There are many studies done on financial inclusion and on evaluation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Besides, there are few studies on women and MGNREGS and also MGNREGS and financial inclusion of women. The literature reviewed here is divided in to reviews on financial inclusion, reviews on MGNREGS in general, reviews on MGNREGS and women and reviews on the role of MGNREGS in financial inclusion. This review of literature gives a direction for the present study on factors that facilitate financial inclusion measures of women through MGNREGS.

Reviews on Financial Inclusion

Shah, M. Rao, R and Vijayshankar, PS. (2007) is of the opinion that though the financial inclusion covers a wide array of services by the banking sector, one crucial area relates to borrowings from banks by the lower strata of the unorganized segment of the economy. Further, debt owed to
institutional and non-institutional sources could be used as barometer of degree of financial inclusion in the two sectors.

Thorat (2007)\(^2\) uses the percentage of adult population having bank accounts as a measure of financial inclusion in the payment system. Similarly he uses the percentage of adult population having loan account as a measure of financial inclusion in the formal credit market.

Chattopadhyay (2011)\(^3\) uses an index of financial inclusion, which computes the degree of financial inclusion in different states across India - It was developed by calculating a dimension index for each dimension of financial inclusion (three dimensions were considered, banking penetration, availability of the banking services and usage of the banking system.)

Venugopal Pulidindi (2012)\(^4\) in his study concentrates in finding the correlation between women’s financial inclusion as a contributing factor towards the decision making power in the family. Women constitute half of the population, contribute more than half of the duties and responsibilities of the family but are hardly empowered to participate in decision making. They were not given any rights, they are supposed to do domestic work and look after the children.

Gangambika Savagaon (2012)\(^5\) considers that there are several challenges that require concerted efforts from banks, the RBI and the Government to ensure convenient and cost effective delivery of financial services to the public at large. There is a need to cover more people under financial inclusion who deserve and extremely in need of finance. The challenges in particular are, to introduce innovations in identifying such people, re-engineering of financial products as per the requirements, risk
assessment, reduce transaction costs, devise new credit delivery channels and use information technology to make financial inclusion a viable model. As a developing country, India faces constraint of resource for rapid socio-economic development. While there may be limitation of financial resources but available human resources are huge and yet to be fully exploited. Thus the issue is not only the availability of finance to the targeted class but also about the usage. Therefore there is a need of evolving appropriate strategy for mobilising and training human resources for optimising use of the available financial resources.

Dinesh Borse and Dr. D.M. Gujarathi (2012) recognized that the broad strategy for financial inclusion in India in recent years comprises the following elements: (i) encouraging penetration into unbanked and backward areas and encouraging agents and intermediaries such as NGOs, MFIs, CSOs and business correspondents (BCs); (ii) focusing on a decentralised strategy by using existing arrangements such as State Level Bankers’ Committee (SLBC) and District Consultative Committee (DCC) and strengthening local institutions such as cooperatives and RRBs; (iii) using technology for furthering financial inclusion; (iv) advising banks to open a basic banking ‘no frills’ account; (vi) emphasis on financial literacy and credit counseling; and (vii) creating synergies between the formal and Informal segments. It is essential for any economy to aim at inclusive growth involving each and every citizen in the economic development progression. There are lot of initiatives taken around above mentioned elements by Government and RBI. Still there is long way to go.
Porkodi S., and D. Aravazhi (2013)\(^7\) examines the role of micro finance in the empowerment of people and the realization of financial inclusion in India. While there are reservations about the efficacy of MFIs in handling public money, their growth and achievements demand attention and appreciation. Today the MFIs want the government to empower them for mobilizing savings. With increasing demand for rural finance, and the inadequacies of formal sources, the MFIs have immense opportunities in the new avatar of micro credit in India. However, in the light of recent experiences, and the need for qualitative growth, we suggest that MFIs should be managed with better scrutiny in terms of finance and technology as well as social responsibility. This is of utmost importance in order to upgrade MFIs from thrift and credit institutions to capacity building and livelihood- sustaining associations of people. NGOs have played a commendable role in promoting Self Help Groups linking them with banks. In view of this the authors felt that there is a need to evolve an incentive package which should motivate these NGOs to diversify into other backward areas.

