

**THE ROLE OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT
GUARANTEE ACT (MNREGA) IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN:
A STUDY IN GULBARGA DISTRICT**

*Thesis submitted to the Gulbarga University, Gulbarga in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the award of the Degree of*

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
WOMEN'S STUDIES**

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RESEARCH IN WOMEN'S STUDIES,
GULBARGA UNIVERSITY, GULBARGA**

2015

CHAPTER – VII

CONCLUSION

This chapter presents precise summary about all has done and found in the present study. The thesis comprises of seven chapters in all.

Mahatma Gandhi NREGA seeks to enhance the livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Employment is fundamental pre-requisite to raise per capita income and eradicate household poverty. Poor employment opportunity is one of the key reasons for the endurance of poverty in India. After independence and particularly from the Fifth Five Year Plan onwards, Government of India has initiated several rural development programmes for raising rural employment for the alleviation of rural poverty. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is one amongst them.

The Government of India has initiated various employment generation programmes self-employment and wage employment programmes since independence. The wage-employment programmes generate employment, infrastructure and social capital. Evaluation of these programmes is another very significant component to achieve the laid down objectives. Further, these wage employment programmes must be need based and cost effective to improve the life of rural people, especially poor families. A few important wage employment programmes launched by the Government of India are Food for

Work Programme (FWP); National Rural Employment Programme (NREP); Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP); Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) and Sampurna Gramin Rojgar Yojana (SGRY) and recently launched National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and lately renamed as Mahatma Gandhi NREGS. The Government of India launched the Food for Work Programme in 1977. The programme aimed at providing gainful employment to the rural poor to improve their income and nutritional level. Side by side it also aimed at creation of durable community assets and strengthening rural infrastructure for higher production and ensuring better standard of living to the rural poor.

In October 1980, the FWP was

replaced with National Rural Employment Programme (NREP). The NREP sought to generate additional employment, create durable assets and raise the quality of living of the rural poor.

The NREP was a centrally sponsored

programme with 50:50 sharing basis between the central and the state Government. One of the important features of the NREP was that it was implemented through Panchayati Raj Institutions. The RLEGP which was launched in 1983, aimed at providing employment to the landless families in rural areas, who are hard pressed with poverty and hunger particularly during the lean season. It was a 100 percent centrally sponsored scheme funded by the Government of India. The Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) Programme launched in 1989-90 in place of NREP.

Empowerment of Women:

The concept of empowerment traces its history in the mid-17th century with the legalistic meaning; to invest with authority'. Thereafter it began to be used with an infinitive in a more general way meaning "to enable or permit." Its modern use originated in the civil rights movement, which sought political empowerment for its followers. This idea of empowerment is an offshoot of the discourse on human development and it came into prominence after 1980s. Its linkage with feminist discourse went a long way in shaping the idea of women's empowerment. However, these concepts are still not clearly defined and demarcated from closely related concepts.

Empowerment has been defined as to infuse people with power (Narayana, 2002, World Development Report, 2002/2000) i.e. access to resources, as expansion in individual's agency (Kishore, 2002), as power of decision making i.e. autonomy (Jojeebboy, 1995). However, the dictionary meaning of empowerment is that it "the empowerment of a person or group of people is the process of giving them power and status in a particular situation (Collins Dictionary). Feminist movement has extensively used this concept with hardly establishing its particular definition and parameters. A distinct vagueness and subjectivity is in built into this concept as it goes beyond the material well being of women, latter being only as one of the outcomes of the lengthy process of empowerment.

MNREGA and Women Empowerment:

In a major push for women's rights, activists called for the greater participation of women in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the world's largest pay-for-work programme. National Advisory Council Member Ms Aruna Roy urged policymakers to safeguard the Act. "While the national average for women's share in MNREGA is 55 per cent, in Uttar Pradesh it remains 18 per cent, which is one of the poorest levels of participation. Unless the impact of MGNREGA is analyzed from women's standpoint their participation will continue to remain low," she said during her keynote address at the National Consultation on Women and MGNREGA organized by Gender at Work and UN Women at Yojna Bhawan.

