

**EFFICACY OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL
EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME: A STUDY OF
GAGANBAVADA TEHSIL IN KOLHAPUR DISTRICT OF
MAHARASHTRA**

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Abstract:

India with its planned efforts and effective implementation with periodic modifications to suit the regional economy has exhibited a satisfactory scenario in reducing poverty and obtaining social protection to a great extent. The levels of poverty at national level was estimated at 45.3 % in 1993-94 within a span of almost two decades it is reduced by more than half at 21.9 % by 2011-12. It is important to note that inspite of these efforts the nation is still comprises a large number of 269.8 million people (21.9%) living below poverty line. This phenomenon is not acceptable in any society and therefore further intensive and extensive implementation of Poverty Eradication Scheme is imperative. Based on this aspect the present paper has appraised the efficacy of MGNREGS in the Gaganbavda tehsil of Kolhapur district. The field survey of two villages selected as sample with a sample size of 62 BPL households through analytical study has revealed satisfactory result. MGNREGS has helped in preventing outmigration of families from the villages as well as in increasing to some extent their socio-economic conditions. It can be therefore be stated that enhancement of concerted and collaborative effort by administration, academia, industry, social organizations and local community is required while implementation of MGNREGS for complete eradication of poverty based on holistic approach towards environmental sustainability.

Key words: Poverty level, BPL households, MGNREGS, social protection, environmental sustainability

INTRODUCTION:

India since historical times as well as in the post-Independence period through planning measures has provided employment to its populace and achieved socio-economic growth in various sectors of the economy. But the problem is of its increasing population after independence. Presently a sizeable proportion of it in the working age group termed as 'Demographic Dividend' is a challenge for Indian government for providing them with fruitful employment. This is reflected from the prevalence of chronic poverty and unemployment problems both in the rural area as well as in urban area. As per the report of

Tendulkar the poverty levels during 2011-12 were recorded as 269.8 million people constituting 21.9% of India's population living below poverty line of which a large number of 216.7 million people were from rural India (GOI Planning Commission June 2014) which is understandable because India is still a land of villages with nearly 70 % population living in rural areas.

India's economy has been growing at rapid pace since liberalisation policies from the mid-1980s. The Indian economy has grown steadily over the last two decades. The average annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product during 1980-1990 was 5.1 percent and during 1990-2005 and declined to 4.2. However during 2005-2017 it increased to 6.5 percent. (Economic Survey of Maharashtra, 2017-18). Though the country is progressing in terms of its economic growth yet there is prevalence of chronic poverty. Table 1 depicts the levels of poverty in India. The levels of poverty at national level was estimated at 45.3 % in 1993-94 within a span of almost two decades it is reduced by more than half at 21.9 % by 2011-12 (figure 1 & 2). Poverty is an outcome of unemployment and its prevalence in the society is an unwarranted situation to any nation. The poverty stricken families face a severe brunt on various fronts. Therefore complete eradication of poverty should be a first prime motto of any country as well as by its society and community. Recognizing these problems Government of India introduced several nationwide centralized schemes for alleviating poverty. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (hereafter referred to as MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) is the Indian government's flagship for social safety net program. Significant investment has been made in this scheme, amounting to 5.3 billion dollars (Ministry of Rural Development, 2013-14).

Table:1 Levels of Poverty in India (1973-74 to 2011-2012)

S.N.	Year	Total population below poverty line (figures in millions)			Ratio of Pop. Below poverty line	
		Total	Rural	Urban	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1	1973-74	321.3	261.3	60.0	81.3	18.7
2	1977-78	328.9	264.3	64.6	80.4	19.6
3	1983-84	322.9	252.0	70.9	78.0	22.0
4	1987-88	307.1	231.9	75.2	75.5	24.5
5	1993-94	320.3	244.0	76.3	76.2	23.8
6	2004-05	301.7	220.9	80.8	73.2	26.8
7	2011-12	269.8	216.7	53.1	80.3	19.7

Source: GOI Planning Commission June, 2014

Population living Below Poverty Line In India (1973-74-2011-12)

