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# **A vigour study of MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu: A seven years study**

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**Abstract**--Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a Special Scheme launched by Government of India to reach the unreached segment of the population. As Poverty and Unemployment forms a Vicious circle, this becomes impossible to break. The Indian Government's commitment to meet this issue and break the Vicious circle of Poverty, was headed by Introducing MGNREGA is highly appreciated world-wide. This Paper is an Empirical Study of various levels in Transformation of MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu among the Beneficiaries. The study is based on the secondary data analysis for last 7 years – 2015 to 2022 in specific relation to Socio economic parameters and Fund allocation with Pre COVID-19 years and During COVID-19 year's segmentation. This Study reveals that there is a positive transformation, that it has an increase in fund allocation during COVID-19 years to provide job to the migrant workers returning to the villages from cities.

**Keywords**---vigour of MGNREGA, COVID-19, Tamil Nadu.

**Introduction**

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a legal framework flagship programme of the Government that directly supports lives of the poor people in rural India, encourages inclusive growth and Strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions. This Act Promises an improving livelihood security in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members demands to do unskilled manual work. Various Facilities for work and at worksite is also an attraction of the scheme for Beneficiaries.

### Basic Privileges

- a. Application for registration
- b. Obtaining a Job Card (JC)
- c. Choice of time and duration of the work applied for .
- d. Getting work within fifteen days of application

### Worksite Facilities and Works Privileges

- a. Worksite Facilities like crèche, drinking water, first aid etc.
- b. Extra Wage of 10% on employment beyond 5Km radius
- c. Right to check their Muster Rolls (MRs).
- d. Workers are entitled to payment on a weekly basis.
- e. Right to get unemployment allowance.
- f. Right to receive payment of compensation for the delay @ 0.05% of unpaid wage perday
- g. Complete Medical Coverage in case of injury in the course of employment

### MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu

Honourable Thiru R.N. Ravi, Governor of Tamil Nadu is the Constitutional Head of the state. Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru M.K.Stalin is the Head of the elected Government and heads the Council of Ministers.Hon'ble Thiru.Munishwar Nath Bhandari, Chief Justice, Madras High Court is the Head of Judiciary. Tamil Nadu State has a population of 7, 21, 47,030 as per Census 2011 and covers an area of 1, 30,058 sq.km Chennai (formerly known as Madras) is the State Headquarters.

In Tamil Nadu, the scheme was first notified on 2.2.2006 in 6 districts of the State and the scheme was extended to all the remaining districts, in a phased manner as per the table 1. MGNREGA is significant for various reasons, besides provision for guaranteed wage employment; it aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas through creation of durable assets for sustainable development by enhancing agricultural production

Table 1  
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme – Introduced in  
3 Phases

Phase – 1 (2.2.2006 onwards)	Phase –II (1.4.2007 onwards)	Phase – III (1.4.2008 onwards)
1. Cuddalore 2.Villupuram 3.Tiruvannamalai 4.Nagapattinam 5.Dindigul 6.Sivagangai	1. Thanjavur 2. Tiruvarur 3. Karur 4. Tirunelveli	1. Kanchipuram 2.Tiruvallur 3.Vellore 4.Salem 5.Namakkal 6.Dharmapuri 7.Krishnagiri 8.Erode 9.Coimbatore

		10.The Nilgiris 11.Trichy 12.Perambalur 13.Ariyalur 14.Pudukkottai 15.Madurai 16.Theni 17.Ramanathapuram 18.Virudhunagar 19.Thoothukudi 20.Kanniyakumari 21.Tiruppur
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Source: [https://drdpr.tn.gov.in/schemes/cen\\_nrega\\_13.html](https://drdpr.tn.gov.in/schemes/cen_nrega_13.html)

At Present, Tamil Nadu has received five awards from the central Government for effectively implementing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme. Tamil Nadu is a key performer in MGNREGA beneficiary enrolment and rural development.