The implementation of the Act has been mixed. Some states like Kerala and Andhra Pradesh have made considerable gains for women. Others like Uttar Pradesh are still lagging far behind, especially in the participation of Dalit women. "Seven years after the introduction of the Act, many states are still neglecting economic roles for women by failing to ensure that women get one-third of MGNREGA jobs," said Arundhati Dhuru, Consultant for Gender at Work and Uttar Pradesh Advisor to the Supreme Court Commissioner's on the Right to Food.

THE NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME:

It is pertinent to note here that three Articles of the Constitution of India have bearing on the right to work and these are listed in the Directive Principles of State Policy. These three Articles are: (i) Article 39 calls upon the State to

direct its policy towards securing for all its citizens, men and women, the right to an adequate means of livelihood. (ii) Article 41 enjoins the state to make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in any other case of undeserved want, all within the economic capacity of the state. (iii) Article 43 directs the State to secure to all its citizens, work, living wage conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities.

Unemployment is a cause of poverty and generation of employment is central to eradicate poverty from rural India. The NREGS was launched in 2004 in 200 backward districts and later on extended to all the districts in the country in 2008. The National Rural Employment Grantee Act (NREGS) (herein after referred as NREGS) which was enacted in 2005 aims to provide a minimum guaranteed wage employment of 100 days in every financial year to rural households with unemployed adult members prepared to do unskilled manual work. The scheme is a strategic attempt to fight the conundrums of poverty and unemployment, which are intrinsically interlinked; The NREGS indirectly aims at making employment as a human right. The NREGS is now called as Mahatma Gandhi NREGS.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Several studies have been conducted to study the women empowerment particularly economic, social and political development of rural people at various levels in different states. The implementation of several poverty

eradication programs of the Center and State governments and its evaluation reports highlighted both merits and demerits of programs. As a result of these reports, the new schemes and programs are being formulated by respective governments. The studies on the impact of MGNREGS, on the economic, social and political development of women in India have attracted the attention of scholars from different disciplines such as Political Science, Sociology, Economics and Women's Studies. An array of scholarly works examining the impact of MGNREGS on the overall empowerment of women, their nature, the factors contributing for their success and for failure along with policy implications has been brought out. A review of certain important works is quite pertinent in the context of the present study.

Special Programmes under UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and SAPAP (South Asia Poverty Alleviation Programmes) have been focusing in a few taluks of Hyderabad Karnataka region along with the adjutant Mahabood Nagar, Kurnool and Anantapur Districts of Andhra Pradesh. As a result in Bidar District (study area) small scale income generating activities are being promoted. It is also intended to assess the impact of the UN programmes. Finally the study aims to evaluate the impact of all these programmes on the socio-political, cultural and economic development of families on the one hand and on the other to know the status of poverty eradication programmes in Bidar District, has its relevance. It has difference from the other Studies carried at the State, National and International levels.

In the present study, the studies have been classified into four groups firstly, studies on public policies secondly, on specific programmes for women development, thirdly on self help groups and fourthly studies in Andhra Pradesh including the study area.

Studies on Women Programmes:

Basu Rumki studied "*New Economic Policies and Social Welfare Programmes in India*" in 1996. It is suggested that India's move toward privatization and a market economy will weaken the present insufficient social infrastructure and simultaneously fail to generate sufficient trickle-down benefits to fund new infrastructure or create enough employment to eradicate poverty. Continued government social welfare intervention is essential. A variety of existing and needed social welfare programmes are discussed: (1) Poverty alleviation/employment programmes; (2) National social assistance programmes; (3) Nutritional support for primary education; (4) Services for rural women and rural life insurance; (5) Agricultural strategies; (6) Assistance for small and marginal farmers; (7) Social security; and (8) Programmes for the unorganized sector.

"*Rural Poverty, Growth and Macroeconomic Policies: The Asian Experience*" (1990) Islam Rizwanul is also another important research. Noting that the efforts of developing Asian countries were more successful in alleviating rural poverty in the 1970s and 1980s than in the 1960s, it is contended that, while high growth is an essential precondition for poverty alleviation, it is not a sufficient condition in and of itself. Appropriate macroeconomic policies in the areas of

trade exchange rates, taxation, credit, subsidies, etc., are shown to have an important role to play in poverty reduction.

