



MGNREGA AND ITS IMPACT ON REDUCING POVERTY IN ANDHRA PRADESH: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract

It is common knowledge that India, as a growing nation, struggles with various social and economic issues. However, the Indian government attempts to address certain issues by implementing several policies and procedures. The widespread acknowledgment of poverty in India as the country's most pressing problem with far-reaching implications for the country's economic growth is another key fact. The "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)," formerly known as the "National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA, 2005)", is one of the methods or programs are undertaken by "the Government of India under the Ministry of Rural Development" to reduce unemployment and poverty. Each family participating in the program must commit to working for the company for 100 calendar days during the fiscal year if they do not have any eligible workers in residence. The government can pay a family's unemployed adolescent member for 100 days if they refuse to do such work. Between February 2, 2006, and April 1, 2008, the MGNREGA Act was implemented in three phases in 13 districts across Andhra Pradesh. This will result in a 33% increase in women participating in job-creation programs. 46.71 million Households in Andhra Pradesh have access to the 2235.46 million individual days created so far. The purpose of this piece is to shed light on the role of the MGNREGA in the fight against poverty. Not only have that but the scheme's earnings been evaluated. According to the findings of this article, the Act has shaped the economic and social lives of people in various parts of India. On the other hand, Andhra Pradesh has not adequately enforced the system, which shows a "significant gap" between the program and its acceptance by "the government."

Keywords: *Andhra Pradesh, Employment, MGNREGA, Poverty, Strategy.*

1.Introduction

During the past six or seven decades, financial progress has become a far more prominent position in mainstream discourse and has undergone significant development. One of India's welfare initiatives is "The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), passed by the government in August 2005 and went into effect on September 7, India." Its foundation can be traced back to one country with a large population, especially in rural areas. According to the 2011 Indian Economic Census, 68.84% of the country's population resides in rural areas ^[1]. Nonetheless, unemployment is a secondary worry to the public's primary worries of illiteracy and poverty. The study's author also emphasized the link between wasteful spending and economic decline.

Despite being one of the world's top ten fastest-growing industrial powers, India's heart lies in its rural communities and villages. Since 1952, the government has created numerous measures to combat rural poverty and boost economic growth. Additionally, the government has implemented other programs



throughout the country, one of which is MGNREGA. Eliminating rural poverty and enhancing village economies are central to this strategy's efforts to repair rural progress. One of the primary tools for ensuring the appropriate answer and financial stability in terms of occupation and income was enacted as a result of this law^[2].

2. The objective of the study

The following are the objectives of the study—

1. The current study intends to evaluate the impact of MGNREGA in Andhra Pradesh, emphasizing poverty reduction and its ramifications.
2. To get a good grasp on the role MGNREGA has played in Andhra Pradesh's fight against poverty and its positive impact on rural development.
3. Determine what obstacles exist in implementing MGNREGA at the grassroots level;
4. To analyze the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and suggest how it might be implemented in the rural sections of emerging states like Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere in India.

3. Methodology

To complete this study, we rely heavily on secondary information sources. The research has used existing papers, books, documents, newspapers, government and non-governmental sources, and relevant websites to ensure its thoroughness, accuracy, and completeness. Moreover, the inductive technique was used in this study to analyze MGNREGA's contribution to the reduction of poverty in Andhra Pradesh. Using study objectives to define the qualitative scope of the research has helped restrict the study's scope. Conversely, the experimental study design was helpful in the development of a productive idea that relied heavily on the aggregation of quantitative data from secondary sources. Thus, this study's unrealistic assumptions were weeded out using an exploratory test approach. Since the emphasis here is on secondary sources, qualitative analyses have been applied. The information gathered from the government MGNREGA website has been given more weight than the information reported in Andhra Pradesh documents and other literature. The website for MGNREGA has uncovered secondary data for the years 2016–2017 and 2020–2021, which will be used to create the qualitative context of the report and to gauge MGNREGA's contribution to the reduction of poverty in Andhrapradesh.

