



Implementation and Performance of MGNREGA in Jammu and Kashmir A Decadal Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: The MGNREGA was notified by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in September, 2005. The Act provides legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage-employment to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work in a financial year. The Act encompasses all areas concerning registration, plan formulation, implementation, timely payment of wages, grievance redressal mechanism, right to information, rendering of accounts, periodical meetings for fulfilling statutory requirement of providing 100 days guaranteed employment to rural households who volunteer to do unskilled manual labour.

Methods: The present research is based on the secondary sources of data and empirical analysis of the data is conducted by using some basic statistical tools like percentage and graphs analysis of various variables in the study.

Result: Since the implementation of MGNREGA, the number of households issued job cards increased from 4.97 lakh in 2008-09 to 12.53 lakh in 2017-18, thus showing a significant increase. The number of households who demanded employment and the level of employment in the State has also shown an upward trend and the number of person days of employment generated has increased from 32.3 to 84.61 lakhs and the total person days of employment provided the share of SCs STs and others has also been increased from 1.7, 7.5 and 23.05 to 4.09, 17.27 and 63.25 lakhs respectively. Although the share of employment of SCs, STs and women in the total employment has shown an increasing trend through-out the reference period but there is a large number of SCs and STs who have not yet got registered under MGNREGA and the increase in women participation is still far below the 33% share as enshrined in the guidelines of the Act.

Key words: Job cards, MGNREGA, Person days, Rural development, Wages employment.

INTRODUCTION

Rural Development has assumed global attention especially among the developing nations. A country like India where nearly more than 70 percent of the people lives in rural area has great significance. India is virtually a poor country though it is rich in natural as well as agricultural resources, but its resources have not yet been fully exploited. It is all because the country has passed through the foreign rule for more than two centuries. Although, the planned exercise towards rural development started in the post-independence period, but it has got its echoes from the pre-independent rural development experiments, launched by various outstanding personalities to transform the socio-economic structure of rural people. These experiments were limited in scope, resources and as such these Programmes failed to inflict a change in the rural India. But it is pertinent to state here, that these experiments had succeeded to create awareness among the rural masses about rural development (Sundaram and Suresh, 1985). After independence the country launched various (major) antipoverty and employment oriented programmes, like Community Development Programme (CDP), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Command Area Development Programme (CADP), Food for Work

Programme (FWP), Crash Scheme for Rural Employment Programme (CSREP), Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme (PIREP), Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), Jawahar Gram Samrudhi Yojana (JGSY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana, Swanjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) and Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) from time to time. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) has been implemented across the country with the aim of providing supplementary wage employment in rural areas, creating sustainable rural infrastructure and ensuring food security (Rajakutty, 2004; Ahmad, 2014). Although the SGRY provided some relief to rural people, its reach was inadequate given the level of unemployment in rural areas. It has been noted that the scale of employment generation under the SGRY in 2002-03 and 2003-04 was scarcely adequate to provide an average of 20 days of employment for each BPL household in rural areas. Second, there was no guarantee that rural households would have employment

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on demand, since SGRY was an allocation-based program. The unemployment situation was compounded by the lack of any social security mechanism (Gopal, 2009). There was there fore an urgent need to ensure certain minimum working days.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was notified by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in September, 2005. The Act gives legal guarantee of at least one hundred days of wage employment to a rural household, whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work in a financial year. MGNREGA could not out-rightly be extended to Jammu and Kashmir due to its special status enshrined in the constitution of India. Therefore, it was obligatory on the part of the Jammu and Kashmir State to formulate a scheme by which micro details of various activities were to be addressed besides evolving workable framework in order to make dent in implementation of the scheme and to achieve underlying goals and objectives in conformity with the legally non-negotiated parameters laid down in Schedules 1 and 2 of the Act. The matter was also taken up simultaneously with the Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development for extension of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGA) to the State of Jammu and Kashmir to ensure effective implementation of the Act. The Act was launched in the Jammu and Kashmir State in February 2006 initially in three backward districts namely Poonch, Doda and Kupwara under Phase-I. Subsequently, during 2007-08, two more districts viz Jammu and Anantnag were also brought under the ambit of the scheme under Phase-II. The Act was notified for extension in the remaining districts with effect from 1st April 2008 under Phase-III. Presently the scheme has been universalized and all the 22 districts in J & K (Lachotra, 2008). The Act encompasses all areas concerning registration, plan formulation, implementation, timely payment of wages, grievance redressal mechanism, right to information, rendering of accounts, periodical meetings for fulfilling statutory

requirement of providing 100 days guaranteed employment to rural households who volunteer to do unskilled manual labour.