The Tamil Nadu state government has announced numerous improvements in the implementation of MGNREGA to maximize its wage-employment objective. “These innovative approaches range from ensuring gender sensitive tools for workers to laying renewed focus on provision of childcare and other worksite facilities”. As a policy decision, the state implements schemes under MGNREGA which ensure 100 per cent unskilled manual works. This is a positive step towards maximizing the welfare provisions as laid down under MGNREGA 2005. Upto 2010-11, the major works taken up were large water bodies and community assets. The impact of these works was realized by the entire community. The Below table 2 highlights the households registered in Tamil Nadu as on 01 June 2022

Table2  
Total Number of Households registered in T.N

Number of Districts	Number of Jobcards		Registered Workers					Number of Active Job Cards *	Active Workers				
	Applied for	Issued	SCs	STs	Others	Total Workers	Women		SCs	STs	Others	Total Workers	Women
37	9270889	9070153	3994367	238878	9136791	13370036	9174620	7493594	2710030	156209	6294255	9160494	7218602

Source: Tabulated from [www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in) (Assessed on 01-06-2022)

The MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu stands tall in its Fame of Reaching the unreached; it is the only programme which targets of the rural India’s transformation by reaching all levels.

Table 3  
MGNREGA at a Glance in Tamil Nadu

Total No. of Districts	37
Total No. of Blocks	388
Total No. of GPs	12,525
<b>I Job Card</b>	<b>In Lakhs</b>
Total No. of JobCards issued[In Lakhs]	92.71
Total No. of Workers[In Lakhs]	133.7
Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Lakhs]	74.94
Total No. of Active Workers[In Lakhs]	91.6
(i)SC worker against active workers[%]	29.58
(ii)ST worker against active workers[%]	1.71

Source: Tabulated from [www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in) (Assessed on 01-06-2022)

### Key Stakeholders in MGNREGA

The key stakeholders for whom the awareness is targeted are Wage seekers, Gram Sabha (GS), Three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Programme Officer at the Block level, District Programme Coordinator (DPC), State Government, Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Bankers, SHG unit members, Adolescent school drop outs, Anganwadis, Beneficiary groups of various development projects implemented in GPs. This Paper is a study based on the secondary data analysis for last 7 years – 2015 to 2022 in specific relation to Socio Economic parameters and Fund allocation with Pre Covid19 years and During Covid19 year's segmentation.

### Literature review

Many Studies have pointed out gaps in the implementation of scheme. Bhatia and Dreze (Bhatia and Dreze 2006) in their study concluded that the irregularity in scheme is mainly due to low awareness among the people. Another paper by VM Rao (Rao 2007), Concludes the inefficiency in the Scheme is mainly due to non-Participation of Villagers in Gram Sabha Meetings. In 2009, Indian Institute of Technology, Chennai conducted a study "Evaluation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: In Cuddlore, Dindugal, Kanchipuram, Thiruvallar, districts Tamilnadu", to reveals the impact of MNREGA in the state of Tamilnadu by taking five districts into account. They concluded with the following observations that

- Villagers consider NREGA a boon for improving rural Livelihood.
- This Scheme ensured gender equality and upliftment of SC & ST caste people.
- Financial inclusion strategies like bank account opening etc. has helped.

Further Novotn\_y et al (2013), in his Paper provided an multidimensional analysis of MGNREGA using a case study from rural Tamil Nadu. Also projected how MGNREGA had a very minimal impact on migration, He concluded showing positive effects on the welfare of participating and non-participating households

were accompanied by adverse effects on the local economy and negligible impact on out-migration for work.

Another such research in the FY 2014, A Joint research carried out as part of a British Academy funded research project entitled 'India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme: Livelihoods, Gender and Migration in Tamil Nadu. The study was carried out in Tamil Nadu, a state widely presented as a 'success' in terms of MGNREGA's implementation, and describes who participates in the scheme and how success is understood and expressed at different social and bureaucratic levels. They concluded that the scheme is benefitting the poorest households – and Dalits and women in particular – especially in terms of providing a safety net and as a tool for poverty alleviation. These benefits are not only substantial but also transformative in that they affect rural relations of production and contribute to the empowerment of the rural labouring poor. However, in terms of creating durable assets and promoting grassroots democracy, the scheme's outcomes are much less encouraging.