Prem Singh Dahiya, Pandey, N.K. and Anshuman Karol, (2002), have described in their article "Socioeconomic upliftment through Self Help Groups in Solan District of Himachal Pradesh" that the success or the efficiency of micro finance interventions can be understood at three levels mainly (i) outreach and financial sustainability of the programme, (ii) income or poverty impact on the users and (iii) development of financial market at the local level. The economic impact is measured in terms of increase in annual incremental income. All SHGs recorded increase in income, overall is 94.3%. They have also pointed out that various parameters are used to measure the maturity of the households. These are: (i) homogeneity; (ii) feeling of relevance of group formation; (iii) awareness about objectives of groups; (iv) participation and frequency of meetings; (v) regularity of savings; (vi) repayment of loans, and (vii) group participation in financial transactions.

Medha Dubhashi, (2002), in his, study "Revitalizing PACs through SHGs: A Case of BIDAR DCCB" has explained the case of Bidar District Co-operative Central Bank, which has through Primary Agricultural Co-operative Societies and Self Help Groups successfully provided credit to the poorest of poor. This model has been helpful for socioeconomic upliftment of the disadvantaged people in the region. He has also expressed that the micro credit division of the Bank 'has established good rapport with Zilla Panchayat and Government Departments at district and taluka level; as a result, the Block

Development officers and other government officials have been supporting the programme.

Shankar Chatterjee, (2003), has focused in his article "Networking SGSY (Swarna Jayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana), Banks and SHGs" that the main objective of SGSY is to bring the assisted Poor families above the poverty line by providing them income-generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. He has also explained that it covers all aspects of self-employment of the rural poor mainly by organizing them through SHGs and their capacity building, training, selection of key activities and planning of activity clusters, infrastructure build-up, technology and marketing support. A major shift of the SGSY from the erstwhile programmes is its emphasis on the social mobilization of the poor. Social mobilization enables the poor to build their own organizations, viz., Self Help Groups.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present Study "The Role of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in the Empowerment of Women: A Study in Gulbarga District" has the following objectives.

- 1) To find out the importance of women empowerment.
- 2) To find out the importance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in the process of women empowerment.
- 3) To study the aims and objectives of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA).

- 4) To understand the structure and working of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Gulbarga District.
- 5) To find out the attempt of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) for the upliftment of women.
- 6) To assess the role of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in economic, social, educational and political development of women rural people in Gulbarga district.
- 7) To recommend policy implications for the effective implementation of the Act, for the overall empowerment women.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

1. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) has no role in women's empowerment.
2. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) has no role in economic, social and political development of women in Gulbarga District.
3. The implementation process of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Gulbarga district helped the women belonging to rich, political dominant and middle class.
4. Due to the illiteracy and ignorance among the women, the working of MNREGA aimed at their development has been perverted by the district administration.

METHODOLOGY:

The study intends to analyze the working of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Karnataka with special

reference to Gulbarga district. Further it intends to identity the role of (MNREGA) in the empowerment of women. Normative (analytical) descriptive, historical and empirical methods will be employed in this study.

SAMPLE DESIGN:

In the present study the required data will be collected randomly with the help of stratified random sample technique. Since the research area consists of six taluks, in each taluk two Gram panchayats will be chosen on the basis of the population, rainfall, economic development, illiteracy and the nature of implementation of (MNREGA). The sample to be collected may vary from 400 to 500. This sample consists of SCs, STs, OBCs, Minorities, Upper Caste's Women.

SOURCES OF DATA:

The present study is made on the basis of both primary and secondary sources. The macro aspect of the study is based on the published and unpublished works on the subject, reports of rural development and Panchayat raj institutions in the state and expert bodies. Exclusively in this study, reports, records, annual action plans, bulletins, & budget documents prepared by zilla panchayat, District Planning Board of Gulbarga are the main sources of data. The information is also has been collected from government websites, www.kar.nic.in, rural.nic.in, [local government.com](http://localgovernment.com). Secondary data also has been collected from books, journals and news papers. In addition to these sources, primary information is also collected through interview by the help of

questionnaires with a cross section of the beneficiaries under (MNREGA) and the data collected has been used for analysis.