Mohi-Ud-Din Sangmi (2013)\(^8\) in his paper made an attempt to examine the financial inclusion efforts made at the global level and highlight the progress made on the subject in SAARC countries, and what strategies were designed and implemented in the fast developing economy like India in the past two decades have been discussed in detail. The author concluded that India along with other countries of the world has put Financial Inclusion process into a mission mode given that it can effectively help in addressing the concern of inclusive growth. However, still Financial exclusion remains an area of concern given the low levels of financial penetration and deepening in
the country- only 30,000 habitations out of a total of 6,00,000 habitations have a commercial bank branch and just about 40% of population across the country have bank accounts.

Payal Tiwari (2014)\(^9\) presents a case of women from marginalized communities and gives recommendations to the upcoming women’s banks to adopt various ways through which women living in the fringes can also be included in the financial circulation. Several women in the urban cities hold bank accounts at various banks in India, a section of women particularly those belonging to lower economic strata of society were interviewed. The women belonged to Pardhi Community, a de-notified tribe found in Maharashtra and parts of Madhya Pradesh to understand the problems women faced while accessing formal financial institutions.

**Review on MGNREGS**

MoRD (2008)\(^10\) in its annual report has portrayed a dismal picture of the J&K in terms of employment to women. The MGNREGS Act stipulates 23 per cent employment to female labourers but in Jammu and Kashmir only 8 per cent women have been provided with employment opportunities in MGNREGA works.

Ashok P., and Rukmini T (2010)\(^11\) studied the impact of MGNREGS from the perspective of women empowerment. The researchers have observed that paid employment under MGNREGS has resulted in increased consumption choices and reduced economic dependence. This has helped women in registering their tangible contribution to the household income.

Kareemulla K. et al (2010)\(^12\) studied the impact of NREGS on rural livelihoods and agricultural capital formation, in four states of Punjab,
Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. This study was conducted at micro level in the above mentioned states and concluded that the employment beneficiaries are both landless and farmers indicating the resource poor are also willing to get employed in public schemes. The other issues studied include migration levels in rural areas, the consumption pattern of NREGA beneficiaries, structure and nature of assets created, utility and sustainability of the assets created. The study also pointed out the fact that the quality and maintenance of the assets created is a major issue which need close attention by all the stakeholders. It also concluded that MGNREGS has also brought down the migration levels from rural to urban areas. The research study also concluded that the NREGA has made a big impact on rural agricultural sector. However, the cost dimension of rural labour market needs to be closely looked into. The researchers have also suggested that there should be an inbuilt monitoring mechanism in the scheme for better impact on ground.

Leelavathi T., and K H Rao (2010)\textsuperscript{13} examined the impact of MGNREGS on various factors including institutional, socio-economic inclusion of poor households, rural-urban distress migration, access of credit et al. The study concluded that the benefits gained from work under MGNREGS led to the reduction of distress migration and increased investment in human capital. It also revealed that some of the workers were not provided with unemployment allowance and were denied work for longer periods. The funds flow including the wage disbursal mechanism should be made for efficient.

Ahuja, R T Usha (2011)\textsuperscript{14} examined the impact of MGNREGS on rural employment generation and migration of labour force. The study was conducted in two districts with different economic profiles. The study
concluded that the flagship scheme has a sizable impact on the employment generation. However, the downside has been that the scheme has not been able to curb the migration from economically advanced districts primarily on account of the low wages.

Chinthireddy Prakash (2013) in his paper lauded the major salient features of MGNREGA. The author says that the Act aims at enhancing livelihood security of households 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 volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The author recognized that Mahatma Gandhi NREGA is the first ever law internationally that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale. The primary objective of the Act is augmenting wage employment and its auxiliary objective is strengthening natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion and so encourage sustainable development. The process outcomes include strengthening grass-root processes of democracy and infusing transparency and accountability in governance.

