

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The long history of India's developmental planning shows the emergence of various wage employment programmes in the country to create increased employment opportunities, especially for the poor and the disadvantaged groups in rural areas. The latest of the exercises is the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) launched in 2006 under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) that guarantees 100 days of wage employment to rural households. NREGA and NREGS were renamed with the prefix "Mahatma Gandhi" on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2009 as **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)** and **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** respectively. Currently, it is an extensive scheme being implemented in 658 districts in the country.

The targets of MGNREGS have been highlighted as the poorest of the poor, i.e., people living below poverty line including Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families of rural India. Assured employment for 100 days in a year for the poor during slack seasons of employment in agriculture and allied sectors on a wage rate slightly higher than that paid for similar work has been highly commended by most of the researchers as the valuable outcome of the Scheme. However, the official web sites of MGNREGS show a decline in the average person days generated under the Scheme from 46.2 days in 2012-2013 to 40.15 days in 2014-2015 as against the stipulated 100 days of employment per household has raised some doubts about the performance of the Scheme. However, the data from the same website revealed a rise in the percentage of person days generated under the scheme by women from 51.3 to 54.87 during the same reference period of three years. The rising trend in the person days generated by women aroused interest in the researcher to concentrate on the appraisal of the status quo of the Scheme with focus on women wage workers as to identify the factors promoting or precluding their participation

in the Scheme and to identify the programme input for empowering the status of women under the Scheme from a passive recipient of employment to an empowered worker with functional skills and capabilities.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The **overall objective** of the study was to understand the implementation of MGNREGS at Village Panchayat level and the women wage workers with reference to: the Scheme, Socio-Economic Profile, Work Profile, and Attitude towards Employment, Knowledge of the Scheme, Work Participation Level and the Scheme Impact.

#### **Specific Objectives of the study:-**

1. To have an overview of the implementation of MGNREGS at Village Panchayat level
2. To understand the socio-economic status of the women wage workers under the Scheme
3. To portray their work status, working conditions and work allied problems
4. To assess their **attitude** towards employment under the Scheme
5. To examine the **knowledge** level of women on the Scheme
6. To ascertain the relationship between socio-economic status, attitude and knowledge levels of women
7. To recognise the level of participation of women in the Scheme and the factors influencing their participation levels
8. To consolidate the strength and weakness of the Scheme and suggest strategies for improving the performance of the Scheme at the field level.

### **Research Methodology**

A **Cross Sectional Descriptive Design** was adopted for this study. A combination of survey, case-study and observation were used for gathering information on the

implementation of MGNREGS and the personal, family and employment details of the women workers. The study was conducted in 18 Village Panchayats of Madurai District, Tamil Nadu chosen by stratified random sampling at Block level and simple random sampling at Panchayat level. The data collection work was done in four phases during April 2014 to September 2014. In the first phase, data were collected from the presidents of a sub sample of six Village Panchayats with supplementary data picked up from secondary data sources. The second phase of the study covered a survey of 630 women MGNREGS workers chosen by convenient sampling from the 18 Village Panchayats spread over the chosen six Blocks. This was followed by a case study of 12 workers chosen from six Village Panchayats of two purposively selected Blocks. The fourth phase was an opinion poll among non participants of MGNREGS on their impressions of the scheme and suggestions for improvement.

### **Implementation of MGNREGS at Village Panchayat Level**

MGNREGS has a five-tier structure of implementation starting from Village Panchayat (VP) at the bottom to the Central Government at the top. Its design is reported to be bottom-up, people centred, demand driven, self selecting and rights based. (MGNREGA Guidelines, 2013). In the organizational structure of the scheme, VP is the nodal agency at the bottom level that has the authority to select, design and implement 50 per cent of the work and the remaining 50 per cent may be undertaken either by the Block Panchayat or the District Panchayat or both. The Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi is the nodal agency for MGNREGS implementation. A Central Employment Guarantee Council is set up at the central level to advise the Ministry of Rural Development on MGNREGA implementation.

VP has the responsibility to register households, issue Job Cards, receive applications for employment, provide employment and monitor the works taken under

MGNREGS. The **registration** of households willing to participate in the Scheme is the first step in the **induction of wage workers** under MGNREGS. The families desirous of employment have to file a **written request** to the Panchayat President with identification details of the household and the list of adult members seeking employment under the Scheme. Within 15 days from the date of receipt of such a request from a household, Panchayat office makes arrangements with the Block office to issue **Job Cards** to eligible adult members on the list.