DATA COLLECTION AND TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY:

For collecting data different methods of social enquiry have been adopted. A special tool has been used by the investigator for using scientific process, particularly the questionnaire process. The questionnaire consists of items in all spheres of over behaviour areas and also as regards personal data i.e., name, sex, age, social, economic, political, educational and cultural backgrounds. The total selected sample is 190 in total.

DATA ANALYSIS:

The collected data has been analyzed with the help of a computer. The data was transformed into computer code and analysis is made with the help of simple variable or multi variable tables. Statistical tools such as average, percentage, cross sectional analysis, mean, was used to analysis the data.

NEED, IMPORTANCE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study has a vast scope in terms of understanding the nature, organization and working of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) and its role in understanding economic, social and political empowerment of women in Karnataka in general and in Gulbarga district in particular. It is intended to make a study on the organization, working and its impact on the overall empowerment of women. Apart from this, it is also the aim of study to make an analysis of socio-economic and political status of women in rural areas and poor households with the impact

of MGNRENGA in the study area. Therefore the present study has its importance and scope.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The present study is entitled "The Role of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in the Empowerment of Women: A Study in Gulbarga District".

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The present study has certain limitations, which must be considered for the purpose of specific study and limited nature of research to be undertaken. Though the existence of several poverty eradication programmes even before the enforcement of NREGA 2005, there was no proper co-ordination between the institutions of rural development. In the state of Karnataka, the working and implementation of poverty eradication (NREGA) was not in accordance with implementing rural developmental programme. Therefore, in the present study the aims, powers, working & the implementation process and its role in empowerment of women in Gulbarga district is taken into consideration.

The study employed only percentage, average & means analysis. This is also to be seen in view of the purpose of the study. There is no scope to use other types of statistics, since the study intended to deal with the role of NREGA in the empowerment of women.

The study was undertaken only in Gulbarga district. The findings of the present study naturally have relative validity. The researcher has chosen to deal

with a few variables. However, it will encompass innumerable variables, which the researcher considers to be significant for the study.

The second chapter is intended to discuss in detail relating to the evolution of MNREGA in India and Karnataka. It is pertinent to note here that three Articles of the Constitution of India have bearing on the right to work and these are listed in the Directive Principles of State Policy. These three Articles are: (i) Article 39 calls upon the State to direct its policy towards securing for all its citizens, men and women, the right to an adequate means of livelihood. (ii) Article 41 enjoins the state to make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in any other case of undeserved want, all within the economic capacity of the state. (iii) Article 43 directs the State to secure to all its citizens, work, living wage conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities.

NATURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN INDIA:

India is a developing economy, the nature of unemployment, therefore, sharply differs from the one that prevails in industrially advanced countries. Card D¹ diagnosed unemployment in advanced economies to be the result of a deficiency of effective demand. It implied that in such economies machines become idle and demand for labour falls because the demand for the products of industry is no longer there. Thus Keynesian remedies of unemployment concentrated on measures to keep the level of effective demand sufficiently

high so that the economic machine does not slacken the production of goods and services.

This type of unemployment caused by economic fluctuations did arise in India during the depression in the 1930's which caused untold Misery J. Pedersen. But with the growth of Keynesian remedies, it has been possible to mitigate cyclical unemployment. Similarly, after the Second World War, when war-time industries were being closed, there was a good deal of frictional unemployment caused by retrenchment in the army, ordnance factories, etc. These workers were to be absorbed in peacetime industries. Similarly, the process of rationalization which started in India since 1950, also caused displacement of labor. The flexibility of an economy can be judged from the speed with which it heals frictional unemployment.

Andersen, T.M. observed that more serious than cyclical unemployment or frictional unemployment in a developing economy like India is the prevalence of chronic underemployment or disguised unemployment in the rural sector and the existence of urban unemployment among the educated classes. It would be worthwhile to emphasize here that unemployment in developing economies like India is not the result of deficiency of effective demand in the Keynesian sense, but a consequence of shortage of capital equipment or other complementary resources.

VARIOUS SCHEMES TO REDUCE UNEMPLOYMENT UNDEREMPLOYMENT

Following the publication of the Bhagwati Committee report in 1973, the Government took the following measures to provide employment and alleviate under-employment.