The Act comprises a pioneering effort to secure wage-employment for the poor households in the rural areas as a guaranteed entitlement on this scale. It takes into account the experience gained under the Employment Guarantee Scheme in Maharashtra. Considering that such a program is being envisaged for the first time on such a large scale, it must obviously be introduced in stages so as to effectively reach all the country's rural areas, according to the economic ability of the central and state governments. The evaluation of MGNREGA by researchers and institutions reveal that the programme has contributed in the poverty alleviation, but its impact is far from satisfactory. It is against this background, that the present study attempts to evaluate the implementation of this Act in Jammu and Kashmir.

Related literature

Rural development is essentially a part of structural transformation characterized by diversification of the economy away from agriculture. To achieve rural development a large variety of measures are needed aiming at improvement of the rural economy, the quality of life of the community, land-use, environmental protection and the attractiveness to reside in rural areas (Elands and Wiersum, 2001). The perception of rural development has undergone considerable changes in the last 30 years and it has become a multi-dimensional issue viz. the importance of natural resources and environmental dimensions and economical dimensions, rurality and poverty and the role of agricultural sector in rural development, poverty reduction and overall development (Ashley and Maxwell, 2001; Sanderson, 2005; Courtney, *et al.*, 2006; Lise, 2007; Narain, *et al.*, 2008; Rizov, 2005; Anriquez and Stamoulis, 2007).

The government of India in collaboration of NGOs has achieved considerable success in scaling up MGNREGA to over 40 million households in the space of three to four years (Holmes, *et al.*, 2010; Khera, 2011). MGNREGA is the largest labour guarantee scheme in the world, offering 100 days of paid labour to every rural household and is a safety net and driver of household accumulation, its ability to create assets which build collective resilience and its support for transformations of exploitative social relations (Jha, 2008; Raghav, 2008; Dutta, 2012; Ahmad, 2014; Wood and Flower, 2016). It ensures sound planning and to overcome political apathy and the focus is on duration of participation (number of days worked in MGNREGA), an important result is that the higher the probability of participation, the longer was the duration of participation (Roy, *et al.*, 2008; Dreze, 2011). Regarding the authenticity of data on MGNREGA there are simply too many errors in the online data on individuals' characteristics for this to be usable by researchers (Sidhartha and Vanaik, 2008). The real inaccuracies in the data become apparent when we look at the data on individual characteristics of MGNREGA workers. The actual information on job-cards is unreliable: age and caste details have particularly high levels of inaccuracies (Carswel, *et al.*, 2013;

Table 1: Socio-economics characteristics of Jammu and Kashmir.

Characteristics	Value
Per capita income (in Rs.)	85755
Area (per Sq. Km)	222236
Population (in Numbers)	12541302
Male population (in Numbers)	6640662
Female population (in Numbers)	5900640
Population growth rate (decadal)	23.64
Literacy rate (percent)	67.16
Sex ratio	862
Population density (per Sq. Km)	24
Community development blocks	320
Gram panchayats (in Numbers)	4198
Life expectancy at birth (in years)	73.2
Unemployment rate (in percent)	16.2

Source: - Census of India (2011), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Jand K.