Kurinjimalar & Prasanna, (2017), in their study analysed the impact of MGNREGP on poverty alleviation with special reference to Salem and Villupuram Districts of Tamil Nadu. This study concluded that SC and ST people have keen interest to do MGNRRGP works. MGNREGP fulfilled their basic needs like food consumption, medicine, children's education and small savings like SHGs.

### **Objective**

TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF MGNREGA IN TAMIL NADU FOR PAST 7 YEARS (2015 -2021) WITH RESPECT TO PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE AND FUND ALLOCATED.

- a. To study the effect of Socio-Economic parameters of MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu, before and After COVID19.
- b. To study the level of funds allocated, in MGNREGA – TN Before and After COVID19.

### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between 2015-2019-Before COVID-19 and 2020-2021-After COVID-19

H<sub>11</sub>: There is significant relationship between 2015-2019-Before COVID-19 and 2020-2021-After COVID-19

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Fund Allocated-2015-2019-Before COVID-19 and After COVID-19

H<sub>12</sub>: There is significant relationship between Fund Allocated-2015-2019-Before COVID-19 and After COVID-19

### **Methodology**

To study the effect of socio-economic parameters of MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu, before and After COVID19, paired t-test was used. For understanding the effect

before COVID19, 2015-2019 was taken while to understand the effect after COVID19, 2020-21 is taken.

Table 4  
Paired T-test Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	2015-2019- Before COVID-19	8867295.3333	12	8208389.95984	3.161	.009
	2020-2021- After COVID-19	7054328.7500	12	6742272.55080		

Source: Author's Creation

The above paired 't' test shows that the mean of effect of socio-economic factors was 8867295.3333 after the implementation of MGNREGA during the period of 2015-2019 while the reduced to 7054328.7500 during the period of 2020-21. The result shows that there is a significant difference in the scores before the COVID19 (S. D=8208389.95984) and after COVID19 (M= 5566.44, S.D. = 956.799) and the impact of the scheme, (t = 3.161) where p=.009 suggests that the implementation of the scheme has made some positive impact on the beneficiaries before COVID19. Hence  $H_{11}$  is accepted

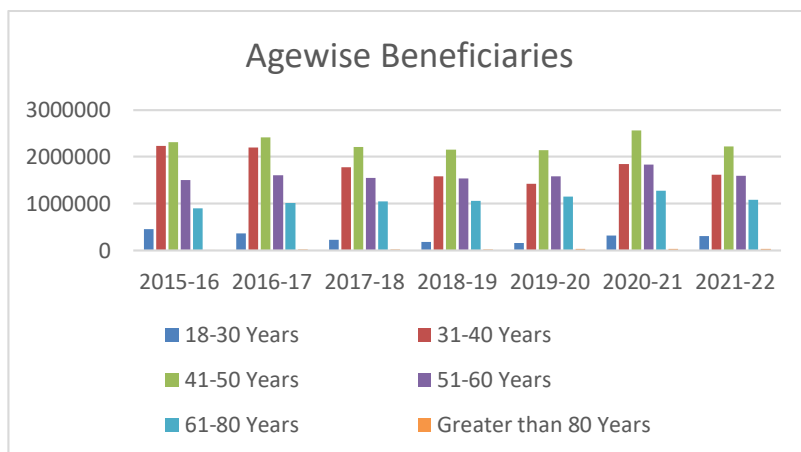


Fig 1: Age wise Beneficiaries T.N 2015-2022

Source: Author's creation

The above is the bar chart based the Beneficiaries among age group of 18 to more than 80 years age and comparison between years 2015-2021. It can be seen that the Beneficiaries who were aged between 41-50 years is the highest in 2020-21, those who are Beneficiaries 80 years of age is lowest in all the years taken. The Beneficiaries among the age group of 31-40 years seems to be almost stable in all the years taken for comparison.

To study the level of funds allocated, Pair t-test was used. For understanding the level funds allocated before COVID19, 2015-2019 was taken while to understand the level funds allocated works after COVID19, 2020-21 is taken.