Rural Works Programme:

The emphasis under the programme was on the construction of civil works of a permanent nature as would contribute to the mitigation, if not the total eradication, of the scarcity condition in the areas concerned.

Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers:

Under the scheme, families were to be assisted with subsidized credit support for agricultural and subsidiary occupations like dairy, poultry, fishery, piggery-rearing, horticultural operations, etc.

Small Farmers Development Agencies:

The object of the scheme was to make available to small farmers credit to enable them to make use of the latest technology to practice intensive agriculture and diversify their activities.

Integrated Dry Land Agricultural Development:

Under the scheme, permanent works like soil conservation, land development and water harnessing were undertaken. These programmes were labour-intensive and were expected to generate considerable employment opportunities.

Agro-service Centers:

The schemes provided for assistance for self-employment to the unemployed graduates and 'diploma holders in mechanical, agricultural and electrical engineering and allied fields and graduates in agriculture and science

with experience in industry or agriculture, It aimed to help in establishing work-shops, organizing agricultural machinery, repairing and hiring facilities and other technical services like supply of spare parts, inputs, etc.

Area Development Schemes:

These schemes related to the development of adequate infrastructure facilities like roads, market complexes, etc. in areas commanded by ten major irrigation projects.

Crash Programme for Rural Employment:

The Primary objective of the scheme was to generate additional employment through a network of rural projects of various kinds which are, labour-intensive and productive. The scheme had a two-fold purpose. Firstly, a project in each block as to provide employment to 100 persons on an average continuously over a working season of 10 months in a year, Secondly, each project was to produce works or assets of durable nature in consonance with the local development plans. N. Srinivasan has observed that various types of projects included schemes relating to minor irrigation, soil conservation and a forestation, land reclamation, flood protection and anti- water logging, pisciculture, drinking water and construction of roads.

S. Thorat Argued that various schemes under the Fourth Five-Year Plan or the Crash Plan could not succeed in removing rural' unemployment and under-employment because 'efforts were not made to organize the army of the rural unemployed into appropriate supply camps to be shifted to places of demand at the desired minimum wage. The Auditor- General in his report to

the Loksabha presented in August 1974 brought out the tragic fact that the various 'crash' and rural employment programmes on which the Central.

RURAL LANDLESS EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME:

The Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEG) was launched on the 15th August 1983 with the objective of generating gainful employment creating productive assets in areas and improving the overall quality of rural life.

The programme was funded by the Central Government on 100% basis. Resources were allocated to the States/Union Territories on the basis of the prescribed criteria giving 50% of weight age to number of agricultural laborers, marginal farmers and marginal workers and 50% weight age to incidence of poverty. Wages were paid to the workers under the Schedule of employment in the Minimum Wages Act. Parts of the wages were required to be paid in the form of subsidized food grains. It was also stipulated that the wage component on a project should not be less than 50% of the total expenditure on the project. The programme included projects of social forestry, Indira Awaas Yojana and Million Wells Scheme.

The progress of RLEG during the Seventh Plan (1985-86 to 1988-89) revealed that during the first four years, a sum of Rs. 2,412 crores was utilized and this helped to generate employment to the tune of 1,154 million Mondays.

J. Krishnamurthy Found that as a result of the RLEG, social forestry programme 5.2 lakh hectares of land were covered and 533 million plants were planted during the 3-year period. Besides this 4.27 lakh houses at a cost of 425.5

crores were constructed up to Dec. 1988. The cost per dwelling unit worked out at Rs. 9,954.

The Government decided to merge NREP and RLEGP. The merger was based on the premise that the objectives and implementation in the field of these two programmes were by and large similar. But A. Shaw pointed out that merger of NREP and RLEGP is merely tinkering with the problem. A much more serious consideration should be given to develop a much tighter administration of rural employment scheme to eliminate malpractices so that real beneficiaries can be helped to cross the poverty line. Improving effectively of implementation is the crux of the matter and not administrative reorganization.