Narayanan, *et al.*, 2013). While as there has been shift towards the MGNREGA works especially of women folk and tribal households and payment of wages through banks has encouraged savings habit (Chari, 2006; Narayanan and Das, 2014; Jagadeeswari, 2015; Breitkreuz, *et al.*, 2017). MGNREGA has specific design features to address gendered vulnerabilities and has generated broader transformative effects, such as facilitating investment in human capital and strengthening the agency of those in poverty so that their capacity to overcome their predicaments is increased (Khan and Saluja, 2008; Barrientos and Hulme, 2009; Holmes, *et al.* 2010; Carswell, *et al.*, 2014).

In Jammu and Kashmir almost 80 percent of the populace is as yet reliant for its livelihood on farming and allied occupations (GoJK, 2014). About 70 percent of the population resides in rural area of J & K, out of which 26.14 percent falls under below poverty line (BPL), which implies that on an average one person out of every four people belongs to BPL class (JKDES, 2008). The rural unemployment in the state around the time when the MGNREGA came into being was at 4.7 percent which was two-fold the 2.4 percent at the national level (NSSO, 2008). It was relied upon to increase owing to "consistent reduction in factor productivity and landholding size" (MoA, 2014). Subsequently, there was a conspicuous need of a MGNREGA type programmes to ensure the present as well as the expected weaknesses by providing gainful employment and thereby uphold their subsistence level. Notwithstanding job insurance, it was additionally seen as a chance to rejuvenate the old and make new essential provincial foundation to help the economy. There have been few studies to assess the working as well as performance of MGNREGA. The evaluation of MGNREGA by researchers and institutions reveal that the programme has contributed in the poverty alleviation, but its impact is far from satisfactory. To understand, how actually the scheme is working on the ground and to know about the status MGNREGA since its implementation in Jammu and Kashmir still remained an unanswered quarry. Therefore, the present study attempts to evaluate the implementation of MGNREGA in Jammu and Kashmir.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is mainly based on an analysis of official data taken from secondary sources. The data has been collected from different govt. organisations viz. directorate of economic and statistical planning J & K Govt., directorate of rural development J & K and Central Statistical Organisation, journals, annual reports, magazines and periodicals. To achieve the objective of the study, the data has been analyzed while calculating percentage of different parameter of MGNREGA in coupled with this graphical analysis of some parameters have also been shown.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF JAMMU and KASHMIR

In order to get the proper understanding of implementation and performance of MGNREGA in uplifting the livelihood of

people in Jammu and Kashmir it pertinent to get some knowledge about the socio-economic indicators of the state. Most of the districts were generally below the national average. These districts were primarily agricultural.

The above table shows various socio-economic features of Jammu and Kashmir and it is depicted the data that the living standard measure in terms of per capita income is Rs. 85755 and other parameters like literacy rate, life expectancy at birth, unemployment rate and so on with values of 67.16 per cent, 73.2 years and 16.2 percent respectively. The value of many of the parameters are better as compared to other states of India Assam, Madya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, etc. such as life expectancy at birth in J & K is higher than the national average. But as far as the state economy is concerned, it is mainly based on agriculture and allied activities and 80 per cent of people get their livelihood from agriculture and allied occupations (GoJK, 2014) and about 26.14 per cent falls under below poverty line (BPL), which implies that on an average one person out of every four people belongs to BPL class (JKDES, 2008). The rural unemployment in the state around the time when the MGNREGA came into being was at 4.7 percent which was two-fold the 2.4 percent at the national level (NSSO, 2008). From these perspectives, it can be inferred that there was a conspicuous need of a MGNREGA type programmes to ensure the present as well as the expected weaknesses by providing gainful employment and thereby uphold their subsistence level.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE OF MGNREGA

