Chapter – I

INTRODUCTION
1.1. INTRODUCTION

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act or MGNREGS is an Indian job guarantee scheme, enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005. The scheme provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household willing to do public work, related to unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage of Rs.100 per day. The Central government outlay for the scheme is Rs. 39,100 crores ($8 billion) in the financial year 2009-10. This act was introduced with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled work to people living in rural India, whether or not they are below the poverty line. Around one-third of the stipulated work force is women. It has been renamed as Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Act on 2nd October, 2009.

A majority of the poor in rural areas of India depends mainly on the wages they earn through unskilled, casual and manual labour. The sinking labour demand and unpredictable natural disasters adversely affect their employment opportunity. They are vulnerable to the possibility of chronic poverty. The unemployment in the rural area forces them to migrate to the urban and the life become more miserable for them. When the professionals in the global of information technology flourish with more income and economic growth, their counterpart namely the rural youth are not provided with sufficient employment opportunity.
In August 2005, the Indian Parliament passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), which provides for 100 days of guaranteed employment to every rural household. On February 2, 2006, amid great hype and hope, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) came into force in 200 of India's most backward districts. In 2007, it was extended to cover another 130 districts and with effect from April 1, 2008, the scheme covered in all districts of rural India. Now the NREGA is in operation in the whole country. This is the largest ever public employment programme visualized in human history.

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is a social and economic security for the rural poor. The NREGA is the first tangible commitment to the poor that they can expect to earn a living wage, without loss of dignity and demand this as a right. The NREGA is the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government's flagship programme and they hope to gain political mileage in every election. That is perhaps one of the main reasons why NREGA has been fast-tracked and will be implemented throughout the country. The earlier plan was a phased one where there would be a progressive implementation. The opponents of NREGA were very critical when the Act was in the final stages of being drafted as it was felt that corruption would be rampant and scarce resources would be wiped out without any real benefit to the poor.

NREGA has placed a judicially enforceable obligation on the state. Under the provisions of the Act, State Governments are to
provide unskilled, manual work within 15 days of a person making an application, within a radius of 5 kms from the applicant's residence. Failing this, the state government is to provide an unemployment allowance. Workers are entitled to a statutory minimum wage for their labour, to be paid within 7 days after the work is done. Men and women are to be paid equal wages. This Act is based on the principle of Self-selection by focusing on unskilled, manual work.

1.2. POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Since 1951, eradication of poverty and unemployment has been the major objectives of development planning in India. There have been continuous efforts to tackle the problem of unemployment in India. In the past, public employment programmes targeted at the poor are generally identified with poverty alleviation. The MGNREGS goes beyond poverty alleviation and recognizes employment as a legal right of the job seekers in rural areas. In July 2004, a draft National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was prepared by concerned citizens and sent to the National Advisory Council. The MGNREGS was started as a pilot project from 14th November 2005 in selected districts of the country but later on from 2nd February 2006, it was formally initiated in 200 selected most backward districts of 27 States of the country.

In 2007 it was extended to cover another 130 districts and with effect from April 1, 2008, the act is to cover all 604 districts of rural India. Under this programme, a person from each rural family is guaranteed for unskilled wage employment for a minimum of 100 days in a year. Through this programme assets and infrastructure are to be
created, which later on assist in securing sources of livelihood. One of the salient features of this programme is that if employment is not provided then employment allowance will be given to the identified job seekers in the rural areas.

This Act has been extended to cover not just Below Poverty Line (BPL) households but is entitled to the statutory minimum wage applicable to agricultural workers in the state unless the central government overrides this by notifying a different wage rate. If the central government notifies a wage rate, it is subject to a minimum of Rs.80 per day. The act was brought about by the UPA coalition government supported by the left parties. The promise of this project was one of the major factors that gained UPA victory in the Indian general election, 2004. Dr. Jean Drèze, a Belgian born economist, at the Delhi School of Economics, has been a major influence on this project.

1.3. EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAMMES IN INDIA

Poverty reduction has been an important goal of development policy since the inception of planning in India. Various antipoverty, employment generation and basic services programmes have been in operation for decades in India. The ongoing reforms attach great importance to removal of poverty, and addressing specifically thwide variations across States and the rural–urban divide. Anti-poverty strategy has three broad components: promotion of economic growth; promotion of human development; and targeted programmes of poverty alleviation to address multi-dimensional nature of poverty.
The various programmes targeted at the poor have been streamlined and strengthened in recent years, including through the MGNREGS. The following are the various employment generation programmes in India in operation.

1.4. PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)

Launched in December 2000 as a 100 per cent CSS, PMGSY aims to provide all-weather connectivity to all the eligible unconnected rural habitations. Bharat Nirman, envisages connectivity by 2009 to all the habitations with a population of 1000 or more in the plains, and of 500 or more in the hilly, desert and tribal areas. The systematic upgradation of the existing rural road network also is an integral component of the scheme, funded mainly from the accruals of diesel cess in the Central Road Fund, with support of the multilateral funding agencies and the domestic financial institutions. Up to December 2005, with an expenditure of Rs.12,049 crore, a total length of 82,718 km. of road works had been completed.