In the select sub sample of six Panchayats in Madurai District, the percentage of households registered for employment under MGNREGS from April 2008 to March 2014 ranged from 56.4 to 88.4 with a mean of 67.3 and the number of Job Cards issued ranged from 317 to 951 with a mean of 507. While allocating work, priority is given to women in such a way that they constituted one third of the beneficiaries. The study revealed that 22 differently abled persons were also given employment during 2013-2014. **Person Days** generated in the study locale in the year 2013-2014 ranged from 36 to 62 with a mean of 44 days as against the stipulated 100 days of employment per registered household per year.

According to MGNREGA, **Gram Sabha** makes recommendations on the items of work to be taken up under MGNREGS and the Village Panchayat thereupon prepares the development plan comprising a **Shelf of Projects**. Contrary to this, in the study locale, the Village Panchayats prepared the development plan consisting of the list of works to be completed under the scheme and got it ratified by the Gram Sabha. There upon, the Programme Officer at the Block office prepares the Block Plan and gets it approved by the Intermediate Panchayat Representatives. On receipt of the Block Plans comprising work proposals from the Block Panchayats, the District Programme Coordinator (DPC) prepares a District Plan and gets approval from District Panchayat Representatives. The DPC then releases the Administrative and Technical sanction of the

Block Plans and issues the work orders for the approved works to the Panchayats through the Programme Officer at the Block Office.

The **type of work** to be taken up under the scheme has been shortlisted in the Scheme guidelines and is renewed from time to time. During the period 2012 to 2013, the work done in the selected Panchayats were renovation of traditional water bodies, which included desilting and rejuvenation of village tanks and ponds and connectivity enhancement of village roads. Of late, convergence of MGNREGS work with the programmes of Ministry of Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation and other Ministries is in the offing.

Sufficiently in advance, the workers are informed of the date of commencement of work in a Panchayat. On the first day of work, all those desirous of this employment report at 9 A.M. sharp at the worksite with their Job Cards. Late comers are denied of the day's employment.

At the work site, the **Worksite supervisor** forms groups of **20 workers** with a **group leader** to facilitate supervision and monitoring of work including marking of attendance. The work timings extend from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. with one hour lunch break. Piece Rate system is followed for computing the **wages** of workers and payment is made through banks. The prescribed wage rate for a worker, both male and female during 2013 and 2014 was Rs.148 per day. The Block office takes care of the wage computation and its crediting to the individual accounts of the workers. Payment is made once in 15 days. The **registers** related to the scheme were found to be well maintained in the Panchayats.

To monitor the progress of the work done under MGNREGS, though a **Vigilance Monitoring Committee** had been constituted in every Panchayat as per MGNREGA, the functioning of the body was dormant and in all the Panchayats in the

study sample the Panchayat Presidents were doing it as part of their routine activity. The **social audits** at Panchayat level have been initiated and the procedure is under processing in the chosen panchayats.

The **difficulties** cited by the Panchayat officials in implementing MGNREGS were lack of adequate personnel at the panchayat level for administrative assistance, delay in receipt of sanctions for the work, reduction in financial allocation for works, inability to get the Shelf of Projects recommended by the Gram Sabha, provision of basic amenities at the worksites for child care, drinking water supply, shade and the like, presence of higher proportion of aged persons on the labour force, decrease in the proportion of male labourers among the workers and delays in wage disbursement. Of the persons who register for employment only a few reports for work and some times the number will be too unwieldy to get them accommodated at a work site. Moreover, work cannot be denied to any one reporting at work site on time seeking employment.

### **Socio-economic status of women wage workers under MGNREGS**

The majority of the women workers under MGNREGS were either old (38%) or young old i.e., in the post reproductive period (35%) and 67 per cent of them belonged to Socially Backward Communities. Nearly 98 per cent of the workers were Hindus; 55 per cent were illiterates; 79 per cent were married and 52 per cent were agricultural labourers. Not less than 51 per cent workers were members of more than one social organization and 79 per cent belonged to nuclear families. One half of the families were large with more than five members and 46 per cent of them were with two children.