During the first phase of its implementation in April 2006, among the 200 districts selected for the implementation of this scheme throughout India, the three most backward districts in the State namely, Poonch and Doda from Jammu region and Kupwara from Kashmir region were included. The above table shows that in financial year 2006-07, in the three districts job cards were issued to 1.79 lakh households, out of which 1.21 lakh households demanded employment. Employment was provided to all households who demanded work and a total of 32.3 lakh person days of employment were generated. SCs, STs and others were provided 1.75 lakh (5.42%), 7.5 lakh (23.3%) and 23.05 lakh (71.30%) respectively. Women were provided 1.44 lakh (4.46%) person days of employment sanctioned under the programme. A total of 50.1 crore funds was made available, out of which 9.87 crore were sanctioned. An expenditure of 3.45 crore was incurred. In April, 2007, during the second phase of its implementation, the scheme was extended to another 130 districts in the country which include district Jammu and district Anantnag (including Kulgam) from the State of Jammu and Kashmir. In financial year 2007-08, job cards were issued to 2.53 lakh households and 1.38 lakh households demanded work. A total of 1.38 lakh households were provided employment and 33.4 lakh person days were generated. The share of SCs accounted for 3.29 lakh (9.86%), STs were provided 8.13 lakh (24.35%) and others 21.98 lakh (65.81%) of person days respectively. Women

Table 2: MGNREGA in Jammu and Kashmir (State Overview).

Year	2006 -07	2007 -08	2008 -09	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12	2012 -13	2013 -14	2014 -15	2015 -16	2016 -17	2017 -18
No. of households issued job cards (Lakhs)	1.79	2.53	4.97	6.64	10.01	5.38	10.78	11.39	11.12	11.45	12.68	12.53
No. of households who demanded employment (Lakhs)	1.21	1.38	2.14	3.52	5.04	4.40	6.59	7.12	3.82	7.03	6.76	3.07
No. of households provided employment (Lakhs)	1.21	1.38	1.99	3.36	4.99	4.31	6.46	6.57	3.32	6.53	6.27	2.40
Person days (lakhs)	32.3	33.4	78.8	128.71	210.69	209.1	365.55	337.83	121.09	316.32	319.59	84.61
SCs (lakhs)	1.75 (5.42)	3.29 (9.86)	6.67 (8.47)	10.79 (8.39)	15.19 (7.21)	14.07 (6.73)	21.21 (5.8)	20.24 (5.99)	5.68 (4.69)	18.44 (5.83)	18.14 (5.67)	4.09 (4.83)
STs (lakhs)	7.5 (23.2)	8.13 (24.35)	21.61 (27.43)	33.64 (26.14)	52.82 (25.04)	33.69 (16.11)	56.19 (15.37)	53.74 (15.91)	24.37 (20.13)	53.26 (16.83)	56.58 (17.70)	17.27 (20.41)
Women (lakhs)	1.44 (4.46)	0.36 (1.08)	4.54 (5.77)	8.59 (6.67)	15.73 (7.47)	38.96 (18.63)	72.69 (19.88)	78.16 (23.13)	30.6 (25.27)	79.97 (25.28)	85.65 (26.8)	22.54 (26.64)
Others (lakhs)	23.05 (71.30)	21.98 (65.81)	50.52 (64.12)	84.28 (65.40)	142.67 (67.72)	161.34 (77.16)	288.15 (78.82)	263.85 (78.1)	91.03 (75.17)	244.61 (77.33)	244.87 (76.62)	63.25 (74.74)
Funds available (cores)	50.12	61.48	146.17	208.28	424.82	87863.67	97119.91	80079.59	58529.89	80330.35	91069.9	79430.11
Central release (cores)	9.86	71.84	104.72	175.69	318.44	78130.96	76276.16	60315.73	52171.08	55801.83	80408.52	64603.15
Expenditure (cores)	34.54 (69)	39.20 (64)	87.72 (60)	185.31 (88.97)	377.76 (79.5)	44367.05 (50.49)	85334 (87.86)	76438.07 (95.45)	39390.16 (67.3)	76978.01 (95.82)	84541.55 (92.83)	59445.53 (74.84)
Total works taken Up	1958	5814	13060	29426	56116	79325	147687	176030	152041	179290	164667	122677
Works completed	722 (37)	2645 (46)	7176 (55)	18661 (64)	36542 (65)	18316 (23.09)	57691 (39.06)	54792 (31.12)	39586 (26.03)	87693 (48.91)	60221 (36.57)	29047 (23.68)
Works in progress	1236 (63)	3169 (54)	5884 (45)	10765 (36)	19574 (35)	61009 (76.91)	89996 (60.93)	121238 (68.87)	112455 (73.96)	91597 (51.09)	104446 (63.43)	93630 (76.32)

Source: Authors compilation from Directorate of Rural Development, Kashmir.