4. Study area

The Indian state of Andhra Pradesh can be found on the country's southeastern coast. Seventh in size, with “an area of 162,975 km² [62,925 sq mi], and tenth in population, with 49,386,799, it is the seventh most extensive and the tenth most populous state in the country. The states of Telangana bound it to the northwest, Chhattisgarh to the north, Odisha to the northeast, Tamil Nadu to the south, Karnataka to the west, and the Bay of Bengal to the east. In terms of length, it has the second-longest coastline in India (behind Gujarat's), at around 974 kilometers (605 miles). Andhra Pradesh, India's first linguistically based state was founded on October 1, 1953.”^[3]

A total of 49,386,799 people were counted in the Indian census of 2011, giving a population density of 308 per square kilometer (or 800 per square mile) in the residual state. A total of 247,515 people from Telangana state's Khammam district Mandals migrated to Andhra Pradesh in 2014 due to the



Polavaram ordinance law. Andhra Pradesh total population in 2011 was 49,634,314, with a density of 304.5 inhabitants per square kilometer (789 per square mile)^[4].

Out of a total population of 34,776,389, 70.4% live “in rural areas, while 29.6% live in urban areas with 14,610,410 residents. There were 5,222,384 children in the age bracket of 0 to 6 years old, which accounts for 10.6 percent of the total population. There are 2,686,453 boys and 2,535,931 girls among these young people. Visakhapatnam has 47.5% of the district's population and is thus the most urbanized area. Of all the districts in the state, Srikakulam has the highest percentage of rural residents (83.8%). 17.1 percent of the state's population identifies as Scheduled Caste, and 5.3 percent identifies as Scheduled Tribal.”^[5]

More women than men live in this country, with a female-to-male population ratio of 996 females per 1000 males (24,738,068 males and 24,648,731 females). At this time, 67.41 percent of the population of this state can read and write. There is a wide range in literacy rates across Andhra Pradesh, with the highest being in the West Godavari district (74.6%) and the lowest being in the Vizianagaram district (58.9%).

Andhra Pradesh has an HDI of 0.650, placing it 10th among the Indian states. In 2011, the National Council for Applied Economic Study released a review of districts and found “that Krishna, West Godavari, and Chittoor were the three rural AP districts with the highest increasing Human Development Index scores.”^[6]

5. An Overview of MGNREGA

On February 2, 2006, the MGNREGA ACT became law, bringing 200 of the country's districts under its purview. Even though the Act has existed globally for a long time, there is surprisingly little written about its impact or study. The MGNREGA Act has provided an additional boost to the country's backward regions as they attempt to escape a low equilibrium trap. MGNREGA-based ensured jobs are also redistributing poverty, according to the Ministry of Rural Development (2013). Massive infrastructure projects are being built to aid rural revitalization by creating new sources of revenue, new employment opportunities, and plans for long-term economic growth^[7].

Women's economic empowerment has been greatly aided by MGNREGA, which has increased their independence and confidence and helped them secure jobs that pay the same as men's. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this action will increase the percentage of women employed by 33. Under this Act, the federal government must give 100 days of guaranteed wage jobs to households whose adult members volunteer for unskilled manual labor. In addition, the Act's employment opportunities address root causes of poverty, such as soil degradation, crop failures, and deforestation in rural areas, guaranteeing the long-term viability of the job creation mechanism^[8].

5.1. Key MGNREGA Characteristics

The numerous employment program based on MGNREGA describes two goals: rural employment and development. The program recommends that adults in rural communities follow this career path if they want to be able to perform unskilled physical labor. Nevertheless, the local Gram Panchayat must approve it^[9]. In addition, the framework of this method is based on granting rights in response to specific needs. MGNREGA provides displaced individuals with jobs for a minimum of 100 days each



year in rural areas. Any member of the Gram Panchayat, regardless of their social standing, is eligible to apply for this employment program. In addition, the law guaranteed that if employees were not offered within 15 days, the worker would be eligible for unemployment benefits following the verification of their credentials and issuing of a job card. The Village Panchayats must distribute identity documents when they have enrolled adult members besides photographs of registered families. Its validity period was set at five years^[10].