The third chapter is intended to examine what are all the programmes implemented for the welfare of women in India and in Karnataka. Under Article 15(3), the Constitution of India allows for positive discrimination in favour of kli. The article, under right to equality, states: "Nothing in this article shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children. In addition, the directive principles of State Policy 39(a) state that: "The State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (National Credit Fund for Women) was set up in 1993 to make credit available for lower income women in India. More recent programmes initiated by the Government of India include the Mother and Child Tracking System (MCTS), the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana

Conditional Maternity Benefit plan (CMB), and the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls – Sabla.

In India, the female population is 495 million as per Census 2001 contributing to nearly half of the Country's population. Among this, around 236 million women are dalits. They are facing the problems of discrimination and are being treated as second grade citizens. Census data of various nations reveal that more women than men have been found to be illiterates. According to the Census of India 2001, 46 per cent of women in India are illiterate, most of them live in remote parts of the Country, and are not even aware of their rights. Their life is mostly confined within the four walls of the home. Their representation in Indian Parliament and the State Legislatures has never crossed 7 per cent. Hence, empowerment of women is the pressing need of the contemporary times.

Definitions and Meaning of Women's Empowerment:

The term empowerment has been defined or explained by different writers in the following manner. According to Gutierrez, empowerment is the process of increasing personal inter personal or political powers sought individuals, families and communities can take action to improve their situations.

Stephen Fawcett, et al, defines empowerment as the process of gaining some control over the events, outcomes and resources important to an individual or group. The European Working Group on empowering the excluded has defined empowerment as "The process of moving to a situation

of inclusion or the development of capacity as opportunity to play a full role in economic, social, psychology and political forms".

The World Bank defines empowerment as "The process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes". Central to this process are actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets". Thus, as the World Bank (2001) report confirms, that societies that discriminated on the basis of gender pays the cost of greater poverty, slower economic growth, weaker governance and a lower living standard of their people. The World Bank also identifies four key elements of empowerment to draft institutional reforms: access to inform, inclusion and participation; accountability; and local organizational capacity.

Empowerment is a process of transcending from a lower level of development to higher level of self-realization. It is to rise above a limited context or perspective to a wider field of vision. It enables the woman to manage and come out of any difficult situation and makes her look at obstacles as a part of life and positive challenge.

Empowerment also means the "ability to assert oneself" striving for upward mobility or attaining the psychological state of being powerful. But ability to assert one's self or to do things is dependent on cultural norms and institutional arrangements that regulate their lives.

Empowerment can be defined as "Anything the women may want food, medical care, shelter, income, respectful treatment for her, a job, property, freedom from violence, sexual pleasure, the family size she desires and so on".

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNDFW) includes the following factors in its definition of women's empowerment.

1. Acquiring knowledge and understanding of gender relations and the ways in which these relations may be changed.
2. Developing sense of self worth, a belief in one's ability to secure desired changes and the right to control of one's life.
3. Social Empowerment: To create and enabling environment through various affirmative developmental policies and programmes for development of women besides providing them easy and equal access to all the basic minimum services so as to enable them to realize their full potentials.
4. Economic Empowerment: The women should be encouraged to participate in income generating activities to make them economically independent and self-reliant.
5. Gender Justice: To eliminate all forms of gender discrimination in all spheres of viz., political, economic, social, civil and cultural.

Empowerment is a process by which one can gain greater control over material and intellectual resources which will assist them to increase their self-reliance and enhance them to assert their independent rights and challenge, the ideology of patriarchy and the gender based discrimination against women.

This will also enable them to organize themselves to assert their autonomy to make decisions and choices and ultimately eliminate their own subordination in all the institutions and structures of society.

The starting point

would logically be looking at the constituent of women empowerment. These are defined in the X Plan document quoted below.

"Empowerment may be broadly defined as control over material and intellectual resources which will assist them to increase their self reliance and enhance them to assert their independent rights and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and the gender based discrimination against women. This will also enable them to organize themselves to assert their autonomy to make decisions and choices and ultimately eliminate their own subordination in all institutions and structures of society".

Goals and Objectives of Empowerment:

The process of empowerment assists people to develop a sense of control and power. The objectives of this process include the following aspects:

1. Achievement of equitable distribution of resources.
2. Establishment of non-exploitative relationships between people rooted in trust, honesty, respect, reliability and openness.
3. Enabling people to achieve a creative sense of power through enhanced self respect, confidence, knowledge and skills.
4. Encouragement and promotion of people to improve their skills and solve add address issues that affect their lives.