1.5. INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA (IAY)

IAY aims to provide dwelling units at free of cost to the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and freed bonded labourers, and also the non-SC/ST BPL families in rural areas. It is funded on a cost-sharing basis in the rates of 75.25 between the Centre and the States. Under IAY, the ceiling on construction assistance is Rs.25,000/- per unit in the plains and Rs.27,500/- for hilly/difficult areas; and Rs. 12,500/- on upgradation of unserviceable kutcha house to pucca/semi pucca house for all areas. Up to January
30, 2006, about 138 lakh houses had been constructed/upgraded with an expenditure of Rs.25,208 crore.

1.6. SWARNAJAYANTI GRAM SWAROZGAR YOJANA (SGSY)

SGSY, launched in April, 1999 after restructuring the Integrated Rural Development Programme and allied schemes, is the only self-employment programme for the rural poor. The objective is to bring the self-employed above the poverty line by providing them income-generating assets through bank credit and Government subsidy. Up to November 2005, the Centre and States, sharing the costs on 75:25 basis, had allocated Rs.8,067 crore, of which Rs. 6,980 crore had been utilized to assist 62.75 lakh self-employed.

1.7. SAMPOORNA GRAMEEN ROZGAR YOJANA (SGRY)

SGRY, launched on September 25, 2001 to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas, has a cash and food grains component, and the Centre bears 75 per cent and 100 per cent of the cost of the two with the balance borne by the States/UTs. In 2004-05, 82.23 crore persondays were generated with the Centre releasing Rs. 4,496 crore as cash component and about 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to the States/ UTs. Besides, under the special component of the SGRY, with the States/UTs meeting the cash components, Centre released 26 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to the 13 calamity affected States. In 2005-06 up to November, 2005, the number of persondays generated under SGRY was 48.75 crore, while the Centre's contributions in terms of the cash and foodgrains components up to January, 2006 were Rs. 4651 crore and 35 lakh tonnes, respectively.
Under the special component, about 11.65 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been released to the 11 calamity-hit States in the current year.

1.8. NATIONAL FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMME (NFFWP)

The NFFWP was launched as a CSS in November 2004 in the 150 most backward districts to generate additional supplementary wage employment with food security. States receive food grains under NFFWP free of cost. The focus of the programme is on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing (including aorestation /tree plantation), land development, flood-control/protection (including drainage in waterlogged areas), and rural connectivity in terms of all-weather roads. In 2004-05, allocation of Rs 2,020 crore and 20 lakh tonnes of foodgrains generated 7.85 crore persondays of employment. In 2005-06, of the allocation of Rs 4,500 crore and 15 lakh tonnes of food grains (Revised), Rs.2,219 crore and 11.58 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrains had been released up to January 27, 2006. About 17.03 lakh persondays were generated up to December 2005.

1.9. DPAP, DDP and IWDP

Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP) was launched in 1973-74 to tackle the special problems faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought conditions. Desert Development Programme (DDP) was launched in 1977-78 to mitigate the adverse effects of desertification. Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) has been under implementation since 1989-90 for the development of wastelands/ degraded lands. The basis of implementation has been shifted from sectoral to watershed basis.
from April 1995. For 2005-06, Rs.353 crore, Rs.268 crore and Rs.485 crore have been allocated for DPAP, DDP and IWDP, respectively. So far in 2005-06 up to October, 2005, 3000 new projects covering 15 lakh ha., 2000 new projects covering 10 lakh ha. and 340 new projects covering 16 lakh ha. have been sanctioned under DPAP, DDP and IWDP, respectively.

1.10. SWARNA JAYANTI SHAHARI ROZGAR YOJANA (SJSRY)

In December 1997, the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP), which are the two special components of the SJSRY, substituted for various programmes operated earlier for urban poverty alleviation. The SJSRY is funded on a 75:25 basis between the Centre and the States. In 2003-04, the central allocation of Rs. 94.50 crore plus Rs. 10.50 crore for North-Eastern Region including Sikkim was fully utilized. Even 2004-05 saw the release of the entire budgetary allocation of Rs. 122.00 crore. In 2005-06, out of an allocation of Rs. 160.00 crore, Rs. 84.52 crore had been utilized until November 30, 2005.

1.11. VALMIKI AMBEDKAR AWAS YOJANA (VAMBAY)

VAMBAY, launched in December 2001, facilitates the construction and up-gradation of dwelling units for the slum dwellers, and provides a healthy and enabling urban environment through community toilets under Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, a component of the Scheme. The Central Government provides a subsidy of 50 per cent, with the balance provided by the State Government. Since its inception and up-to December, 31 2005, Rs. 866.16 crore had been
released as Central subsidy for the construction/upgradation of 4,11,478 dwelling units and 64,247 toilet seats under the Scheme. For 2005-06, out of the tentative Central allocation of Rs. 249 crore, up to December 31, 2005, an amount of Rs.96.4 crore had been released covering 60,335 dwelling units and 381 toilet seats.