Majority of the workers were supportive earners (59%) and the earner dependency ratio of 54 percent families was 1:> 2, i.e., one earner for more than two dependents. The monthly income of 44 percent of the families of the workers ranged from Rs.4000 to

Rs.7000; 38 per cent of them were landless; 51 per cent lived in own houses; 79 per cent of them lived in semi pucca houses and nearly 98 per cent of the houses were electrified. All households (100 %) had access to drinking water; 93 per cent used LPG as their source of fuel and nearly 87 per cent houses had latrines.

The composite Socio-Economic Index scores computed from the 13 background socio-economic variables of the workers using the scale developed by the investigator ranged from 1.3368 to 2.7846 with a mean index score of 1.963. The distribution of the workers within a narrow range on the lower side of the socio-economic scale indicates their homogeneity in low socio-economic status. Amongst the workers, those in the comparatively Low, Medium and High socio-economic categories within the range of mean Socio-Economic Index  $\pm$  Half Standard Deviation constituted 28 per cent, 41 per cent and 31 per cent respectively.

### **Work Profile of the Women Workers**

The wage employed persons under MGNREGS comprised workers, group leaders and worksite supervisors and their distribution in the study sample was 71 per cent, 24 per cent and five per cent respectively. The majority of the workers (85 per cent) had put in three and more years of work experience under the Scheme and the remaining 15 per cent of them were with less than three years of work experience.

The reasons cited by the respondents for their participation in MGNREGS were economic necessity of the family (95%), assurance of higher wages for 100 days in a year (93%), the government's backing for the job (91%), equal wage rates for men and women (89%), availability of local employment (81%), flexibility in job contract (76%), women friendly working condition (68%), non availability of alternative employment in and around the village (61%), their unskilled status (48%) and possibility to strengthen

social relationship (46%). The other specific reasons identified through case studies were husband's alcoholism and allied financial swindling which made the respondents go for wage employment and the emergent financial needs of the family.

The minimum and maximum days of employment prescribed for a worker under MGNREGS is 14 and 100 respectively. In the study sample of 630 wage workers, only 13 per cent of the workers had put in 100 days of employment in a year. For the others, it ranged from 15 to 99 with the modal class working for 51 to 75 days. The worksite supervisors were permitted to work for more than 100 days in a year to enable them supervise all items of work undertaken in a Panchayat.

Intra-household sharing of 100 days of employment among the family members (46%), own farm work (31%), health / disability related problems of family members (27%), personal health problems (20%) and presence needed at home to take care of young children (18%) were the reasons reported by the women workers for not reaching the targeted 100 days of work.

The annual income of the respondents from MGNREGS ranged from Rs.1015 to Rs. 24364 with a mean of Rs.9520.63 per annum. A majority (63 %) of the workers were with annual earnings between Rs.5001 and Rs.10000. The mean annual income of the work site supervisors, group leaders and workers among the respondents subjected to the case studies was Rs.45,349, Rs.19,133 and Rs.18,950 respectively.

The MGNREGS wages were utilized by the workers for meeting food expenditure (63 %), medical expenses (58%), non-food expenditure (50%) and other personal needs of the family (19%). Increase in family income (91%), opportunity to share and gather information from friends at work site (82%), increase in mobility (75%), added resources to meet personal needs (63%), economic independence (60%), reduction in household



indebtedness (52%) and improvement in self confidence (47%) were the benefits of employment reported by the workers.

Delays in wage payment (52%), difficulties in withdrawing money from the bank (35%), strain of balancing dual workload (43%) and minor accidents like thorn prick, insect bites and injuries from implements were the work related problems reported by the workers.

Lack of travel allowance, non availability of first aid box and indifferent attitude of a few workers were the problems of the work supervisors. Group leaders faced problems like non compliant workers and non availability of work implements. Workers listed problems such as difficulties in reporting for work on time and the strain of working in unhygienic places.

### **Attitude of women towards MGNREGS**

The respondents rated their preferential levels on the attitude statements on wage employment of women under MGNREGS on the 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being the lowest level and 5 being the highest level of attitude for positive statements and reverse scoring of 5 being the lowest level and 1 being the highest level of attitude score for negative statements. The positive statements expressed the 'Opportunities' that favoured their work participation in MGNREGS and the negative ones reflected the 'Bottlenecks' of the scheme that dissuaded their choice of the scheme support.