5. Encouragement for setting up systems and environment that promotes effective participation.

The fourth chapter examines the detail profile of Gulbarga district along with the analysis of MNREG in the study area. In this chapter the researcher has made an attempt to assess the women empowerment through MNREG in Gulbarga district.

Gulbarga is the one of the districts in Karnataka State. It is situated in North Eastern part of the state. It lies between north latitude of $17^{\circ} 20'$ and $17^{\circ} 45'$ and between East longitude $76^{\circ} 45'$ and $77^{\circ} 45'$. The district is bound on the north by Bidar District of Karnataka and Osmanabad district of Maharashtra on the East by Medak and Mahaboob Nagar districts of Andhra Pradesh on the south by Raichur Districts and on the west by Bijapur district of Karnataka and Solapur district of Maharashtra State.

Historical Background:

Gulbarga is not only one of the districts but also one of the division comprising five districts viz. Bidar, Gulbarga, Raichur, Bellary and Koppal. Thus Gulbarga is called by district and division. Koppal is the new district in Gulbarga Division. Gulbarga is also called Kalaburgi which means land or leap of extent of the 'Vijayanagar' empire, stated that it extended upto the extremities of the country Kalburgah'. Another version is that Gulbarga is so named to connote a leaf with a flower: since in the Persian language Kalburagi came to be pronounced as Gulbarga when it was under the Muslim rule.

Soil and Climate:

There is a thick spread of black and red soil overlying the Deccan traps and Bhimas some of which are about thirty or thirty five feet thick. The other types of soil are shallow or medium black. Red sandy loams literate alluvial. The climate is generally hot and dry with a day temperature range of 44^0 C in summer and 26^0 C in winter season. The period of December to May is driest part of the South West and North West Monsoons. The district receives generally 813-8 mms rainfall. The average number of rainy days in a year varies from 39 to 62 in different talukas of the district.

Rivers:

The principal rivers flowing in Gulbarga district are Krishna and Bheema. Small rivers running through the district are the Kagina. The Amarja the Bori, the Bennetora and the Mallamari, Krishan and Bheema rivers are on the way of Gulbarga to Bangalore road.

Mineral Resources:

The district posses rich deposits of many minerals useful for industrial development. The most important mineral is the limestone. This is found in Chittapur, Jewargi and Chincholi talukas. Gold mine is also situated at Mangalore in Gulbarga district but at present that gold mine is closed due to depletion of raw material and Waganagera in Shorapur taluk is also particularly noted for Granites.

Gogi, in Shahapur taluka is particularly noted for uranium and Quartz of pure quality is available in Yadgiri taluk. Fuller's earth is found in Karvi near Chincholi. Other mineral resources found in the district are pottery clay, geniuses and trap rock, Gypsum, Iron ore, mineral pigment, moulding saved copper clay etc.

The fifth chapter is study area consists of the district, thus, the detailed Profile of beneficiaries of Gulbarga District in Karnataka has been analyzed on the basis of field experience. The socio-economic, educational, age, Caste, family structure, occupation, income, land holding of the beneficiaries would also enable us to anticipate as to what they are capable of doing, what we should expect from them and how well they are equipped to empowerment by the programme. Therefore, the collected sample is 200, which consists of SC, ST, Backward, Minorities and General Categories Karnataka and thus the collected data has been transformed in to computer and the respective tables are generated.

It is essential to look into the socio-economic and political traits of individuals under the study since they act as inducing or preventing factors in various socio-economic and political activities. Hence, the present chapter examines the socio-economic and political traits of the women elected representatives under the study.

Traditionally, motherhood is considered as the most important role for women in the society. In the traditional rural society politics is regarded as manly and this traditional attitude prevents women from taking an active role in the body

politic. In fact, women's presence in Panchayats is not encouraged by a larger section of the society. As women's representation has become mandatory through the 73rd Amendment Act, women's presence and participation in the Panchayats is seen. Women are expected to play a dual role with equal efficiency in both home and office. There is correlation between the participation of women in the Panchayats of a society and the socio-economic traits of the women elected representatives under the study have been analyzed in the chapter and the participation aspect of women representatives under the study are analyzed in the ensuing chapter on participation, perception and awareness of elected women representatives in PRIs.