Babu, C. V., & Sudhakar, G (2014).^[11] make clear that the Gram Panchayat is the only organization with the legal authority to hire the village's residents. "The incentives structure of the Act provides work, as 90% of state employment expenses are generated centrally. Furthermore, the public delivery mechanism is responsible through the annual performance study based on MGNREGA findings, which is reported to the legislature by the state governments and to the parliament by the federal government. On the local level, MGNREGA is enforced by the Panchayat and the programmer; at the district level, it is enforced by the Commissions and the Local Job Guarantee Council." The federal government has approved a program that will help with water administration, rural connections, drought avoidance, flood mitigation, minor cultivation, land acquisition, and other tasks in tandem with the state government.

5.2. MGNREGA in the Indian Context

Table 1 shows MGNREGA's growth from 2005-2009. To help those in rural areas get by on a subsistence level of income, the statute guarantees them 100 days of employment per year. They are required to register fifteen days before the start of their position. Total Expenditures (Rs. in Cr.): 631959.14 Personal Outputs (in Cr.): 3149.18 Days After the Start. As of January 25, 2021, it is expected that 123, 9456 businesses will be home to 1, 384, 1470 workers (as per e-Must Roll)^[12].

Table-1: The Evolution of MGNREGA from 2005-2009

Starting Point (August 2005)	Stage-I	Stage-II	Stage-III	Stage-IV	Stage-V	Stage VI (Present status)
Commencement of NREGA (August 25, 2005)	From 2nd February, 2006, functioning initiated in 200 most backward districts	130 more districts were brought under the scheme in April, 2007	On April 1, 2008, the scheme was implemented to the entire country	From October, 2008, initiation for paying wages through post office and banks begun	On February, 2009, MOU with postal department has been signed	With effect from 2nd October, 2009, NREGA has been renamed as "MGNREGA"

Intending to create transitional economic resources, forest areas, and water management systems, MGNREGA is the greatest ecological restoration effort in the world. More than half a million water and soil administration facilities and agricultural assets were built through MGNREGA between 2006 and 2007, all of which contributed to creating jobs and reducing poverty. The MGNREGA-funded



districts in the area yearly produce between 2,000 and 4,000 village assets. It's also noteworthy that this growth is double what was produced under the SGSY and EAS programs^[13].

It is also acknowledged that MGNREGA enables rural residents to create importantly and competing economic resources. Tanks, rural roads, and market sheds are just a few examples of the valuable communal assets built for youth unemployment and water supplies, all of which have improved the quality of life for rural residents and given them a vision for the future. Table 2 provides an overview of the current MGNREGA situation in India.

Table-2: A Comprehensive Picture of MGNREGA in India (As on 5/11/2022)

MGNREGA in Indian Scenario					
1. Total No. of Districts	734				
2. Total No. of Blocks	7,154				
3. Total No. of GPs	2,70,048				
I Job Card					
4. Total No. of Job Cards issued[In Cr]	16.86				
5.Total No.of Workers[In Cr]	31.46				
6.Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Cr]	10.18				
7. Total No. of Active Workers[In Cr]	15.52				
8(i).SC worker against active workers[%]	19.9				
9(ii).ST worker against active workers[%]	16				
II Progress	FY 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019
10. Approved Labour Budget[In Cr]	230.15	337.76	385.67	277.63	256.56
11. Persondays Generated so far[In Cr]	184.08	363.33	389.09	265.35	267.96
12. % of Total LB	79.98	107.57	100.89	95.57	104.44
13. % as per Proportionate LB	89.32	0	0	0	0
14. SC person days % as of total person days	20.02	19.17	19.87	20.38	20.77
15. ST person days % as of total person days	17.05	18.32	17.95	18.51	17.42
16. Women Person days out of Total (%)	56.04	54.7	53.19	54.78	54.59
17. Average days of employment provided per Household	36.24	50.07	51.52	48.4	50.88
18. Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs.)	216.26	208.84	200.71	182.09	179.13
19. Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	6,95,51959	18,01971	97,09040	60,46352	59,502