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage out of total.

Table 3: MGNREGA works in Jammu and Kashmir (State overview)

Year	Works completed	Rural connectivity project	Flood control and harvesting	Water conservation and water	Drought proofing	Micro-irrigation	Irrigation facility to SCs, STs and IAY beneficiaries	Renovation of traditional water bodies	Land development	Total works completed	Total works take-up	Works in progress
2006-07	Works completed	235	111	74	5	208	21	55	13	722	1958	1236 (63.12)
2007-08	Works completed	612	461	417	92	552	93	371	47	2645 (45.49)	5814	3169 (54.50)
2008-09	Works completed	2203	1601	671	55	1012	561	662	411	7176 (55)	13060	5884 (45.05)
2009-10	Works completed	4389	2521	3182	311	3647	2019	1332	1260	18661 (64)	29426	10765 (36.58)
2010-11	Works completed	8463	7079	6295	397	7688	5796	479	345	36542 (65)	56116	19574 (34.88)
2011-12	Works completed	6966	3777	1560	122	1649	4	472	3225	18316 (23.09)	79325	61009 (76.91)
2012-13	Works completed	20879	15202	4179	255	5788	61	1253	6905	57691 (39.13)	147687	89996 (60.93)
2013-14	Works completed	19859	14457	3434	297	5714	46	776	5951	54792 (31.13)	176030	121238 (68.87)
2014-15	Works completed	14878	10357	1880	109	3956	52	673	3826	39586 (26.04)	152041	112455 (73.96)
2015-16	Works completed	32077	25428	4103	299	8439	122	1352	8834	87693 (48.91)	179290	91597 (51.08)
2016-17	Works completed	23668	15865	3601	226	5455	128	1059	5947	60221 (36.57)	164667	104446 (63.42)
2017-18	Works completed	12261	7167	1875	144	2630	104	643	2508	29047 (23.86)	122677	93630 (76.32)

Source: Authors compilation from Directorate of Rural Development, Kashmir.

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage out of total.

were provided 0.36 lakh (1.08%) person days of employment. An amount of Rs. 71.83 cores were sanctioned out of which an expenditure of Rs. 39.2 cores were incurred. 5814 works were taken up, out of which 2645 (46%) were completed and 3169 (54%) were in progress. Out of total works taken up during the year, 1334 works of rural connectivity, 1034 works of flood control, 939 works of water conservation and water harvesting, 198 works of drought proofing, 1171 works of micro irrigation, 211 works under the provision of irrigation facilities for the land owned by the SCs and STs or land of beneficiaries of land reforms or IAY beneficiaries, 821 works under the category of renovation of conventional water-bodies and 106 works of land-development were taken up in the State. From the financial year 2008-09, in the third phase of implementation, the programme of National Rural Employment Guarantee was extended to the whole of Jammu and Kashmir (all 22 districts).

In 2008-09, job cards were issued to 4.97 lakh households, out of the 2.14 lakh households who demanded work, 1.99 lakh households were employed and a total of 78.8 lakh person days were generated across the State. From the total person days of employment generated the share of SCs was 6.67 lakh (8.47%), STs 21.61 lakh (27.43%) and others 50.52 lakh (64.12%) respectively. The

