is maintained at work site to capture the daily attendance. Work wise, week wise, group wise, e- muster is generated in the computer, with e-muster ID No. work ID No, work name, SSS name, SSS ID No. At present e-muster as well as manual muster is maintained at work site. The mate captures the daily attendance on the muster sheet, for his/her group and the FA(GRS) captures the attendance through mobile (D-Muster) for all the groups in his/her GP and uploads to the server.
- f. **E-Measurement& e-Check Measurement:** The Technical Assistant (TA) measures the quantity of work done by each group for the muster week and records in the Measurement Book. At the same time the TA captures the GPS coordinates and photo of the work, each week and uploads to the server. The Engineering Consultant (EC), cross checks the measurements recorded by the TA for the works pushed to his/her mobile for check measurement.
- g. **E-Pay order:** The system generates the Pay order work wise, group wise and week wise, based on the muster details and quantities of work done by the group. The pay order is printed with names of the wage seekers, account number, days worked during the week, total amount to be paid. Along with Pay Order, pay slip is also generated per each wage seeker which is also used as withdrawal slip.
- h. **Payment Cycle:** The payment mode follows a 15 day's payment cycle. In order to reduce delays, the MGNREGS – AP makes use of a Standard Fixed Payment Cycle for distribution of wages. Currently two payment cycles are being operated with the first cycle starting on Monday and second cycle on Thursday of the week.

7. Execution of Work:

- a. At least 50% of works shall be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution.
- b. All material required for the works shall be procured by the Gram Panchayat or the implementing agency using a transparent tender process as specified by the State Government.
- c. Muster rolls shall be maintained at the worksite by marking attendance daily by a person authorized under the Scheme.

8. The categories of Permissible Works as per Schedule I of the Act:

a. Category A: Public works relating to Natural Resources Management

- **Water conservation** and water harvesting structures to augment and improve groundwater like Farm Ponds, underground dykes, earthen dams, stop dams, check dams with special focus on recharging ground water including drinking water sources;
- **Watershed management works** such as contour trenches, terracing, contour bunds, boulder checks, gabion structures and spring shed development resulting in a comprehensive treatment of a watershed;
- Micro and minor irrigation works and creation, renovation and maintenance of **irrigation** canals and drains;

- Renovation of **traditional water bodies** including desilting of irrigation tanks and other water bodies;
- **Afforestation**, tree plantation and horticulture in common and forest lands, road margins, canal bunds, tank foreshores and coastal belts duly providing right to usufruct to the vulnerable sections
- Land development works in common land.

b. Category B: Individual assets for vulnerable sections

- **Improving productivity of lands** through land development and by providing suitable infrastructure for irrigation including dug wells, farm ponds and other water harvesting structures;
- **Improving livelihoods through** horticulture, sericulture, plantation, and farm forestry;
- **Development of fallow or waste lands** of households to bring it under cultivation;
- Unskilled wage component in **construction of houses** sanctioned under the Prime Minister AawasYojana or such other State or Central Government Scheme;
- Creating infrastructure for **promotion of livestock** such as, poultry shelter, goat shelter, piggery shelter, cattle shelter and fodder troughs for cattle; and
- Creating infrastructure for **promotion of fisheries** such as, fish drying yards, storage facilities, and promotion of fisheries in seasonal water bodies on public land;

c. Category C: Common Infrastructure for NRLM Compliant Self-Help Groups:

- Works for promoting **agricultural productivity** by creating durable infrastructure required for bio-fertilizers and post-harvest facilities including pucca storage facilities for agricultural produce and
- Common work-sheds for livelihood activities of self-help groups.

d. Category D: Rural Infrastructure:

- **Rural sanitation** related works, such as, individual household latrines, school toilet units, Anganwadi toilets either independently or in convergence with schemes of other Government Departments to achieve 'open defecation free' status and solid and liquid waste management as per prescribed norms
- Providing all-weather rural **road connectivity** to unconnected villages and to connect identified rural production centres to the existing pucca road network; and construction of pucca **internal roads or streets** including side drains and culverts within a village;
- Construction of **play fields**;
- Works for improving **disaster preparedness or restoration** of roads or restoration of other essential public infrastructure including flood control and protection works, providing drainage in water logged areas, deepening and repairing of flood channels, chaur renovation, construction of storm water drains for coastal protection;
- Construction of buildings for Gram Panchayats, women self-help groups' federations, cyclone shelters, Anganwadi centers, village hats and crematoria at the village or block level.
- Construction of **Food Grain Storage Structures** for implementing the provisions of The National Food Security Act 2013 (20 of 2013);
- Production of building material required for construction works under the Act as a part of the estimate of such construction works.
- **Maintenance** of rural public assets created under the Act; and
- **Any other work** which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

Field Data Analysis: In order to understand the implementation of the program at the grassroots level by taking the data from Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh reveals that the employment scenario of the rural people by community wise explained in the figure 1. Caste Wise Employment Analysis, Guntur. In the year 2014-15 employment ration recorded as the highest among all the social groups. Particularly SCs

secured 55.83% household employment followed by OBCs with 49.14 % then STs had 45.88% the lowest employment recorded as 36.28% in case of Other Communities. The employment ratio among all the communities from 2014 to 2018 observed slowly down falling, which indicates the employment opportunities at the rural areas are deteriorating.