20. Total Households Worked[In Cr]	5.08	7.26	7.55	5.48	5.27
21. Total Individuals Worked[In Cr]	7.02	10.62	11.19	7.88	7.77
22. Differently abled persons worked	3,93,327	5,73,870	6,06,149	4,62,917	4,61,880
III Works					
23. Number of GPs with NIL exp	10,131	4,797	6,594	10,556	10,978
24. Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over)[In Lakhs]	190.51	233.13	222.39	189.31	197.06
25. Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	134.15	143.97	138.04	114.64	106.84
26. Number of Completed Works[In Lakhs]	56.35	89.16	84.35	74.67	90.22
27. % of NRM Exp.(Public + Individual)	67.99	65.12	64.52	61.88	58.8
28. % of Category B Works	61.18	62.29	64.97	67.71	67.55
29. % of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	70.05	64.33	65.01	66.13	63.39
IV Financial Progress					
30. Total center release (In Cr.)	55,258.4	96,812.29	1,09,810.68	71,020.35	62,125.07
31. Total Availability (In Cr.)	60,965.23	1,07,968.53	1,18,887.86	75,510.25	69,228.68
32. Total Exp[In Cr]	60,343.34	1,06,174.13	1,11,719.55	68,265.97	69,618.59
33. Percentage Utilization	98.98	98.34	93.97	90.41	100.56
34. Wages[In Cr]	41,263.53	75,115.05	78,016.86	48,847.94	47,172.55
35. Material and skilled Wages[In Cr]	17,901.07	27,702.26	29,557.92	16,192.15	19,465.87
36. Material (%)	30.26	26.94	27.48	24.9	29.21
37. Total Adm Expenditure[In Cr]	1,178.74	3,356.82	4,144.77	3,225.88	2,980.1
38. Admin Exp (%)	1.95	3.16	3.71	4.73	4.28
39. Average Cost Per Day Per Person (In Rs.)	282.86	284.19	266.19	235.28	247.19
40. % Total Exp through eFMS	99.76	99.41	99.37	99.56	99.01
41. % of payments generated within 15 days	95.11	97.01	96.18	93.76	89.61

Source; "Official website of MGNREGA, www.mgnrega.nic.in & http://mnregaweb4.nic.in/netnrega/all_lv_details_dashboard_new.aspx?Fin_Year=2020-2021&Digest=ueg%2fHtV54GGJ8ZQ6GUB2ew"

5.3. MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh Scenario

In Table 3, in the first step of 2006-2007, MGNREGA covered four districts, and all households had to enroll in Gram Panchayat and pursue jobs. In the second step, "six new districts were added under the plan, accompanied by the third phase, taking all 13 districts into the framework by 2008."



“Table-3: Phase-wise Execution of MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh”

Phase-I (with effect from 2 nd February 2006)	Anantapuram, Chittoor, Kadapa, Vizianagaram
Phase II (with effect from April 1, 2007)	Nellore, East Godavari, Srikakulam, Kurnool, Prakasam, Guntur.
Phase III (with effect from April 1, 2008)	West Godavari, Krishna, Vishakhapatnam.”

