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### MGNREGA and policy institutional factors

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#### Abstract

MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Under the Act every Gram Panchayat (village council) should have an annual MGNREGA plan that includes a list of all the projects that need to be carried out in the community. These projects could include building new wells, repairing roads or irrigating farmland. The resulting assets – such as wells, roads or irrigation systems – should be used and accessed by the whole community. Under Section 17 of MGNREGA, independent social audits of the Gram Panchayats should happen every 6 months, carried out by a third party. These audits should be participatory, including all village members to ensure that MGNREGA works are being carried out inclusively, fairly and following with all policy institutional factors with annual plans. A sample of 120 respondents was selected from Janapala Cheruvu Agraharam and Pamidipadu of Bestavaripeta and Korisapadu Mandals of Prakasam districts in Andhra Pradesh respectively. The data reveals that the norms were drawn keeping I view the past experiences and constrains encountered in achieving the objective of providing rural employment. Almost 50% of the norms were neglected. If not controlled this may lead to process constraints, hindering the execution thereby, employment generation.

**Keywords:** MGNREGA, Policy institutional factors, Employment, Social audits

#### Introduction

The Government of India created a historic act, by enacting the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), the largest employment generating programme in the world, ensuring the right to work in a country with a population of over one billion.

The Government of India passed the NREGA 2005, (Central Act No. 42 of 2005). NREGA was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. MGNREGA is the first ever law, in the world that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale. This Act gives legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled and manual work. The Act is applicable in the Districts notified by the Government of India, the implementation of the Act calls for the formulation of Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme by the State Governments.

MGNREGA seeks the creation of durable and sustainable assets that are created by the community and also managed by it (Mehrotra, 2008) <sup>[1]</sup>. For creation of such assets using the guaranteed employment, the act has codified works- water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing (including afforestation and planting of trees), irrigation canals (including micro and minor irrigation works), provision of irrigation facility to land owned by households of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes (formerly lower castes and indigenous peoples) or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms and the Indira Awas Yojna (the house-building programme of the Government of India), renovation of traditional water bodies (including desilting of tanks), land development, flood control and protection works (including drainage in water-logged areas) and rural connectivity to provide all-weather access. Any other work which may be notified by the central government in consultation with the state government can also be considered.

#### Material and Methods

The present study was taken up in Prakasam Dist. of Andhra Pradesh.

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The research design adopted for this study was Ex-post-facto since the phenomenon had already occurred. Accordingly, the sample was selected in Janapala Cheruvu Agraharam (JCA) and Pamidipadu (PMD) of Bestavaripeta and Korisapadu Mandals respectively. Out of this 60 respondents from each village were selected randomly thus a total of 120 respondents were selected. Stratified random sampling procedure was adopted in the selection of the respondents at two villages.

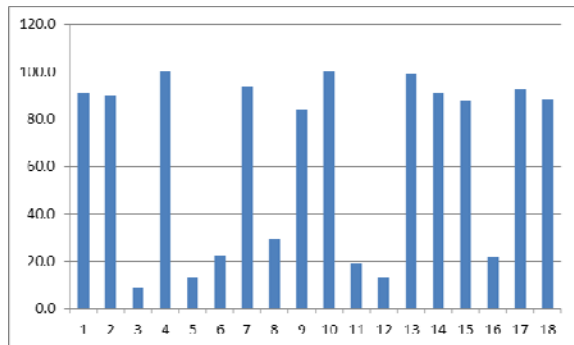
**Results and Discussion**

It was considered as the norms envisaged by MGNREGA to be adhered in implementation. Such norms were identified through literature survey and eighteen were prepared as check list and obtained the answers yes or no. The results as shown in table

**Table 1:** Observance of policy institutional factors in implementation of MGNREGA n<sub>1</sub>= 60, n<sub>2</sub>= 60

S. No	Policy issue	(Janapala Cheruvu Agraharam) JCA %	(Pamidipadu) PMD %
1	Submission of written application for employment to the Gram Panchayat	95.0	86.7
2	Verification for the issue of Job Card from the Gram Panchayat	98.3	81.7
3	Job Card issued within 15 days of application	11.7	6.7
4	Submission of written application to the Gram Panchayat for employment	100.0	100.0
5	Provided employment within 15 days.	16.7	10.0
6	Daily unemployment allowance as per the act is paid, when not provided within 15 days	20.0	25.0
7	Work provided within 5 km of radius from the village	91.7	95.0
8	Minimum wages was paid according to the Act 1948 for agricultural laborers	31.7	26.7
9	Piece rate wages were paid.	90.0	78.3
10	Wages paid through Bank / post	100.0	100.0
11	One-third beneficiaries were women	21.7	16.7
12	Work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water, shade were provided (any other facility other than the above may be specified)	15.0	11.7
13	Projects were identified as per the recommendation of Gram Sabha	98.3	100.0
14	Gram Panchayats executed 50% of works	88.3	93.3
15	Works included water and soil conservation, a forestation and land development works	86.7	88.3
16	A 60:40 wage and material ration has to be maintained	23.3	20.0
17	No contractors and no machinery was entertained	91.7	93.3
18	Social Audit was to be done by the Gram Sabha	86.7	90.0

n<sub>1</sub> = JCA, n<sub>2</sub> = PMD



**Fig 1:** Observance of policy institutional factors

The data reveals that two factors item submission of written application to the Gram Panchayat for employment (item 4) and wage payment through Bank / post office (10) were being observed in both the villages. Another factor scored maximum was identification of projects as per the recommendation of grama sabha (item 13). Job Card issued within 15 days of application (item 3), providing employment within 15 days(item 5), daily unemployment allowance as per the act is paid, when not provided within 15 days(item 8), one-third beneficiaries were women(item 11), providing work site facilities such as crèche, drinking water and shade (item 12) and maintenance of payment of 60:40 wage and material ration were the factors not being followed in both the villages with some exception of numbers. The norms were drawn keeping I view the past experiences and constrains encountered in achieving the objective of providing rural employment. Almost 50% of the norms were neglected. If not controlled this may lead to process constraints, hindering the execution thereby, employment generation.

**Conclusion**

MGNREGA (the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Under the Act every Gram Panchayat (village council) should have an annual MGNREGA plan that includes a list of all the projects that need to be carried out in the community. These projects could include building new wells, repairing roads or irrigating farmland. The resulting assets – such as wells, roads or irrigation systems – should be used and accessed by the whole community. Under Section 17 of MGNREGA, independent social audits of the Gram Panchayats should happen every 6 months, carried out by a third party. A sample of 120 respondents was selected from Janapala Cheruvu Agraharam and Pamidipadu of Bestavaripeta and Korisapadu Mandals of Prakasam districts in Andhra Pradesh respectively. The data reveals that the norms were drawn keeping I view the past experiences and constrains encountered in achieving the objective of providing rural employment. Almost 50% of the norms were neglected. If not controlled this may lead to process constraints, hindering the execution thereby, employment generation.

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