The Mean Comparison of the Attitude Scores on Opportunities of MGNREGS revealed that the respondents felt very happy about the teamwork, supervision of work and self-dependency. At the same time, the respondents felt that the scheme was not very much helpful to improve their lifestyle (savings & amount spent on food). **A significant difference in the Mean Attitude Scores of respondents in different socio-economic**

**status with respect to only one of the statements ‘Feels good to work in a group’ was observed.**

The Mean Comparison of the Attitude Scores on Bottlenecks of MGNREGS revealed that the respondents wanted the working days under the Scheme to be extended, faced difficulty in carrying tools and implements to worksite as well as performing some of the work under the scheme. At the same time, the respondents felt that they did not face any difficulty in receiving job cards and wages. There were no significant differences in the mean attitude scores of respondents belonging to different socio-economic status with respect to each of the attitude statements reflecting the bottlenecks of MGNREGS.

### **Knowledge of Women on MGNREGS**

The knowledge of the respondents on MGNREGS was assessed by administering the knowledge scale with 19 questions grouped under four domains, Viz. Eligibility and Employment Rights (six questions), Induction procedure (six questions), Work Execution (four questions) and Wage Payment (three questions). The Knowledge Index refers to the total number of correct answers to the questions under each category. The maximum and minimum Knowledge Index were 17 and 8 respectively. The Mean Score and Half Standard Deviation of Knowledge Index were 12.606 and 1.784 respectively. Based on the total Knowledge Index score, the 630 workers were classified under High (34%), Medium (40%) and Low (26%) knowledge categories.

It was observed that the respondents had the highest level of knowledge on Wage Payment (81%), followed by Induction Procedure (74%), and Work Execution (70%) and the least level of knowledge on Eligibility and Employment Rights (49%). The Composite Knowledge Index of the workers on MGNREGS was found to be 66 per cent. No significant difference between the index score on each of the domains of knowledge

scale and the composite index with respect to the Socio-Economic Status of the respondents was observed among the respondents.

### **Relationship between Socio-Economic Status, Knowledge scores and Attitude scores of Respondents**

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed through Path analysis to study the impact of Socio-Economic Status of respondents on knowledge and attitude of respondents towards MGNREGS and also to study the relationship between knowledge and attitude of respondents towards MGNREGS. SEM was used to verify the conceptual model constructed involving all the three variables taken for study.

The goodness of fit index of the Structural model was  $\chi^2 = 31.419$  ( $df = 11$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ),  $GFI = 0.986$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.054$ ,  $CFI = 0.924$ . The unstandardized and standardized estimates of various regression models and their significance involved in the structural model proved that the relationships between none of the pairs of variables is significant ( $p > .05$ ), i.e., Socio-Economic Status does not have any relationship with knowledge as well as with attitude. The relationship between attitude and knowledge is also not significant. The model explains only a negligible amount of variation in knowledge ( $R^2 = .002$ ) and attitude ( $R^2 = .004$ ), though the model is satisfying the significance of norms and pre-requisites of model fit. The hypotheses set in the model are tested for their validity which showed a very high P value ( $>.05$ ). Hence it is inferred from the results that there is no impact of socio-economic status on knowledge and attitude of respondents towards MGNREGS. Similarly there was no relationship between knowledge and attitude of respondents towards MGNREGS.

## **Participation of women in MGNREGS**

All the 630 respondents of this study had been selected equally from blocks which registered high, medium and low levels of women participation (210 respondents each from one category) in MGNREGS. The percentage of person days generated by women in the sub sample of six Village Panchayats ranged from 74.9 to 97.7 with a mean of 92.4. in the year 2013-2014.

The association between levels of participation of respondents in MGNREGS with the variables such as Socio-Economic Status, attitude level towards Opportunities of the Scheme, attitude level towards Bottlenecks of the Scheme and level of knowledge on MGNREGS was statistically tested using **chi square test**.

A significant association was noticed between **the levels of participation and Socio-Economic Status of the respondents**. Similarly a significant association was found between the **level of participation of respondents and their attitude towards Bottlenecks of the scheme**. At the same time no significant association was found between the level of participation of respondents and their level of attitude on opportunities of the scheme. It was also found that there was no significant association between the level of participation of respondents and their level of knowledge on the scheme.