Asha Sharma (2013) considers that there is no uncertainty that the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA has been successful in achieving its primary objective of providing wage employment to rural household in India. The Ministry of Rural Development has done an imposing work towards conceptualizing and operational zing this enormous flagship program. The Mahatma Gandhi NREGA will be a path breaking program for inclusive growth of rural India.
Parvathamma.G.L. (2014) in her study made an attempt to assess the need and importance to build Inclusive India and emphasizes on its imperativeness on inclusive growth and aims at examining the effectiveness of MGNREGA on excluded section of the rural areas. It presents the opportunities available for building an inclusive India. The main objectives of the study are to examine the impact of MGNREGA on some of the social and economic factors of the rural people such as employment and wages. The study is based on secondary data and some of the findings of the study on aforesaid objectives to be discussed in the paper.

Padma K., (2015) has undertaken a study to assess 1) the employment generated by MGNREG, 2) The nature of assets generated by the programme, 3) the growth in wage rates and growth in productivity and 4) Categories of persons secured employment in Andhra Pradesh. The study relies on secondary sources for information to analyze and infer the conclusions. The study also depends on the reports published by the Government of India and the research works published by the scholars and professionals. Performance of MGNREGA is evaluated for the period 2012-13 to 2014-15 by considering number of persons employed, categories of persons employed, and type of assets created. The author concludes that the continuation of MGNREGA is essential to curtail excess migration to urban areas and given the literacy rate in rural areas.

Sushmita (2015) in hers paper delves into the structural and statutory construct of MGNREGA, the objectives, working and implementation of the scheme. The author also tries to comment on the implementation of the scheme and provide a future road a map which can increase the viability and
feasibility of the MGNREGA. MGNREGA as a scheme is very egalitarian and the potential of MGNREGA in reaching rural poor is unsurpassed which is crucial for Indian economy for reducing the rural-urban divide.

**Review on Women and MGNREGA**

Retika Khera and Nandini Nayak (2008)²⁰ in his work on “Women Workers and Perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act” examined the socio economic consequences of the NREGA on women workers. He also attempts to understand the perception of the NREGA legislation as reported by workers. Looking at all India women on participation rates in the first 2 years of NREGA complementation it increased from 40 percent in 2006-07 to 44 percent in 2007-08. The inter-state variations in the participation have been observed by him in ranges from 82 percent (Tamil Nadu) to 15 percent (Uttar Pradesh). He indentified following five barriers to women Participation.

1) Traditional social norms
2) Illegal presence of contractors.
3) Lack of child care facilities.
4) Law rates of wages.
5) Delay in Payment of wages.

The Project Report “An appraisal of NREGA in the states of Meghalaya and Sikkim” by Prof. B. Panda, Prof. A.K. Dutta and Prof. S.Prosty (2009)²¹ of IIM Shillong mentions that one of the poignant and most visible link impacts of NREGA is promotion of women empowerment. Provision of equal wages for men and women in the Act, the opportunity to share information during the course of work in NREGS worksite, the opportunity and necessity of
interacting with the bank/post office/government officials have all in a fundamental way empowered the rural tribal women by enhancing their confidence level and by ensuring some degree of financial independence. Working in NREGA has given an opportunity to workers particularly women workers to share information among fellow workers. This has led to Knowledge Empowerment in the tribal society. Similarly, NREGA has also brought in improvement in the health status of the women workers. About 96 per cent of women workers surveyed are of the opinion that they have been able to gather information on health related problems through interaction with their coworkers while working in NREGS.

Gundeti Ramesh and T.Krishna Kumar (2009)\textsuperscript{22} in their article on “Facet of rural women Empowerment: A study in Karimnagar District in Andhra Pradesh” finds that NREGP has become a beacon of light in the empowerment of rural women and contributed substantially for the increased living and economic conditions by creating equal wages to male and female workers and increasing the minimum wages. The study reveals that 51.6\% of the workers are backward class communities, and 46.6\% of workers are from S.C Category and the rest are from ST and O.C communities. The study reveals that the beneficiaries expressed the following changes in the programme: Wages should be paid to workers on time. Health and life insurance is required not only during the working days but other days and there should be better communication between beneficiaries and officials, the nature of the work should be amicable to all the workers and beneficial to the community. Effective social audit is necessary to eliminate bogus beneficiaries.
Ashok Pankaj, Rukmini Tankha (2010) in their paper examines the empowerment effects of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on rural women in Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. The authors argue that women workers have gained from the scheme primarily because of the paid employment opportunity, and benefits have been realized through income-consumption effects, intra-household effects, and the enhancement of choice and capability. Women have also gained to some extent in terms of realization of equal wages under the NREGS, with long-term implications for correcting gender skewness and gender discriminatory wages prevalent in the rural labour market of India. Despite the difficulties and hurdles for women, prospects lie, inter alia, in their collective mobilization, more so in laggard states.