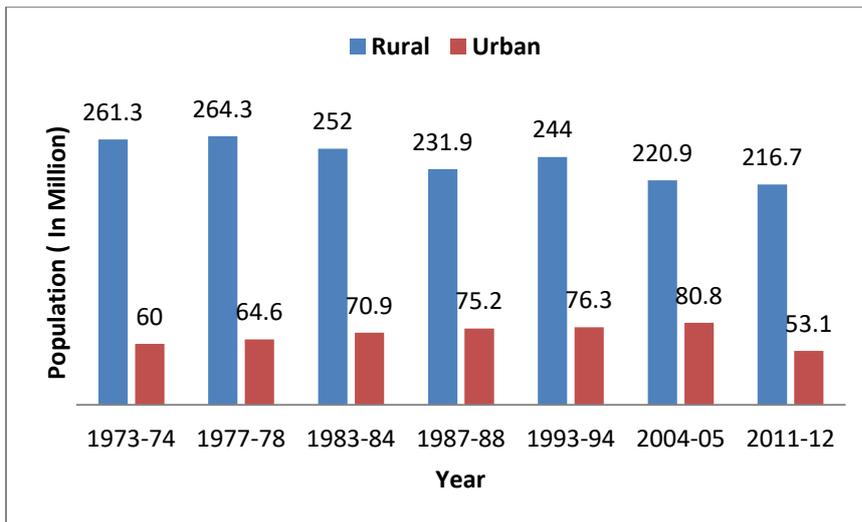


Figure 1

Ratio of Rural and Urban Poverty in India (1973-74-2011-12)

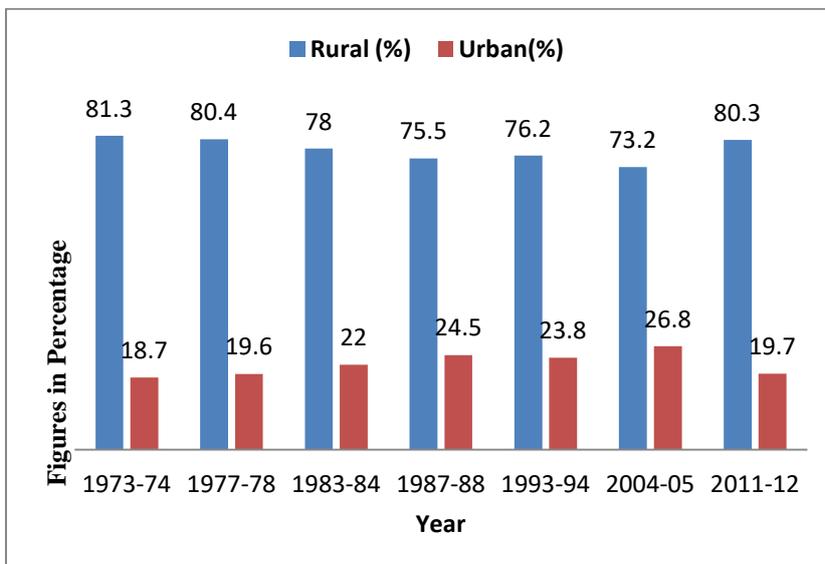


Figure 2

Given the size of this policy platform, the substantial amount of public money invested in it and the potential impact on rural citizens, it is important to ascertain the extent to which MGNREGA has reached its stated policy goals. According to an NCAER (2015) report, farmers holding small farms were the major participants in MGNREGA, around 42% of MGNREGA participants owned farms that contained 1 hectare land or less. In this context MGNREGA has been functioning as a wage generating source of income for such farmers as well as for millions of people living BPL in rural areas with chronic and or seasonal unemployment situation. The World Bank in year 2015 announced MGNREGS as world's largest public employment guarantee programme. According to 'India Today' Magazine (February, 2016) report, around 200 million people were provided with work under

MGNREGS in India. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize to end poverty in all its forms and quality & decent employment. The Poverty alleviation programmes along with productive and sustained employment remained forefront objective of the government initiatives.

Maharashtra with a population of 111 million (2011) exhibits co-existence of both high levels of affluence and poverty. The poverty levels in the state during 2011 were at highest in the district of Nadurbar at 41.9 % while Kolhapur is at 33rd position with 7 % poverty levels from among the 35 districts in the state. Therefore in spite of one of the most developed district prevalence of poverty in the Kolhapur is not an acceptable phenomenon. This aspect motivated to undertake research and appraise the efficacy of government welfare schemes in the district.

The present study focuses upon 'Efficacy of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme: A Study of Gaganbavada Tehsil in Kolhapur District of Maharashtra. The main occupation of people here is agriculture and nearly 13 % of the households in the Tehsil are living below poverty line. 'Gaganbavada' Tehsil is thus a face of present rural India reflecting poor and remote socio-economic conditions. Using this as a case an attempt on appraisal and an efficacy of MGNREGS is adopted in the study area using secondary and primary data.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

1. To study the nature of schemes implemented under MGNREGS in sample villages of the study area.
2. To study the efficacy of MGNREGS among the beneficiaries in the sample villages.
3. To study the impact of the MGNREGS on the rural community and on its environment.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in rural development of the study region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND SOURCE OF DATA COLLECTION: Present research is based on both the secondary and primary information sources. Secondary data is referred from District Census handbook. Primary data through field survey is collected by conducting interview of the officials from concerned offices and questionnaire method has been used for 62 BPL households as sample in the selected villages of Borbet/ Garivade and Longhe of Gaganbavada tehsil.