Table 5  
Fund Allocation 2015-2022

Year	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
2015-16	112387.7	491676.5	302032	268197.697
2016-17	103178.9	561701.4	332440	324224.404
2017-18	78486.14	363114.6	220800	201262.728
2018-19	128701.2	439762.4	284232	219953.42
2019-20	151593.3	427447.4	289520	195058.333
2020-21	235901.6	639995.5	437949	285737.551
2021-22	97896.13	315700.6	206798	154011.018

*Source: Authors Creation*

The above table 5 provides information on funds allocated under MGNREGA from the years 2015-22. The mean and standard value for the year 2015-16 is 302032.0700 and 268197.69665. For the year 2016-17, M=332440.1650, SD=324224.40443. The mean and SD value for the year 2017-18 is 220800.3800 and 201262.72833. The mean and SD value for the year 2018-19 is 284231.7950 and 219953.42024. The mean and SD value for the year 2019-20, is 289520.3600 and 195058.33301. The Mean and SD value for the year 2018-19 is 284231.7950 and 219953.42024. The mean and SD value for the year 2020-21, 437948.5800 and 285737.55107. The mean and SD value for the year 2021-22, 206798.3650 and 154011.01771. Thus, the level of funds allocated was highest in the year 2016-17

Table 6  
Fund Allocation Statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Fund Allocated-2015-2019- Before COVID-19	285091	3	57715.79982	0.665	0.574
During COVID-19	311422	3	117121.2241		

*Source: Author's Creation based on table 5*

The above table 6 shows that the level of funds allocated before COVID19 was 285090.8717 during the period of 2015-2019 while the same increased to 311422.4350 during the period of 2020-21. The result shows that there is a significant difference in the scores before the COVID19 (S. D=57715.79982) and after COVID19 (S.D. = 117121.22413) and the impact of the scheme, (t = 0.665) where p=.574 suggests that it has a positive impact. Hence  $H_{12}$  is Accepted.

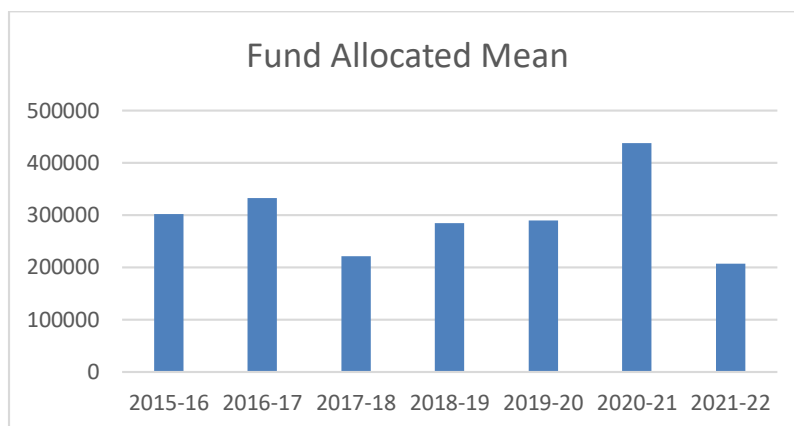


Fig 2: Mean Fund Allocation  
Source: Author's Creation

The above bar chart provides information on mean of fund allocated from the years 2015-22. It was found to be highest in the year 2020-21 and for the years 2018-20, the mean of funds allocated were same.

### Conclusion

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Proves to be a Special Scheme, because of its unique features which includes Time Bound Work- Wage Guarantee, Emphasis on labour intensive work, Social and economic development of Village, Infrastructure and asset creation in rural area including assistance in individual asset creation, Worksite facilities, Unemployment wages and other entitlements. This study shows that there is a significant difference in the scores before the COVID19 and after COVID19 with the impact on MGNREGA. It suggests that the implementation of the scheme has made some positive impact on the beneficiaries before COVID19. The Beneficiaries among the age group of 31-40 years seems to be almost stable in all the years taken for comparison. Further, the evaluation of Fund allocation shows that there is a significant difference in the scores before the COVID19 and during COVID19 and the impact of the scheme suggests that it has a positive impact with an increase in fund allocation During COVID19 years to provide job to the migrant workers returning to the villages from cities.

### Few Key Suggestions

- More Self-help groups and NGO's should be encouraged.
- Government should come up with Short Movies and Radio message to spread the knowledge and latest information in the scheme.
- Focused attention to Individual/Community needs is to be addressed.

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