Richard Mahapatra (2010) in his article “How Women seized NREGA” mentions that unique features of the public wage programme turned it into a magnet for women. More women than men work under the national programme that guarantees employment to rural people. In the current fiscal till October, women availed of more than 50 per cent of employment created under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Their participation has been growing since the inception of the Act in 2006. This is remarkable given that only 28.7 per cent women form a part of the country’s workforce, according to the National Sample Survey Organization data of 2004-05, the latest such data available for the country, women take up this opportunity (MGNREGS) as economic freedom. In Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan, history of women mobilization for schemes and campaigns seems to have contributed to their higher
participation. In Rajasthan, the campaign for social audits, in which women play a major role, has contributed to enhanced awareness and increased participation under MGNREGA. The State’s MGNREGA worksites have good facilities for children and women. In Kerala, management of worksites and other logistics for implementation is placed in the hands of women self help groups under the poverty eradication mission, Kudumbasree. He also mentioned that it is mandatory to have 50 per cent women Panchayat representatives who have nodal role to play in the programme’s implementation, including preparing the village development plan. So, if the supervisory roles of Panchayat members and the dominant presence of workers converge, it will be a win-win situation for the programme as well as villages.

Pankaj, A., & Tankha, R. (2010)\textsuperscript{25} in their study shows that a woman worker’s earnings from MGNREGA constituted 14 percent of the total annual income of the household on average across the four sample districts in 2008-09. This study also shows an increased participation of women in Gram Sabha meetings.

Naganagoud S.P. and H.H. Uliveppa (2010)\textsuperscript{26} in their article on “Employment Guarantee and Human Rights: Some Observations” considers that it will not be possible to achieve the full potential of NREGA unless the structure for its implementation is more adequately strengthened. Particularly the women are less participation in some states. Recent Social Audit of NREGA indicates the programme can have a positive impact on the socio-economic well being of rural labourer and their families. In particular, it holds powerful prospect of bringing major changes in the lives of women. This is
especially true in a state like Tamil Nadu, where women constitute an overwhelming proportion (80%) of NREGA workers. The provision of NREGS should be reviewed separately for tribal people in general and tribal women particularly. Nature of work to be taken should be flexibly in essential that we carefully consider the comparative relatives of women & child locally.

Vanitha S.M., and Srikantha Murthy P.S. (2011) considers that the MGNREGS women participants had better control over family expenditure, savings and social participation and participated more in household management decisions and financial management decisions compared to the non-participant women. The reason the authors cited is, the participation in MGNREGS gave them more confidence as they earned their own livelihood and also had opportunity to mingle and work with other people in the society. According to authors MGNREGS has been successful in providing all the components that pave the way for empowering women. The study found that 31.67 per cent of participant women were highly empowered compared to only 5 per cent in case of non-participant women. This indicates that MGNREGS is enhancing the empowerment of women.

Govind Kelkar (2011) in his study shows that the challenge is not to reinstitute policy for women’s economic security, but to redeploy the machinery already in place to be used in a more gender responsive manner to overcome persistent gender inequalities, in both economic and socio-cultural spheres. As per author the overarching vision that informs the design of MGNREGA for women’s economic empowerment has hardly ever articulated the need for women’s interests and inclusion of adequate numbers of women in management and social audits of creation and maintenance of productive
assets. These errors of omissions and systematic de-emphasizing of gender equality in MGNREGA policies need to be made visible through district- and country-level workshops. An integrated approach that links equality-based rights to manage productive assets and gender inclusive, participatory rural institutions is the need of the hour for sustainable development and for addressing risks arising from MGNREGA fatigue.