STUDY AREA: The present study is restricted to Borbet/Garivade and Longhe Villages. Borbet/ Garivade Villages located in southern part of Gaganbavada Tehsil and Longhe village located in northern part of Gaganbavada tehsil and Gaganbavada tehsil is situated in the south western part of Kolhapur District of Maharashtra (figure 3). The maximum temperature and minimum temperature ranges between 34.5⁰ Celsius and is 15.20⁰ Celsius respectively. The physiography of Gaganbavada tehsil is a hilly region of Sahyadri mountain range in the Western Ghats enclosed by rich biodiversity and forms a part of UNESCO World Heritage site. Its neighbouring areas are the tehsil of Radhanagari, Karvir and Panhalatahsil of Kolhapur district and Vaibhavadi tehsil of Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra state, its administrative area is 342.07 Sq.Km. It is entirely a rural tehsil with 38 Grampanchayat for 45 villages with 7230 households supporting a population of 35772 as per 2011 census. It is smallest Tehsil of Kolhapur district in area.

Location of the study area in the Gaganbavada Tehsil of Kolhapur District

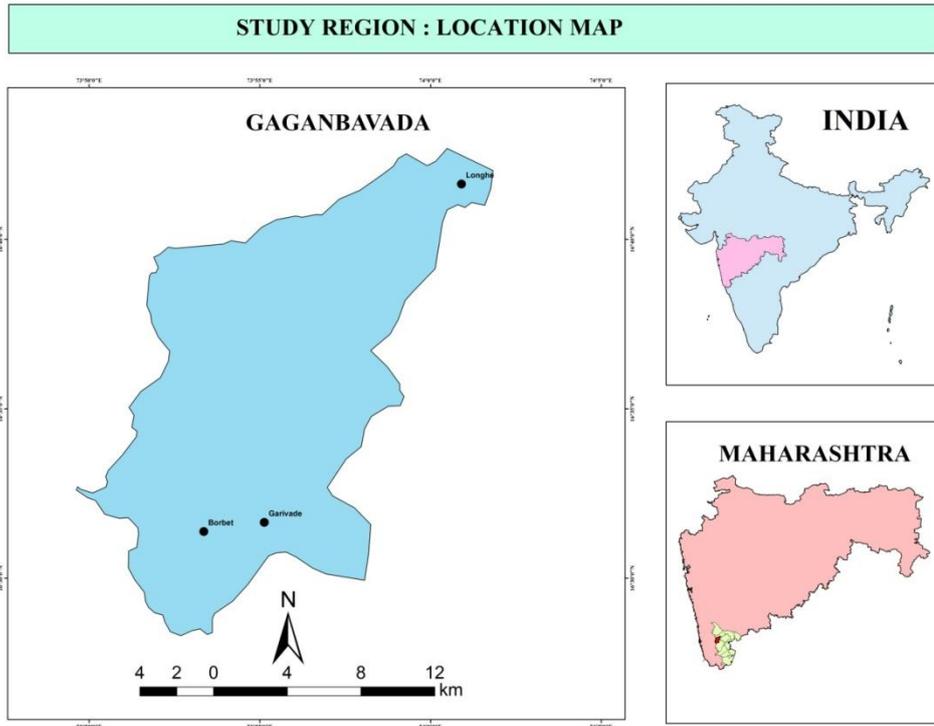


Figure 3.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS: Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in Gaganbavada tehsil which is practiced by many in a traditional way. Therefore yield is low and so farmers' income is less. There are 7230 rural families in the tehsil of which 923 families (12.8 per cent) are living below poverty line (Oct. 2017). Further the conditions are worsened as income opportunities are few due to its remote location lacking connectivity and accessibility in terms of public transport to reach the nearest urban centre for employment as offered by cities like Mumbai, Nagpur, Pune and Nashik in the state. Much of the employment is seasonal resulting in lower economic standards and prevalence of poverty in the Tehsil. Implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme has provided off season source of livelihood to the rural people. Two villages namely Borbet/Gariwade and Longhe are selected as sample villages of Gaganbavada Panchayat Union Block for the present paper. A sample of 62 households living below poverty line (41 and 21 from both villages) with a sample of 290 beneficiaries under MGNREGS as respondents were undertaken for present study.