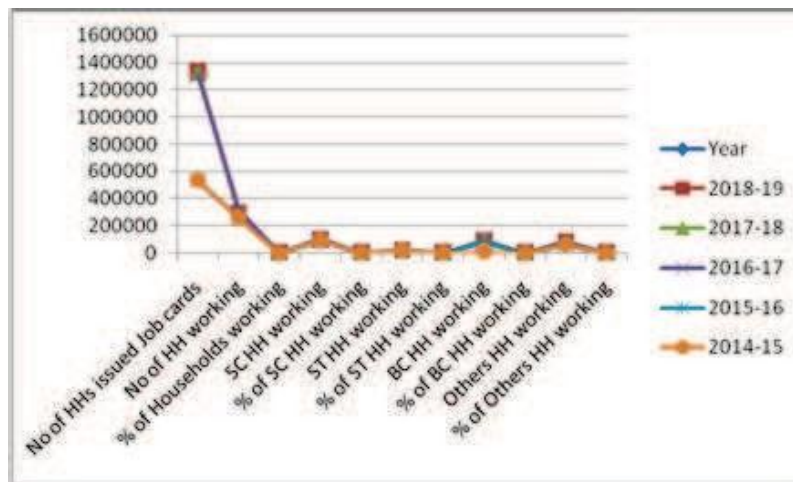


Figure 1: Caste Wise Employment Analysis, Guntur

Department of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, Tadepalli, Andhra Pradesh

Table 1: Community wise wage and work analysis in Guntur

S.No.	Year	BC-No of registered HHs	BC-No of working HHs	BC-Total wage (Rs in Lakhs)	BC-Days worked
1	2014-15	159285	78278	2904.54	2202073
2	2015-16	159285	75489	2918.69	2214249
3	2016-17	387233	95091	3619.45	2496141
4	2017-18	391894	95256	4708.8	3201471
5	2018-19	395422	92114	5779.46	2911366

Department of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, Tadepalli, Andhra Pradesh

For the purpose of understanding the situation of the livelihoods at the rural areas Guntur district is selected. If you look at the data on employment among the OBCs in the Table.1: explains year wise (2014-15 to 2018-19) household registrations and compared these with the wage and number of working days to estimate the participation of the persons. The number of registration are increasing but work participation if you observe family as a unit it is seen as improved but wages are also increasing slowly. The only thing is number of working days recorded as (3201471) highest in the year 2017-18 but in the year 2018-2019 recorded as (2911366).

Table 2: Community Wise Wage and Work Analysis in Guntur

S.No.	Year	SC-No of regd HHs	SC-No of working HHs	SC-Total wage (Rs in Lakhs)	SC-Days worked
1	2014-15	166994	93225	3982.19	2832015
2	2015-16	166994	90971	3986.69	2848138
3	2016-17	404412	106457	4333.6	2829078
4	2017-18	406997	101544	5268.94	3422825
5	2018-19	409032	94177	6332.52	3161984

Department of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development, Tadepalli, Andhra Pradesh

In case of the SCs the data on employment in rural areas analysed from 2014-15 to 2018-19. The household registrations are compared with wage; number of working days and household participation are examined to estimate employment and livelihood situation. The number of registrations in 2014-2016 two years has not much improvement but drastically increased in the year 2017-2018. When it compare to earnings and number of working days are accounts more than the OBCs. The data clearly gives a picture that the beneficiaries are more in case of SCs than the OBCs. The margin may be slightly varied nut not huge difference between these two communities.

Table 3: Community Wise Wage and Work Analysis, Guntur

S.No.	Year	ST-No of regd HHs	ST-No of working HHs	ST-Total wage (Rs in Lakhs)	ST-Days worked
1	2014-15	37584	17244	887.61	667351
2	2015-16	37584	15769	810.01	608430
3	2016-17	95087	22552	1041	709345
4	2017-18	95301	20409	1318.18	895508
5	2018-19	95870	15753	967.01	491563

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Table 4: Community wise wage and work Analysis

S.No.	Year	Others-No of regd HHs	Others--No of working HHs	Others-Total wage (Rs in Lakhs)	Others-Days worked
1	2014-15	171223	62114	2328.37	1758349
2	2015-16	171223	62475	2601.45	1970215
3	2016-17	424543	82775	3252.13	2229796
4	2017-18	431720	82666	4252.3	2881753
5	2018-19	436787	81552	5510.88	2768820

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Table 5: Community Wise Wage and Work Analysis, Guntur

S.No.	Year	MINORITIES-No of regd HHs	MINORITIES-No of working HHs	MINORITIES-Total wage (Rs in Lakhs)	MINORITIES-Days worked
1	2014-15	22389	8288	316.51	233951
2	2015-16	22389	7543	298.84	227119
3	2016-17	50156	10289	387.24	261795
4	2017-18	52215	10067	519.27	343917
5	2018-19	53133	10264	716.96	357843

Conclusion: The MGNREGS is one of the biggest and most successful rural development programme in the world implementing by the Govt. of India at the national level with the budget allocation of Rs.38, 500 crores for the year 2016-17. For a successful implementation of any people friendly welfare programme, the implementation agency/ government requires innovative approach with new initiatives through technology. In this arena, the efforts and initiatives of the Govt. of A.P through ICT mechanism is really appreciable and commendable in respect of the high success rate of MGNREGS in the state of A.P. The Govt. of Andhra Pradesh is pioneered many IT initiatives such as Bio-metric and Irish authenticated wage disbursements, Geo-tagging of assets, Electronic muster management system are

placed vital role to keep the objective of the scheme alive and role model to the entire nation for reducing the poverty in rural India.

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