Asha Sharma (2012) highlights the difference in employment and empowerment attainment among the SC/ST women in rural India. The study found that the high status of women among the SC/ST groups in the Rajnandgoan, Jhabua, Mayurbhanj and Cuddalore has important effect on the generating community assets and enhancing their spending capacity. High poverty rates pose to be significant obstacles in attaining empowerment among SC/ST women in rural India. By putting cash earning in women’s hands, NREGA has both increased and diversified the contribution that women are making to household incomes as wage earners.

Merin S. Thadathil and Vineeth Mohandas (2012) in their study revealed that the majority of the workers in MGNREGS are women, because women get a wage equivalent to a male worker. Not only that, they consider it as a matter of status to be a government worker rather than a mere labourer. So, women who were mainly housewives and labourers of higher age group resorted to MGNREGS as it involves less toil and provides guaranteed employment. The study found that MGNREGS has contributed substantially towards the economic empowerment of rural women. The scheme has been found effective in rural poverty alleviation and women empowerment. It was also found that Neighbourhood help Groups (NHGs) like Kudumbasree have
played a major role in the success of MGNREGS in the Wayanad district. The study has outlined some suggestions also for the effective implementation of the MGNREGS.

Neha Tiwari and Rajshree Upadhyay (2012)\textsuperscript{31} conducted a study to find out constraints faced by the women beneficiaries under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. The sample consisted of 100 randomly selected respondents from two panchayat samities. The author used personal interview technique for collecting data. Finding of the study shows that personal and family (79.16 Mean Percent scores) were the major constraints faced by them.

Jyoti Poonia (2012)\textsuperscript{32} in her paper highlighted the impact and women participation in MGNREGA. The author use data from various issues of RBI Annual report. The paper reviews India’s approach to social protection since independence and places the NREGA within the broader social protection discourse. It looks at how gender concerns have been addressed within public works, and specifically in the NREGA guidelines. The paper findings reveal that the NREGA has the potential to stimulate local development, if the management and delivery are good; and that women’s weak position in the labor market has been greatly helped. The evidence further suggests these benefits are due to a strong state apparatus (which include the Kudumbashree) and not to the demand of citizens per se.

Sasi Kumar B. (2012)\textsuperscript{33} examines the socio-economic consequences of the NREGA for women workers. In spite of the drawbacks in the implementation of the legislation, significant benefits have already started accruing to women through better access to local employment, at minimum wages, with relatively decent and safe work conditions. The study finds that
the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has brought about major changes in the lives of women. However, the act overlooks the fact that childcare is a problem for many of the working women, especially for young mothers.

Soumyendra Kishore Datta and Krishna Singh (2012)\textsuperscript{34} considers that the NREGA programme in India offers a lucrative opportunity for the rural women to participate in job market, earn income, and have control over life events. However women’s decision for participation as well as share in NREGA jobs are influenced by various socio-economic factors like education, caste, religion, alternative income, health-related achievements, and fund availability. Variation in some of these variables is often beyond their control. In this context logit regression and DEA efficiency analysis is done by authors to analyses the issue of women’s participation and share of employment days in the context a poor region in India.

Utpal Kumar De and Polakshi Bhattacharyya (2013)\textsuperscript{35} in his paper tries to examine the level of participation of women in the much popular Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) activities \textit{vis-a-vis} their male counterpart where special provisions are kept for the increased participation of women. They have done with the help of primary survey carried out in Morigaon District of Assam. By using tabular method to compare level of participation of women across communities \textit{vis-a-vis} men, we also examined various socio-economic attributes that reflects the primary factors responsible for such gender-wise variation. Also, Probit analysis is followed to find out the role of gender along with other factors in the participation level. The result suggests that participation of women in physical activities and decision making is far from satisfactory except from backward
communities who are more involved in physical work. Though education, primary occupation and age have inverse impact on participation in physical activities, education, distance from the Panchayat centre has inverse impact on participation in decision making.

Atieq Ul Rehman (2013) made a focus in this paper to explore the barriers and challenges to women’s participation in MGNREGA in Kashmir. The objectives of this study included first, to understand thoroughly the reasons behind women’s level of participation in the scheme in different parts of the state; and second, to identify ways in which the well-being of women participants could be further enhanced, and the social protection potential of the programme better realized. There is an urgent need to bridge the gender gap in the MGNREGA scheme in the state because no society and civilization can move forward without the participation of its half population as well said by Swami Vivekanand, “There is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved”. The paper will also explore the complex reasons why women’s participation in the scheme varies significantly across and within districts, and suggests improvements that could maximize the impact.

