

MGNREGA: ANALYSIS OF DALIT PARTICIPATION IN UTTAR PRADESH

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Mahatma Gandhi once said:

“Poverty is the worst form of violence.”

The ideology of Mahatma Gandhi for poor must have been in the minds of the planners of MGNREGA program when they renamed it after him on 2 October, 2009. It is remarkable by the policy planners that the essential part of economic and social development should reach the poor and needy. Special care should be provided to the Dalits (SCs) of India. The largest democracy of the world has the largest underprivileged population. According to census of India 2011, the population of the nation is nearly 1.21 billion. Uttar Pradesh is the most populated Indian state. Dalits constitute 16.64% of total Indian population and once again Uttar Pradesh has the biggest number of scheduled castes population¹.



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Table 1.1: Demonstrating total Dalit Population in India*

Total Population in India	1,21,01,93,422		
	Male	62,37,24,248	
	Female	58,64,69,174	
Dalit Population in India		Absolute	Percentage total population in India
	Total	20,13,78,372	16.64%
	Male	10,35,35,314	8.55%
	Female	9,78,43,058	8.08%
Literacy rate of Dalits	66.07%		

Source: Census of India 2011

Nearly 68.8% population of India lives in 6.40 lakh villages depending on agriculture and labor. The labor class is suffering with the huge unemployment of the country. We should discuss the population profile of India with reference to scheduled castes before going forward. A brief tabulated data is presented in Table 1.1. If we study any aspect of a particular population, firstly we have to study the population discriminations. India is the one of the largest populated countries of the world. The strength of man-power in India has not been hidden but it is the duty of the government to arrange employment for the people of their country. The employment status of any country states the reputation of a nation.

It is clearly stated that the present scenario of literacy among Dalit communities but economic status is still needing major improvement. It is evident that India has achieved success in the field of science and technology over last 70 years, but some basic problems are there which needs to be address. These basic problems are unemployment and poverty which have caught the economy so powerfully that the people are migrating from rural to urban areas. These two problems have been the curse for India since long. The policy planners have

planned to reduce unemployment since the beginning of the planning year in 1951-1952 but problem still persists. The study of unemployment in Indian is very necessary for us to identify the career prospective, Table 1.2 shows state wise unemployment ratio of year 2015-2016.

The condition of poverty and unemployment is not hidden from anyone. According to the claims of Union Ministry of Labor, national unemployment rate of India falls around 3.7 percent in FY 2015-2016². However, this data is the result of Usual Principal Subsidiary Status (UPSS). The average unemployment rate of Uttar Pradesh is greater than that of the national average. Though the condition of some other states is worse than that, yet it needs improvement. The unemployment rate is gradually increasing due to under employment and other aspects. Due to poverty, unemployment and poor development of rural areas Indian government has launched different types of rural development programmes at different levels. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was launched to fill the gap in the status of rural people who are unemployed and uneducated. It was initially propounded by P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1991, but finally launched by Dr. Manmohan Singh on 2nd of Feb, 2006 in Banalapalli village of Anantpur District of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 1.2: Unemployment ratio in India (per. 1000) for persons aged 15 years (2015-16)*

Rank	State	Total	Urban	Rural
1	Tripura	197	172	203
2	Sikkim	181	168	184
3	Kerala	125	126	125
4	Himachal Pradesh	106	23	117
5	Goa	96	58	150
6	Arunachal Pradesh	89	52	93
7	Nagaland	85	141	69
8	Jharkhand	77	94	73
9	Uttar Pradesh	74	67	76
10	Jammu and Kashmir	72	36	83
11	Rajasthan	71	43	77
12	Uttarakhand	70	32	81
13	Assam	61	101	55
14	Punjab	60	62	59
14	Bihar	60	74	59
16	Manipur	57	70	49
17	Odisha	50	47	51