## **Empowerment of Women**

The case studies revealed a positive trend towards social empowerment of women on their work participation in MGNREGS. Improvement in social interactions and relationships (100%), self confidence (92%), communicative skills (67%), confidence in travelling alone (58%), ability to articulate views (50%), refinement in behavioral traits (50%) and problem solving skills (33%) were the indicators of **social empowerment**

recognised by the wage workers. This happened primarily because of the team spirit at work site and availability of time slots for relaxation at work site which they utilized primarily for shared thinking and informal interactions among peer groups.

The case studies depicted a progress in **economic empowerment** of women on their participation in the scheme. The economic indicators that were probed out from the group were possession of bank account and pass book in own name (100%), ability to check entries in the pass book (83%), reduction in household indebtedness (83%), added financial resources to spend on personal and children's needs (75%), improved decision making role in financial dealings of the family (67%), access to ATMs (58%) and understanding of savings bank procedures (42%).

Participation in capacity building programmes, training in social audit and weekly review meetings have led to **educational empowerment** of the work site supervisors. The informal and non formal trainings under the scheme have enhanced their skills in pre marking the work area, recording the measurements of work done by workers, consolidating attendance, computation of person days, maintenance of records and registers and coordination of social audit.

### **Factors influencing the participation of women in MGNREGS**

The factors associated with participation of women in the scheme have been grouped under Vulnerability factors, Motivating factors and Hindering factors. **Vulnerability factors** are those factors that compelled them to participate in the work, though they were not interested in it. They included inadequate and irregular family income, lack of employment avenues in and around residential locale, household indebtedness, unemployment and underemployment of family members. **Motivating factors** are those factors that inspired the respondents to work in the scheme. They were identified as assured wage rates, conducive working conditions, desire to supplement

family income, presence of sharing and caring friends at work site, team work and support of the family. **Hindering factors** are those factors which hinder or limit their decision to work in the scheme. They were delays in receipts of wages, crisis in the family, health/ disability problems of family members and personal health problems. The vulnerability factors and the hindering factors together dissuaded women from participating in the scheme while the motivating factors encouraged and promoted their participation in the Scheme. The interplay of these factors regulated women's decision to participate in MGNREGS .

The researcher has further made an attempt to categorize the factors that motivated women to participate in MGNREGS into Personal, Familial and Situational factors. The predominant **Personal factors** were their single earner status, desire to be employed and economically independent, favorable attitude towards team work, lack of skills for other jobs, desire to spend time with friends and neighbours, an understanding of the scheme and the scheme provisions.

The **Familial factors** spotted were poverty and allied resource constraints, rising demands on family income, inadequate and irregular family income, household indebtedness, alcoholism and swindling of earnings, economic status of the family and the support received from family members.

The **Situational factors** that were identified were reasonable wage rates, assurance of employment, availability of employment within the domicile Panchayat, predominance of unskilled manual work, democratic control over jobs, conducive working conditions and contract, availability of free time for relaxation, social acceptance of work supported by the government, lack of alternative employment avenues, reduction in purchasing power of families and work in own farm and the like.

## **Opinion poll on MGNREGS**

The views expressed by a cross section of the general population in the study sites throw light on the strengths and weaknesses of the scheme and its impact. The **strengths** centred round the economic benefits of the programme and its suitability to underprivileged women, the merits of employment generation within the villages and the rise in wage rates of agricultural labourers on par with that offered under the Scheme. The **weaknesses** focused around the sub standard quality of the work completed under the scheme, the wrong work ethics inculcated in workers with less work and more relaxation, delay tactics and lack of vision in the work selection that aimed only at creation of jobs and not on sustainable development. There were strong **recommendations** for the selection of work that promote agriculture development in the region, promotion of scientific work management practices and provision of time slots for capacity building of women through training, exposure visits, participatory annual review of the work completed under the scheme by the stakeholders and creation of job avenues in every Panchayat for persons like work supervisor on their excellence in their work performance.