Lavanya V.L. and S.Mahima (2013) in their study focused on analyzing empowerment of rural women through MGNREGA with special references to Palakkad. Data were collected from 80 women from rural villages in Palakkad using the simple random sampling. The findings of the study revealed that women are benefited individually because they are able to earn independently spend some money for their own hands, contribute for their family expenditure. The study concluded that MGNREGA economically empowering women and laying the basis for greater independence and self-
esteem. It has become a beacon of light in the empowerment of the rural women and contributed substantially for the increased living and economic conditions.

Gurukalyana Rout (2013)\textsuperscript{38} in his paper considers that the most distinguishing feature of MGNREGA is its approach towards empowering women citizen to play an active role in the implementation of the scheme, through gram sabha, panchayat raj institution and participatory planning. But the MGNREGA can’t turn out to be a major instrument for galvanizing panchayati raj institution in India due to lack of mobilization of disadvantaged group like women, cultural non-acceptance of female participation in the labour force, non-parity of wages, non-availability of worksite facility, non-involvement of self help group & civil society organisation and non-implementation of an indispensable tool like Right to Information Act 2005 which are highlighted in the paper. The paper concludes with some policy suggestions by which women should be kept in forefront for planning, implementing and evaluation of the MGNREGA programme.

Spandita Kar (2013)\textsuperscript{39} in her paper discusses the status of women participation in Odisha in comparison to other States and issues and challenges for women’s participation in MGNREGS. According to author the effectiveness of MGNREGA crucially depends on what type of schemes it gives priority to lack of focus of social, gender inequality in creation of productive assets has been a major reason for limited success of wage employment programme. Compared to men, the proportion of unskilled, subsidiary workers among women is much larger under MGNREGA. Given
poor health and literacy as well as the predominant responsibility of house
work and caring, women have recourse only to work that is available.

Satinder Singh Randhawa (2013)⁴⁰ in his paper made an attempt to
study the role of MGNREGA on the socio-economic conditions of rural
women, their participation and percentage of women person days in all the
Districts of Himachal Pradesh and its comparison at the national level. The
primary and secondary data has been taken to draw the conclusion. The
author concludes that the overall impact of MGNREGA on the life style of
women is quite impressive and positive in many ways and in order to enhance
it in future number of working person days for women specially may be
increased to 150.

Smita Nayak (2013)⁴¹ conducted in Rajgangpur Block of Sundargarh
district of Odisha. The author examines the potencies and loopholes in the
existing MGNREA and its impact on tribal women in Odisha, especially
Rajgangpur Block, which are causing more alienation than development. The
study finding revealed that various bottle neck such as lack of tribal women’s
involvement at the time of planning for NREGS work, lack of awareness, lack
of crèche facilities at worksites, lack of women’s ownership of job cards and
bank accounts, wage discrimination between men and women, harassment at
the workplace and lack of appropriate gender friendly methods of information
dissemination etc have adversely impacted and thus questioned the efficacy
of the MGNREGA in enhancing the status of the tribal women in the study
area. The author concludes that to deal with bottlenecks and implementation
lapses, besides governmental measure a high degree of participation from the
community and civil society is essentially needed, which can enable the poor
ignorant and illiterate tribal women to seek their entitlement and make them rise above their marginalized and subordinated sub-human status.

NIRD (2013)\textsuperscript{42} considered that The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a landmark initiative in providing 100 days guaranteed employment. MGNREGA has several gender-sensitive features that are attractive for women workers. But even then the national average number of days of employment in MGNREGS is still less than 50 days and it varies across different regions and states. Especially participation of women in MGNREGS is more passive in nature. Implementation processes are key to improve the quality of participation of marginalised especially poor and women in the programme. Actions towards women’s needs, accesses to resources and opportunities, control over outputs and outcomes are essential. Nevertheless, NREGA has the potential to enhance women’s economic independence through cash earnings and social status through participation. However, there is much to be done in achieving gender equality and sensitivity, which needs a comprehensive perspective. So the present study sought to explore, through fieldwork, the reasons behind, extent and the implications of women’s participation in NREGA in selected districts of four States, Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