Table 2 reveals the scenario of the villages under study. Of the total number of households (184) it is noticed that 48 households (about 27%) are living below Poverty line in Borbet/Garivade village and of the 156 Households the number of households living below poverty line are 29 (around 19.%) in Longhe village. A total sample of 62 BPL households

living below poverty line was selected from these two villages namely Borbet/Garivade (41) with a population of 193 and Longhe (21) and 97 respectively.

Table 2. Profile of selected villages and sample Households under MGNREGS (2017-18)

SN	Name of the Sample Village	Distance from Tehsil H.Q and District H. Q. in Km by road	Total Pop.	Total No. of HH	Total no. of living HH below poverty Line	No.of Sample HH selected living BPL	Total pop. of the BPL sample H.H.
1	Borbet/Garivade	12 / 16	809	184 (100%)	48 (26.1 %)	41 (85.4.%)	193
2	Longhe	4/ 24	834	156 (100%)	29 (18.6%)	21 (72.4 %)	97
Total			1643	340 (100%)	77 (22.6%)	62 (80.92%)	290

Data Source: Grampanchayat and Aanganwadi Office (Year 2018-19)

Abbreviations: No.: Number, HH: Households, Pop.: Population, Tot: Total, H.Q.: Head Quarter, Km: kilometer.

Table 3 represents the wage received per day in MGNREGS during the years 2011-12 to 2017-18 by the beneficiaries in the sample villages of Borbet/Garivade and Longhe. **Table 3.**

Wage received per day in MGNREGS (2011-12 -2017-18)

S.N.	Wage per day (in Rs)	Village wise Number of beneficiary respondents		Total No of beneficiary respondents	Percentage of beneficiary respondents
		Borbet/Garivade	Longhe		
1	70	07	03	10	16.13
2	80	-	04	04	06.45
3	90	-	-	-	-
4	100	32	11	43	69.36
5	> 100	02	03	05	08.06
Total		41	21	62	100.00

Source: Based of field work by researcher Apr.2018

It is revealed that 69.36 percent respondents received wage of 100 Rs, only 8.06 % with >100 Rs. While 16.13, and 6.45 percent respondents at 70 Rs and 80 Rs respectively per day depending on the nature of work available and performed by them.

STRUCTURE OF HOUSE: House structure is another economic component revealing the prevailing economic condition of BPL Households. The selected sample households of BPL families provide the nature of structure of house as an indicator of economic condition in

table 4. It is important to note that 40 (98 %) households in Borbet/Garivade and 19 (90%) households live in Kaccha houses. This reflects the low level of economic standards of these households.

Table 4. Structure of House of BPL households in study area (2017-18)

Settlement	Sample Households	Pucca houses	Kaccha houses
Borbet/Garivade	41	01(2%)	40 (98%)
Longhe	21	02 (10%)	19 (90 %)
Total	62	17	52

Source: Compiled and computed through survey by researcher (April 2018)

OCCUPATION: Type of occupation practiced by people is another important economic indicator determining the levels of income earned. In general a country which is largely rural in nature engaging majority of its population in primary occupation has lower levels of income. Almost the same scenario is revealed in the case study of these two villages namely Borbet/Garivase and Longhe. Table 5 reveals the prominence of primary occupation among the BPL respondents in both Borbet/Garivade (96%) and Longhe village (99%).

Table 5. Occupational Structure of sample BPL households (2017-18)

SN	Settlement	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
1	Borbet/Garivade	134 (96.4%)	05 (3.6%)	Nil	139
2	Longhe	74 (98.7%)	01(1.3%)	Nil	75
Total		208 (97.2%)	06 (2.8%)	Nil	214

Source: Compiled and computed by researcher through field survey (Apr. 2018)

A very few percentage of population is engaged in secondary activity (3.6%) while none of the respondent is engaged in tertiary. This occupational situation itself demonstrates the low levels of economic and so does the social status of these BPL households. It is therefore essential to provide strong support through MGNREGS for delivering socio-economic protection with justice. The implementation of MGNREGS is therefore playing an important role in the region to some extent.

BENEFICIARIES UNDER MGNREGS IN STUDY AREA

A questionnaire survey was undertaken to assess the nature and number of beneficiaries in the study area under MGNREGS. Table 6 depicts that number of members receiving job cards from BPL household under MGNREGS.