18	West Bengal	49	56	47
19	Meghalaya	48	134	28
20	Haryana	47	57	43
21	Madhya Pradesh	43	40	44
22	Tamil Nadu	42	36	45
23	Andhra Pradesh	39	44	38
24	Mizoram	30	49	15
25	Telangana	28	62	13
26	Maharashtra	21	23	20
27	Chhattisgarh	19	68	11
28	Karnataka	15	19	13
29	Gujarat	9	7	10

Source: Reprinted from "Report on Fifth Annual Employment-Unemployment Survey (2015-16)", [Ministry of Labour and Employment](#), p.120

On the whole, NREGA was started on 2 Feb, 2006 from 200 districts, whereas from 1 April 2008, it over took all the districts of India. The status was hailed by the government as "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world". Successful implementation of this scheme depends on the amount of financial aid given to run the scheme properly. A brief description of financial budget and expenditure in last few years is shown in Table 1.3. It is evident that the budget is increasing gradually every financial year. However, financial expenditure is also constantly increasing every year, stating the need to release more funds³.

MGNREGA tries to enhance livelihood status of rural people by providing 100 days yearly employment to every household whose adult members wants to do unskilled work. This is the main objective; we have to search whether the people are interested in MGNREGA or not. This is the most important objective of this research. The national level programme should provide the healthy satisfaction. This is an important question that needs to be addressed. Employment guarantee act is a positive effort in this direction, but its achievement is to be judged deeply. The outcome of MGNREGA scheme related to the cumulative number of households provided work every financial year and total number of person days generated under MGNREGA is shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.3: Year-wise financial budget for MGNREGA and financial Expenditure.

S.No	Financial Year	Budget released (in Crore)	Expenditure (in Crore)
1	2012-2013	33,000	3465,351.73
2	2013-2014	33,000	3314135.48
3	2014-2015	34,000	3089445.1
4	2015-2016	34,699	3675998.7
5	2016-2017	38,500	5138127.72
6	2017-2018	48,500	5503781.33
7	2018-2019	55,000	

Source: Ministry of Finance, Government of India, Yearly Union Budgets.

Table 1.4: Cumulative number of households and total number of person days provided work under MGNREGA.

S. no.	Financial Year	Number of Household Provided Work	Person Days (In Lakhs)
1.	2012 – 2013	4,78,89,792	20547.19
2.	2013 – 2014	4,88,73,089	20750.35
3.	2014 – 2015	4,58,99,523	14897.78
4.	2015 – 2016	4,98,70,700	3998.84
5.	2016 – 2017	2,41,86,791	1932.69

Source: Ministry of Rural Development, Govt of India. Data retrieved in Feb, 2018

The comparison of table 1.3 and 1.4 raises a question regarding continuous fall in number of households provided work and person days as compared to increase in financial expenditure in continuous years. Similarly, the percentage of Dalit population participated in MGNREGA is shown in Table 1.5⁴.

Table 1.5: Dalit Participation (in total person days) under MGNREGA.

S. no.	Financial Year	Dalit participation (%)
1	2012 – 2013	21.51
2	2013 – 2014	22.54
3	2014 – 2015	22.52
4	2015 – 2016	22.26
5	2016 – 2017	20.20

Source: Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. Data is retrieved in February, 2018

Compared to the decrease in number of person days in total population, Dalit participation is almost constant during these years even after increased literacy rate among Dalit communities as demonstrated in table 1.4 and 1.5.

Table 1.6: A comparison of the percentage of Dalit participation in UP in last five years

Financial Year	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Percentage of dalit job cards (HH)	33%	33%	32%	33%	33%
Percentage of dalit participation against total HH employment	35%	35%	35%	33%	34%

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>⁶

Though Dalit community forms 21% of total population of UP but their participation in MGNREGA is better in percentage. The government is increasing the Expenditure of every FY yet the number of person days is going down. Thus, the participation of Dalit community is still constant at national and state level both as shown in table 1.5 and 1.6. They are also developing in a similar way to the society. There is an effect of literacy rate, awareness and education. There may be some other factors affecting the scheme. Though the condition of Dalit is constant but implementation of scheme need some improvement because of decrease in

person days.

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