Shihabudheen N (2013)\textsuperscript{43} in his paper looks into the salient features of the Act, its efficacy in empowering rural women, along with its major problems and prospects; by making an empirical study at Kottappady Panchayat of Ernakulam district in Kerala. The study has shown that there is quite high level of potential for MGNREGA for socio-economic empowerment of women, and reasonable (moderate) level of political empowerment too. The
experience so far being satisfactory, the Kerala’s model of MGNREGA implantation could replicated in other states. The Act appears to be quite meaningful and powerful for rural development in general and women empowerment in particular for the entire nation. The problem lies not in the Act per se, but in its defective implementation and lack of proper monitoring; as is evident from the bad experiences and unhealthy practices. Involvement of the middlemen, political and bureaucratic exploitation, misuse of funds, muster roll manipulation, lack of transparency etc. need to be strictly controlled. The prospects of the MGNREGA for rural development and women empowerment are quite bright provided it is properly executed.

Xavier G., Mari G. (2014)\textsuperscript{44} in their study tries to evaluate the impact of MGNREGA on socio-economic empowerment of women in Kalakkanmoi panchayat of Sivaganga district, Tamil Nadu. It further analyses various risk associated with the women during the working time of MGNREGA. The study finds that the MGNREGA increases income and expenditure of the households compared over the pre MGNREGA period and the scheme significantly enhances the social and economic decision making power to women in the men dominated rural society. Hence the scheme ensures improved standard of living of the vulnerable poor, more specifically among women. It also finds that poor worksite facility, hot climate condition and reduction of leisure time put them much hardship during the working hours of MGNREGA.

Saharia R.P., (2014)\textsuperscript{45} considers that MGNREGA is basically an employment generation programme but when we go into its details find the roots deeper. It touches, various other aspects of human life one amongst
them being social inclusion. India has faced the problem of discrimination in terms of gender, caste, creed, colour and financial status. MGNREGA by adopting Inclusive participatory growth is playing a major role bringing the women of the society into the productive zone. The study found that The MGNREGS has gone a long way in saving the "Cultural Climate" from degrading. The employment of women has generated small groups and network of women from different segments of the society. Interaction at the worksite, journey to and from, visit to the bank / Post Office, etc. has been very beneficial to the women at large. They enjoy and celebrate small events and also transfer the folk arts and culture to each other.

Sumeet Agarwal and M. Madhuri Devi (2015) in his paper is an attempt to analyze the status of women empowerment in Chhattisgarh Through MGNREGA using various indicators like women's household decision making power, financial autonomy, freedom of movement, political participation, exposure to media, access to education, experience of domestic violence etc based on data from different sources. The study reveals that women of India are relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. MGNREGA by adopting Inclusive participatory growth is playing a major role bringing the women of the society into the productive zone. Rural women are more prone to domestic violence than that of urban women. A large gender gap exists in political participation too. The study concludes by an observation that MGNREGS has lead to women empowerment through active participation of women in MGNREGS works.
Karthika K T., (2015)\textsuperscript{47} in her paper discuss benefits of MGNREGA and its implementation, through this study, we focus to identify the influence and role of MGNREGA in rural development and growth, and also suggested for the better implementation of this scheme. The author concluded that MGNREGA has a great role and impact on the rural development in coming future and it is better to expand this program in other relevant area like agriculture, industry, construction etc.

**Review on MGNREGA and Financial Inclusion**

Minati Sahoo (2013)\textsuperscript{48} in his study attempts to make an inter-district analysis of the performance of MGNREGA in Odisha. Among 23 states, Odisha is having an index of financial inclusion value of 0.2 and is at 15th rank. Thus the extent of financial inclusion is found to be significantly low in Odisha. Financial inclusion is the key to empowerment of poor, underprivileged and low skilled rural households as they compose 70 percentage of Indian population. Financial Inclusion can truly lift the financial condition and improve the standards of lives of the poor and the disadvantaged. To fasten the pace of financial inclusion, the Government of India in 2008 declared that wage payments, under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, the world’s largest rural public works programme, would be made through banks and post offices. As MGNREGA is a widely discussed public policy and knowledge about it is the need of the hour, the paper analyzed how the scheme is helping in promoting financial inclusion via wage payment through banks and post offices in Odisha. It will also highlight some of the problems that are encountered when banks and post offices are used as a means for wage payment to accelerate the speed of financial inclusion and remedial measures that could be taken to tackle these problems.
Ashish Kumar Mishra and Manisha Dubey (2015)\textsuperscript{49} assesses the impact of the MGNREGA scheme on the financial inclusion and insurance position of beneficiaries so that to bring the rural unskilled workforce to mainstream of banking and postal system and capture their micro savings for the development of the economy.