“Source: Official Website of MGNREGA www.mgnrega.nic.in”

The following Table 4 explains the comprehensive picture of MNREGA in Andhrapradesh

Table-4: The Comprehensive Picture of MGNREGA in Andhrapradesh

ANDHRA PRADESH(As of 8/11/2023)					
Total No. of Districts	26				
Total No. of Blocks	661				
Total No. of GPs	13,350				
I. Job Card					
Total No. of Job Cards issued [In Lakhs]	98.68				
Total No. of Workers[In Lakhs]	195.89				
Total No. of Active Job Cards[In Lakhs]	58.01				
Total No. of Active Workers[In Lakhs]	100.78				
(i)SC worker against active workers[%]	24.46				
(ii)ST worker against active workers[%]	9.12				
II Progress	FY 2022-2023	FY 2021-2022	FY 2020-2021	FY 2019-2020	FY 2018-2019
Approved Labour Budget [In Lakhs]	1400	2350	2592.93	2025	2470.48
Person days Generated so far[In Lakhs]	1766.62	2417.2	2593.24	2002.25	2465.64
% of Total LB	126.19	102.86	100.01	98.88	99.8
% as per Proportionate LB	99.89				
SC person days % as of total person days	23.76	23.55	22.62	21.14	21.45
ST person days % as of total person days	9.46	10.14	10.76	11.37	10.15
Women Person days out of Total (%)	59.52	57.55	57.26	60.07	59.9
Average days of employment provided per	41.95	51.64	54.35	49.59	58.32



Household					
Average Wage rate per day per person(Rs. Lakhs)	207.32	216.18	228.74	203.15	198.83
Total No of HHs completed 100 Days of Wage Employment	38,234	4,69,296	8,64,448	5,81,814	8,67,428
Total Households Worked[In Lakhs]	42.11	46.81	47.71	40.37	42.28
Total Individuals Worked[In Lakhs]	68.88	77.47	79.81	65.02	69.11
Differently abled persons worked	72690	84604	89162	77009	80420
III Works					
Number of GPs with NIL exp	378	388	428	443	440
Total No. of Works Taken up (New+Spill Over)[In Lakhs]	11.27	11.38	15.2	15.65	21.05
Number of Ongoing Works[In Lakhs]	9.44	7.73	7.42	10.65	10.23
Number of Completed Works	1,82,906	3,64,949	7,77,432	5,00,051	10,81,909
% of NRM Expenditure(Public + Individual)	78.73	62.58	68.3	61.55	55.58
% of Category B Works	49.8	53.7	56.68	60.14	55.64
% of Expenditure on Agriculture & Agriculture Allied Works	50.97	59.4	63.32	59.41	54.62
IV Financial Progress					
Total center Release	510153.7	722562.39	1036548.02	731148.04	668453.62
Total Availability	525843	722562.39	1036548.02	731148.04	740036.34
Percentage Utilization	83.7	108.84	105.16	75.67	112.23
Total Exp (Rs. in Lakhs.)	4,40,155.77	7,86,440.01	10,90,061	5,53,251.67	8,30,513.97
Wages (Rs. In Lakhs)	3,69,904.26	5,14,606.12	5,95,141.96	4,21,517.25	4,88,284.66
Material and skilled Wages (Rs. In Lakhs)	58,747.98	2,50,465.95	4,55,696.37	90,035.03	3,02,669.54
Material (%)	13.71	32.74	43.37	17.6	38.27
Total Adm Expenditure (Rs. in Lakhs.)	11,503.53	21,367.95	39,222.67	41,699.38	39,559.77
Admin Exp (%)	2.61	2.72	3.6	7.54	4.76
Average Cost Per Day Per Person (In Rs.)	253.41	393.93	391.62	278.53	365.29
% of Total Expenditure through EFMS	100	100	100	100	100
% payments generated within 15 days	97.9	98.79	99.14	96.03	93.63