share of women in the total employment was 4.54 lakh (5.77%) person days. An amount of Rs 146.1 cores was made available. A total of 104.7 cores were sanctioned and an expenditure of Rs 87.72 cores was incurred. Out of 13060 works taken up, 7176 (55%) were completed while as 5884(45%) were in progress. As far as works break up in the year is concerned, from a total of 13060 woks, 4011 of rural connectivity, 3121 of flood control, 1223 of water conservation and water harvesting, 102 of drought proofing, 2012 of micro irrigation, 1024 works under the provision of irrigation facilities for the land owned by the SCs and STs, land of beneficiaries of land reforms and IAY beneficiaries, 831 works under renovation of conventional water-bodies and 736 works of land-development were taken up in the State during the year. The total job cards issued, households demanded employment and household provided employment has increased through-out the reference period except 2014-15 as J & K has witness heavy floods. It is also pertinent to mention here that the participation of SCs, STs and others downtrodden sections of society as well as women workers, has increased MGNREGA works during the reference period from 1.75, 7.5, 23.05 and 1.44 lakhs to 4.09, 17.27, 63.25 and 22.54 lakhs respectively. The expenditure on MGNREGA works has increased from 35.54 crores to

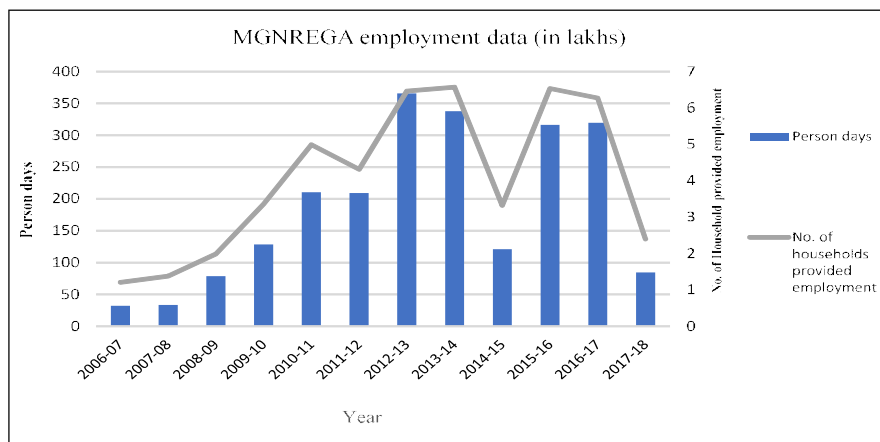


Fig 1

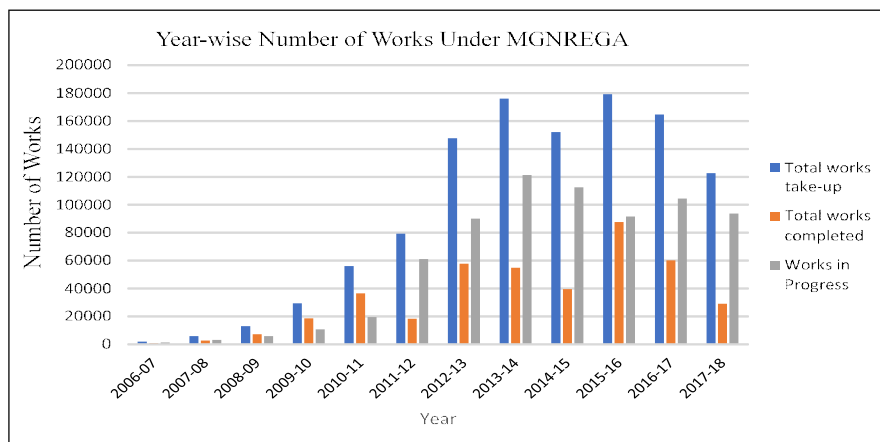


Fig 2

59445.53 crores. The number of works taken-up has also increase during the reference period from 1958 to 122677 and out of total number of works taken-up during 2006-07, 37 percent of works have been completed while as 63 percent of works were in progress during the same year. The number of works completed and number of works in progress have been fluctuation around 40 percent and 60 percent during the reference period of 200-607 to 200-17-18 respectively.