Socio-Economic Background:

The socio-economic attributes of population sample indicate an important input in understanding the functioning of either male or female elected representatives. Therefore, the study attempts to analyze the demographic and socio-economic attributes of the 144 selected women representatives under the study. Age, marital status, community, education, family structure and nature of family are some of the important demographic and socio-economic attributes covered by the present study.

The sixth chapter is socio-economic conditions play an important role in characterizing the social life and behaviour of an individual. The socio-economic status of an individual affects the patterns of interaction in the society. It is therefore, essential to analyze the socio-economic background of the relationship between the leader and the environment. In a developing society like ours where

forces of caste and kinship influence the social life and acute disparity in the standard of living and sub culture among various groups and regions are existing, a study of the socio-economic conditions of rural women respondents would help reveal sociologically significant dimensions.

The socio-economic, educational and political background of the leaders would also enable us to anticipate as to what they are capable of doing, what we should expect from them and how well they are equipped to discharge the responsibilities developed upon them by the electorate.

Knowledge of socio-economic background of a community is an indispensable prerequisite, for the understanding of the thought or behaviors of its members. This holds good for all human communities, and more so in the case of SC/ST and OBC communities, which are intrinsically more traditional in their structure. As Geraint Parry observes, 'It is a wide spread assumption of political sociology that social background and upbringing of a decision maker will influence his attitudes and policies.

The following are the findings of the study:

- In the study area, the young age groups between 18 – 30 years are getting employment from the MGNREGA.
- The finding of the table is that in the constitution of MGNREGA in Gulbarga district there exists.
- In the study area majority of illiterate women getting employment in MGNREGA.

- There exists the higher participation of respondents with the family income between Rs. 10001 to 20000.
- In the study area there exists the participation of people belonging to all the castes in the working of MGNREGA.
- There exists more participation of people belonging to small family.
- There exists the highest number of women's participation in the working MGNREGA in Gulbarga district.
- There exists the participation of former in the women's of MGNREGA.
- In the study area there exists the participation of women from unmarried to divorce for their livelihood under MNREGA.
- There exists the highest number of respondents getting job cards without much difficulty.
- In the study area there exists the highest number of respondents are given job cards. Thus, majority of women living below the poverty line are being provided employment under MNREGA in Gulbarga district.
- In the study area the majority of respondents are involving in the implementation of MNREGA without any awareness.
- In the study area there exists that the majority of women do not have any problems in getting job cards.
- In the study area the majority of women are as position of MNREGA job cards.
- In the study area there exists that the majority of women do not have awareness about MNREGA.

- In the study area the majority of poor women from different occupations have been given job cards under MNREGA.
- In the study area, the majority of women do not have awareness about MNREGA.
- In the study area nearly 29% of women do not have job cards under MNREGA.
- In the study area the middle income group people do not have much awareness about the working of MNREGA.
- In the study area, there exist more difficulties in getting job cards to the lower income groups.
- In the study area more numbers of job cards are issued to women belonging to lower and middle income group.
- In the study area there exists less awareness about MNREGA belong to landless and marginal land holding women.
- In the study area there exists average awareness, about MNREGA among the people belonging to land less as medium farmers.
- In the study area there exist the higher numbers of respondents with job cards under MNREGA.
- In the study area the majority of women respondent's social status has been changing due to the implementation of MNREGA.
- In the study area the women through MNREGA are able to send their children to schools.

- In the study area the majority of villages are developing in MNREGA without incurring its objective and proposal.
- In the study area there exists the higher number of job card holding under MNREGA.
- Nearly 47% of respondents are facing difficulties in getting job cards under MNREGA.

The following are the policy implications:

- 1) The government has to implement MNREGA scheme more effectively.
- 2) The government has to simplify the possession in getting job cards and employment.
- 3) The wage rate has to enhance.
- 4) Awareness has to create.
- 5) More involvement of NGO's and other agencies is required.
- 6) Social audit is to be published in village panchayat.