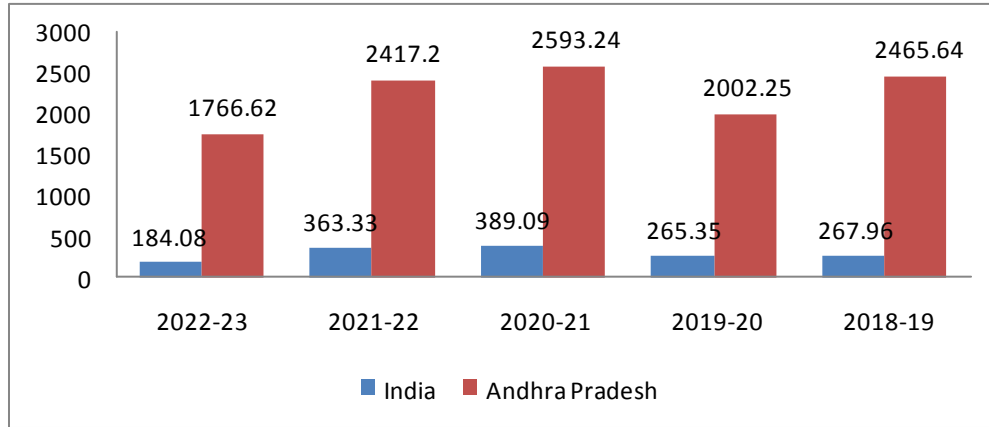
“Source: Official website of MGNREGA www.mgnrega.nic.in”



6. “Results and Discussion”

When comparing the number of families employed in India and AP in 2018-19 to that in 2022-23, Figure 1 shows a significant increase in the number of households provided by jobs individual days were produced.

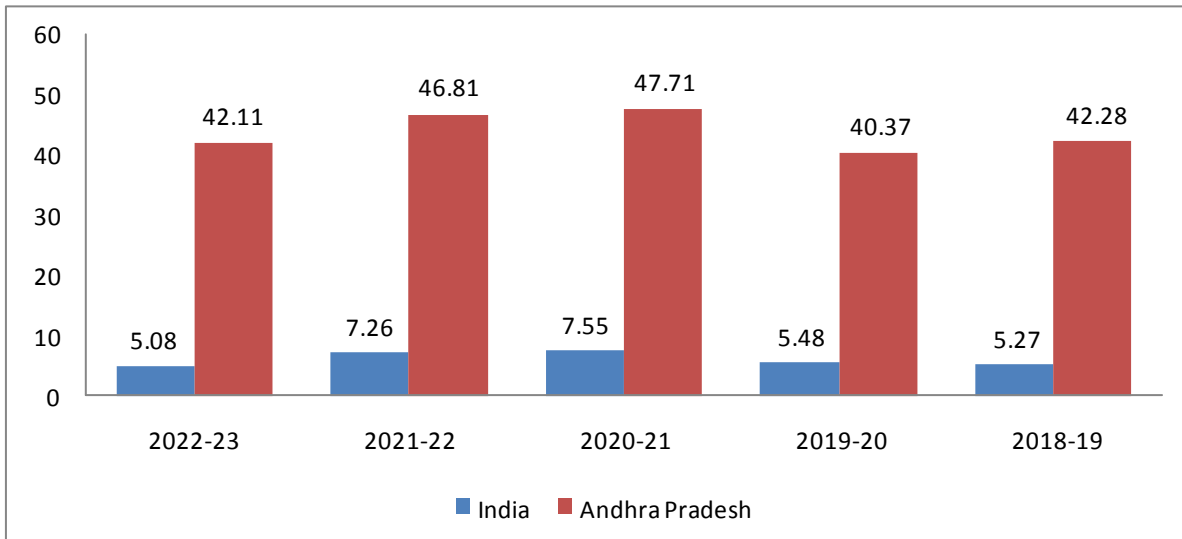
Fig-1: MGNREGA Person days Generated so far (in Crore)



“Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in”

It can be seen in figure-1 above that the MGNREGA generated 267.96 crores in India and 2465.64crores in Andhrapradesh during the 2018-2019 fiscal year, expressed in terms of person-days. As of the current financial year (2022-23), India and Andhrapradesh generated 184.08 Cr. and 1766.62 Cr. According to the data presented above, between 2018-19 and 2022-23, there was a considerable increase in the proportion of employed households in India and AP. They were provided with jobs on a day-to-day basis.