### **Recommendations**

The policy level recommendations which emerged from the study to improve effective implementation and sustainability of the Scheme are as follows:

#### **Strengthening Work Participation**

Measures are needed to improve work participation at every Panchayat level by making the Scheme more attractive to the targeted households. Registration of households needs to be streamlined to include only those households who actually need wage employment.

## **Enforcing Strict Monitoring Measures**

Monitoring the works by the Vigilance Monitoring Committee is to be made mandatory and reinforced at Block Panchayat level to redress the complaints received from the Panchayats and to reduce the irregularities in the implementation of the scheme.

## **Quality of Service Delivery**

Steps should be taken to improve quality of the services delivered under the scheme by appropriate scientific and technical input with due emphasis on the health and productivity of the workers. How long can these unskilled manual workers survive as mere manual workers? The scientific work management techniques need to be promoted through skill up gradation in work performance and facilitation. The minor and major items of work require integrated, scientific and technical intervention and visualization of their impact.

## **Adequate Manpower**

There is need to provide adequate manpower at Panchayat level to coordinate MGNREGS work. The exceptionally good worksite supervisors can be spotted and equipped and empowered as skilled personnel to coordinate the job at Panchayat level.

## **Increase in Employment Days**

There is a need to shift the ceiling of 100 days of employment from household to individual level or doubling the days of employment at house hold level. The respondents surveyed expressed the maximum days of employment to be increased from 100 to 150 days.



## **Labour Supply for Agricultural Operations**

The Big and Small farmers, on payment of subsidized wages, may be encouraged to hire the services of workers registered under MGNREGS in groups of 20 or more. This arrangement would help in mobilizing resources for the Scheme and to overcome labour shortage for agricultural operations and to promote agricultural development.

## **MGNREGS Workers' Forum**

MGNREGS workers' Forum can be organized and a public meet once a year may be tried out to provide an opportunity for them to share their experiences, difficulties faced and to arrive at suggestions to overcome their difficulties.

## **Participatory Planning**

Peoples' participation through Gram Sabha in the preparation of Shelf of Projects needs to be encouraged. The process of preparation of development plan at Panchayat level and obtaining its approval from District Programme Coordinator is too elaborate. The modalities for simplifying this administrative procedure with due transparency is to be worked out through Research and Development work.

## **Tie up with Other Organisations**

Voluntary organizations, National Service Scheme and academic institutions proficient in organizing outreach programmes in the vicinity may be roped in to plan and conduct appropriate educational intervention programmes at work site.

## **Skill Development Programmes**

The time tag of six hours of work with a lunch break of one hour prescribed for MGNREGS work may be relaxed to accommodate at least one hour in the afternoons for

functional literacy and health campaigns, personality development programmes and need based training in smaller groups for effective utilization of the valuable time of the poor.

### **Innovation in Scheme Implementation**

Kerala's model of MGNREGS implementation by integrating it with Kudumbashree, the state poverty eradication mission which is wholly managed through women's groups, can be replicated in Tamil Nadu with appropriate modifications to suit the local environment.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

- Trend studies using secondary data are needed to identify the gaps in the MGNREGS exercises and make a performance comparison of various Panchayats.
- Evaluation studies of the work completed under MGNREGS is imperative to plan innovative strategies for optimizing the resource utilization for productivity enhancement of the rural poor.
- Micro level Research and Development work is the need of the hour to test the empowerment strategies for women workers under MGNREGS.
- The personal and family health status and problems of the workers under the Scheme needs to be studied in-depth to work out the interventions needed for the target group.
- Development of appropriate Information, Education and Communication modules for science communication to rural women and for their Life Skill Development is needed.

## **Conclusion**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a pro- poor and women friendly Scheme that has evinced a positive impact on the lives of rural women through wage employment generation at village level. The enhanced wage rate is a short term attraction for workers which has resulted in a wider outreach of the scheme. Financial inclusion of rural poor is one of the fringe benefits of the scheme. However, the scheme needs revamping with reference to work selection, work skill up gradation with science and technology input and an added effort to make them skilled in the work they perform. Tie up with Self Help Groups in each of the villages is suggested to synergize the output of both the Schemes. Revamping of the programme with scientific temper demonstrated in the work and work performance at the work site along with human resource development through life skill development programmes is necessary to ensure sustainability of the efforts under MGNREGS for employment generation and poverty alleviation along with natural resource conservation and development.