Amar Nath Das (2015)\textsuperscript{50} in his study examine the effectiveness of two innovative instruments to promote financial inclusion such as business correspondence model under PMJDY and wage payment under MGNREGA through banks and post offices in different states in India and districts of west Bengal with special reference to our surveyed district Hooghly. The study at first looked in to the role of MGNREGA to promote financial inclusion via wage payment through banks and post offices in different states in India and districts of west Bengal with special reference to our surveyed district Hooghly.

Sameer Shalla and Asif Fazili (2015)\textsuperscript{51} in their paper made an attempt to understand and estimate the outcome on financial inclusion front from an inter-district perspective. The authors selected the district keeping in view the socio-economic profile of the districts while using secondary data for analysis. The findings of the study reveal that the performance of MGNREGA in terms of man-days generated in the state is dismal compared to other states. Besides, the performance of the state on financial inclusion dimension within and inter-state comparison is abysmally poor. The data analysis reveals a strange phenomenon as the rural areas are supposed to perform better compared to urban areas which has not happened in case of J&K.
Ramesha H.H., (2015)\textsuperscript{52} considers that MNREGA has already contributed to perhaps the largest financial inclusion drive in rural India in recent times. In 2008, the government made it compulsory for MNREGA wages to be disbursed through bank or post office accounts. The Reserve Bank of India allowed „zero balance” or „no frills” accounts to be opened for all MNREGA job card holders. The study found that in many cases, accounts have been opened in the names of women. Under MNREGA, all adults are eligible for work, so each job card can have more than one registered worker. As per the opinion of author to achieve the objectives of financial inclusion, it is essential that the policy for achieving total financial inclusion keeps changing to adapt to the needs of the environment. MGNREGS has contributed to the financial inclusion drive in rural India.

**Research Gaps**

The above review of literature makes it clear that most of the studies are concentrated to discuss the fundamentals of financial inclusion concept and MGNREGS scheme. The studies on financial inclusion covers the varied things like the services covered by financial inclusion, percentage of adult population having bank accounts as a measure of financial inclusion in the payment system, uses an index of financial inclusion, which computes the degree of financial inclusion in different states across India, correlation between women’s financial inclusion and women decision making power at household level, strategy and challenges of financial inclusion etc. Few studies concentrated on financial inclusion efforts made at the global level and some other presented recommendations to financially include women. Some authors concentrated on the role of micro finance in financial inclusion of women.
With regard to MGNREG Scheme some authors confined to discuss the major salient features of MGNREGA, objectives, working and implementation of the scheme, participation levels of men and women. While, some studies concentrated on the participation of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The studies also covered the per cent employment to female labourers, the nature of assets generated by the programme, the growth in wage rates and growth in productivity, major constraints faced in the implementation etc. one or two studies discussed about the importance of Social Audit, reasons behind women’s level of participation in the scheme, economic security of women etc. Most of the studies on MGNREGS concentrated to assess the impact of MGNREGS. Among them the studies evaluated the impact of MGNREGS from the perspective of women empowerment, impact of NREGS on rural livelihoods and agricultural capital formation, impact of MGNREGS on various factors including institutional, socio-economic inclusion of poor households, impact of MGNREGS on rural employment generation and migration of labour force, the effectiveness of MGNREGA on excluded section of the rural areas, the socio economic consequences of the NREGA on women workers, control over family expenditure, savings and social participation, economic empowerment of rural women.

The studies on the role of MGNREGS confined to analyze how the scheme is helping in promoting financial inclusion via wage payment through banks and post offices, impact of the MGNREGA scheme on the financial inclusion and insurance position of beneficiaries.
References