Fig-2: MGNREGA Total Households worked so far (in Crore)

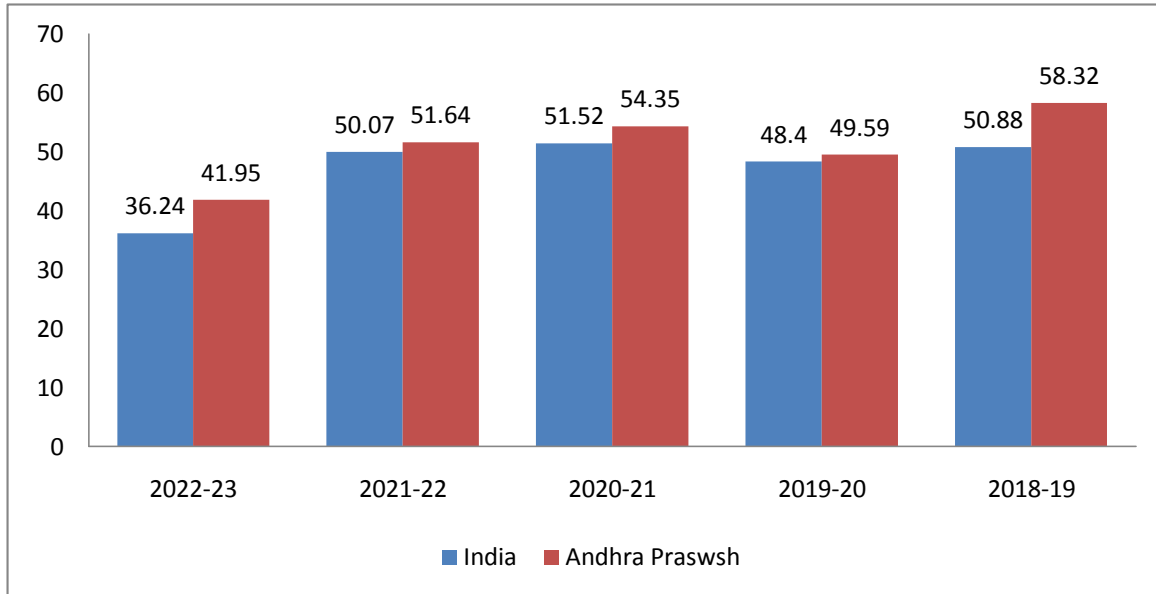


“Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in”

Figure 2 above indicates that the number of employed households in India and Andhra Pradesh grew somewhat between fiscal years 2018–19 and 2022–23.