Table 6: Number of Members receiving Job cards in BPL Households under MGNREGS (2017-18)

SN	Number of members receiving Job cards from BPL HH	Village wise Number of HH and number of beneficiaries				Total number of Beneficiaries	
		Borbet/Garivade		Longhe		Number of BPL HH	Total number of Beneficiaries from BPL HH
1	1	08	08	-	-	08	08
2	2	28	56	16	32	44	88
3	3	02	06	03	06	05	12
4	4	03	12	01	04	04	16
5	5	-	-	01	05	01	05
	Total	41	82	21	47	62	129

Source: Compiled and computed by researcher through field survey (Apr. 2018)

SOCIAL IMPACT: Seasonal unemployment and population pressure are some of the push factors for outmigration of rural folk to urban areas. Table 7 depicts the social impact on BPL households of MGNREGS. Provision of livelihood through MGNREGS has prevented outmigration of rural workers from BPL households (41 and 21 from both villages) as only 1 and 2 household out migrated from Borbet/garivade and Longhe villages. Such poverty alleviation programmes has nonetheless helped the families to maintain their social ties strongly besides getting economic strength on one hand and in reducing population pressure in urban areas by preventing push factor from rural areas on the other hand.

Table 7. Social impact of MGNREGS in study area: (2017-18)

SN	BPL Households	Village wise Number of BPL HH		Total No of BPL HH
		Borbet/Garivade	Longhe	
1	Out –migration	01	02	03
2	Out Migration	40	19	59

	prevented			
Total HH		41	21	62

Source: Compiled and computed by researcher through field survey (Apr. 2018)

STATUS OF WORK UNDERTAKEN IN MGNREGS IN THE STUDY AREA: A number of programmes were undertaken to provide employment and completed through MGNREGS in the study area as depicted in table 8.

Table 8. Nature of work completed under MGNREGS in the study area (2011-12 to 2017-18)

Village	Year	Nature of work and its number	Total no. of days required for completion	Total labour			Total Amount dispersed (in Rs)
				M	F	T	
Borbet/ Garivade	2011-12	Tree Plantation(1)	10	210	297	507	644000
	2011-12	Ropevatika (2)	30	65	79	144	547000
	2011-12	Ropevane (2)	07	140	255	395	352000
	2016-17	Gharkul (15)	20	45	25	70	268955
	2016-17	Nadef (1)	02	19	09	28	10746
	2016-17	CCT (1)	15	90	73	163	468000
Longhe	2015-16	Gharkul (3)	20	10	07	17	58500
	2016-17	Nadef (1)	02	09	14	23	8280
	2016-17	Shoshkhadde (27)	02	80	48	128	48843
Total		53 Works	108	668	807	1475	2406324

Source: Based of field work by researcher Apr.2018

Tree Plantation, Ropevatika, Rope vane, Gharkul, Nadef, CCT and Shoshkhadde etc.works in the villages of Borbet/Garivade and Longhe under the scheme of MGNREGS were undertaken that provided employment to both female and male members from the BPL households in the study area. This work brought a total amount of Rs.2406324 in these villages that were disbursed to the people under MGNREGS for various work involving a total of 1475 labour working over 108 days. The work completed has helped to increase greenery in the area, provide shelter to the families in need, economic livelihood, as well as

better sanitation and access road to the people of the village. On the whole the MGNREGS is undoubtedly playing a significant role in improving the socio-economic and environmental scenario of the people and its region.

Conclusion: It is indeed a satisfactory picture that the MGNREGS has provided a livelihood to the people and has helped to availability of daily wage. However MGNREGS provided them with work to meet their labours needs. The scheme in the study region on one hand has created necessary resources in the form of Gharkul and other for the villagers on the other hand. CCT, Nadev works has been possible and facilitated only because of such useful schemes provided by our government with necessary financial arrangements. The success of the scheme also lay in preventing outmigration of rural working population which has helped to maintain the demographic balance of the family as well as social well-being besides preventing population pressure in the urban areas to which they would have probably migrated. Such schemes would definitely help in checking rural to urban migration and so in minimizing the resultant urban influx and urban problems. However the limitations to such schemes are in the form of getting the approvals for project proposals under MGNREGS well in advance and the time taken for disbursement of such grants.

Suggestions: In spite of implementation of poverty eradication schemes the prevalence of poverty in the country therefore calls for intensive and extensive implementation of such poverty alleviation programmes on warfront so as to provide year round employment to the people. This therefore calls for sincere effort in the preparation of different project proposals with justification and focus on welfare of the underprivileged society for achieving complete eradication of poverty forever (present as well as future). Introducing sustainable agricultural practices in the form mixed farming, livestock activities supported by agro-processing units, marketing of agro-products and allied industries in rural areas is the need of rural India. This is possible through collaborative effort by administrators, academicians, industrialists, marketing organizations, financial institutions and the local community in a holistic way in developing such kind of closed network. This will support sustainability with more balanced regional development with judicious distribution of socio-economic resources.

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