From the above figure it is evident that both person days generated and number of households provided employment has increased from 2006-07 to 2014-14 with a slight decrease during 2011-12 and there is also a fall in 2014-15 as during this period J & K faced heavy floods. Thereafter, The above data from financial year 2010-11 to 2013-14 depicts more or less adjustable fluctuations but during the period of 2014-15 the data shows drastic decrease in the trend *i.e.* the sanctioned job cards decrease up-to to 5.38 lakh households, against which 3.82 lakh households demanded work, but only 3.32 lakh households got employed. 121.09 person days were generated all across the state out of that the SCs were 5.68(4.69%), STs were 24.37(20.13%) and others share was 30.6 (25.27%) respectively. The women share in total employment generated also came down as compared to other financial years up-to 91.03 lakhs (75.17%). An amount of RS 58529.89 crores was made available. The total sanctioned amount was 52171.08 but an expenditure of 39390.16 crores (67.3%) was made. Out of 152041 works Taken up, 39586(26.03%) were completed and 112455(73.96%) were still in progress at the end of the fiscal year. In the period of 2015-16 and 2016-17 the data trend picked up the pace back as in the previous periods *i.e.*, before the period of 2014-15. But during the period of 2017-18 the data showed the decrease in the trend.

The above table depicts the number of works taken-up, works completed and works in progress during the reference period of 2006-07 to 2017-18, which has increased from 1958, 722 and 1236 to 122677, 29047 and 93630 respectively. Out of total number of works taken-up only 37 percent were completed and 63 percent were in progress during 2006-07. While as during 2017-18, out of total number of works taken-up only 24 percent were completed and 76 percent in progress as on September 2017. Furthermore, the table also shows total number of works completed under different categories, which includes rural connectivity, flood control and protection, water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, micro irrigation, irrigation facilities for SCs, STs and down-trodden sections of society, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development and other. The works completed under these are 235, 111, 74, 21, 5, 208, 21, 55 and 13 during 2006-07 and in 2017-18 theses were 12261, 7167, 1875, 144, 2630, 104, 643 and 2508 respectively. As far as the number of works completed and number of works in progress are concerned, they fluctuation around 40 and 60 percent during the reference period of 2006-07 to 2017-18.

It is evident from the above figure that there is increasing trend in number of works taken-up, number of works

completed and number of works in progress under MGNREGA since its implementation up-to 2013-14- and during 2014-14 there is depression in trends as during year J & K was faced devastating floods. Aftermath of floods the trends has increased continuously as on September 2017-18.

The policy context of MGNREGA that aided its efficacy can be classified into two, socio-economic context and political context. With respect to the socio-economic context, before the advent of MGNREGA, the economic growth was having very high pace but its impact on unemployment and poverty was negligible. Subsequently, growth doesn't take place with equal distribution. Policies regarding the poverty, inequality and unemployment have stressed on inclusive growth. To facilitate minimum livelihood security and proper resource disbursement to rural poor the MGNREGA acted as an important instrument. Therefore, this approach was set as a right-based policy so as to guarantee basic dignified level of living for the poor rural people. Secondly, political context, also provided facilities of rapid inclusive growth through framing of the Acts on the plan of the congress government led by UPA-I. The accentuation on the rural backward areas prompted the approach of the government to ensure all rural household a right to work. It was a priority in plans of central government and at the same time also grabbed the attention of the state government as it ensured the right of rural poor a critical political constituency.

CONCLUSION

An analysis of secondary data shows that there has been a significant improvement in the MGNREGA implementation in Jammu and Kashmir from its time of introduction. Since the third phase of implementation when MGNREGA was universalized, the number of households issued job cards increased from 4.97 lakh in 2008-09 to 12.53 lakh in 2017-18, thus showing a significant increase. The number of households who demanded employment and the level of employment in the State has also shown an upward trend since the implementation of programme till now. The number of person days of employment generated has increased from 32.3 to 84.61 lakhs and the total person days of employment provided the share of SCs STs and others has also been increased from 1.7, 7.5 and 23.05 to 4.09, 17.27 and 63.25 lakhs respectively. The share of women in the total employment has increased from 4.46% (1.44 lakh) to 26.64 (22.54 lakhs) during the reference period. Although the share of employment of SCs, STs and women in the total employment has shown an increasing trend through-out the reference period but there is a large number of SCs and STs who have not yet got registered under MGNREGA and the increase in women participation is still far below the 33% share as enshrined in the guidelines of the Act.

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