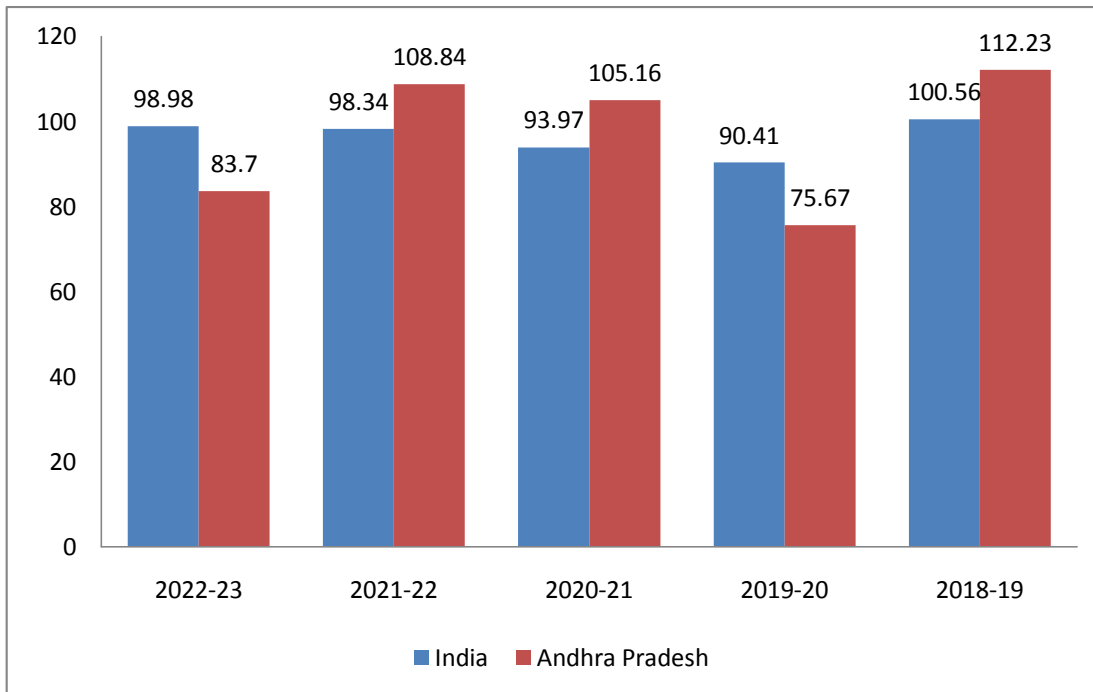
Fig-3: MGNREGA Average days of employment provided per Household



“Source: MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in”

Figure 3 shows that as a result of Covid-19, the average number of working days offered per household in India dropped from FY 2018-19 (50.88) to FY 2022-23 (36.24), while in Andhra Pradesh, it dropped from FY 2018-19 (58.32) to FY 2022-23 (41.95).

Fig-4: MGNREGA Percentage Utilization of allotted budget



Source:

MGNREGA Official website www.mgnrega.nic.in



Figure 4 shows that the Covid-19 reversal of allocation led to MGNREGA's usage percentage across India for FY 2018-19 being 100.56%, and in FY 2022-23 is 98.98%, whereas in Andhra Pradesh it was 112.23% and in FY 2022-23 it was 83.7%.

7. Suggestions

The primary factor identified as being responsible for Andhra Pradesh slower rate of economic expansion is the ineffective administration and operating strategies implemented due to inadequate organizational coordination between the state and the central governments. Large gaps exist between urban and rural areas of Andhra Pradesh and other states, particularly in terms of employment opportunities and economic growth.

They must be reduced in severity if poverty in Andhra Pradesh and elsewhere in the country is to be eradicated. In that case, I have a few recommendations...

1. The need for local and federal governments to work together to strictly enforce MGNREGA, with constant supervision and assessment, to build a sizable stockpile of assets;
2. The government is raising the bar for employment and creating more employment opportunities to boost the economy.
3. Capital stabilization in rural areas requires careful planning and careful implementation if it is to be successful.
4. Panchayats and block organizations should be involved in daily awareness activities to ensure the smooth functioning of the system.

8. Conclusion

It was understood in the context of the study that expansion opportunities in rural areas were severely limited. The most significant problem is related to the Act's actual implementation. It has also been demonstrated that there is a mismatch between the various MGNREGA operations in planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It has been observed that the number of Andhra Pradesh government jobs created according to local demand is rather small. In addition, the initiative would help to increase rural residents' income by creating long-lasting assets. In addition to improving the livelihoods and food security of those living in rural Andhra Pradesh, the scheme's resources will create employment opportunities for those residents.

Even though the increase in income and employment opportunities in Andhra Pradesh as a result of this program is relatively small compared to other states in the country, the assets being generated for the state will undoubtedly positively affect the economy, presuming employment opportunities can be established. This has led to a dramatic reduction in poverty in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.

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