1.12. POVERTY AND MGNREGS

As we are aware, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (MGNREGS/NREGA) aims at enhancing the livelihood security of the people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to a rural household whose members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The pro-poor policy of the Government is to create durable assets in one hand and at the same time to strengthen the livelihood of the rural poor needs a special mention. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is no doubt, one of the finest Social Welfare enactments with an aim of improving the purchasing power of the rural people, primarily semi or un-skilled people living below poverty line in rural India. It attempts to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the country. Roughly, one-third of the stipulated work force must be women.

As per the data available in the World Bank report, more than 30 per cent of the Indian population lives on less than Rs 43.50 a day, but Indian economists believe the figure of poor, especially rural poor could be much higher. We have tried to fight poverty by various means, but have met with little success. So, what India needs is something more lasting than patchwork policies to help its millions of
poverty stricken people. The MGNREGS is one of the means, which can solve the problem, given that it has the potential to provide a livelihood of millions. The success of any scheme depends upon the proper and timely implementation. Awareness is one of the main components for the success of any Scheme. There are several rights guaranteed under NREGS.

1.13. NREGS RENAMED AS MAHATMA NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT

The Act has thus opened up opportunities to the rural households to obtain local employment, enhance their wage earning and through their labour to create rural assets which contribute to development of the rural economy. The association of the name of Mahatma Gandhi with National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 will reinforce the Act’s thrust towards equity and inclusiveness, especially of the deprived groups and socio-economically marginalized communities.

The provisions of the Act of public accountability, through social audit and Right to Information will get central focus with the association of Mahatma Gandhi’s name, reflecting his ideas of the sovereignty of the public in a democracy. The Act is premised on rural households volunteering to do unskilled manual labour and the association of Mahatma Gandhi’s name with it underscores the dignity of labour. It is, therefore, considered befitting that the said Act bears the name of the Father of the Nation “Mahatma Gandhi” as it is a concrete expression of his development vision. Accordingly, the title
of the said Act is proposed to be amended as the ‘Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act’.

The government has renamed its flagship ‘Rural Job Guarantee Programme’, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, after Mahatma Gandhi on his birth anniversary. The Centre has also decided to appoint 100 prominent people from across the country to carry out independent evaluations and monitoring of the scheme. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGS), the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government’s flagship job scheme that provides 100 days of work in a financial year to every rural household, will now be called the Mahatma National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA).

The new name was unveiled on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, on October 2, 2009, with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announcing it to a gathering of heads of villages in New Delhi to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the launch of Panchayati Raj. This is a small effort to pay homage to the Mahatma who always believed in gram swaraj. Flooded with complaints about corruption in MGNREGS works, the Centre has also decided to appoint 100 prominent people from across the country to carry out independent evaluations and monitoring of the scheme. The idea is to openly discuss its performance and share the details with gram panchayats and villagers so that the scheme can be implemented well and transparency brought in. The government of India has decided to
identify 100 eminent citizens to report independently on the progress of the scheme.

1.14. PROCESS OF MGNREGS

Adult members of rural households submit their name, age and address with a photo to the Gram Panchayat. The Panchayat registers households after verification and issues a job card. The job card contains the details of the adult member enrolled and his/her photo. A registered person can submit an application for work in writing (for at least fourteen days of continuous work) either to the panchayat or to the Programme Officer.

The panchayat/programme officer accepts the valid application and issue a dated receipt of application. A letter providing employment will be sent to the applicant and also displayed at the panchayat office. Employment will be provided if possible within a radius of 5 km. If it is above 5 km, transport allowance and 10% extra living allowance will be paid. New public works can be started when at least 50 workers become available who cannot be absorbed under the existing schemes.

If employment under the scheme is not provided within fifteen days of receipt of the application, the unemployment allowance will be paid to the applicant. No discrimination between men and women is allowed under the act. Therefore, men and women must be paid the same wage. All adults can apply for employment, not just those below the poverty line.
1.15. WORKS/ACTIVITIES UNDER MGNREGS

The MGNREGS achieves twin objectives of rural development and employment. The MGNREGS stipulates that works must be targeted towards a set of specific rural development activities such as water conservation and harvesting, afforestation, rural connectivity, flood control and protection such as construction and repair of embankments, etc. Digging of new tanks/ponds, percolation tanks and construction of small check dams are also carried out under this scheme.

Micro irrigation works such as construction of small canals is also carried out. The scheme provides irrigation facilities to land owned by people coming under SC/STs, beneficiaries of land reforms, Indira Awas Yojana, etc. Renovation of traditional water bodies is also carried out. This involves desilting of tanks/ponds, old canals, open wells, etc. Land development is also given importance. The unemployed are given work such as land leveling, tree plantation, etc.

The works undertaken under MGNREGS are Earthen Bunding, Stone Bund / Terrace, Continuous Contour Trenches, Water Absorption Trenches, Staggered Trenches, Farm Pond, Sunken Pond, Sunken Pit, Rock Fill Dam, Loose Boulder Structure, Soil Conservation Gabion, Water Harvesting Gabion, Mini Percolation Tank, Percolation Tank, Field Channel, Feeder Channel, Supply Channel, Diversion Drain, Pebble Bunding, Boulder Removal, Compost Pit, Desilting of Tanks, Jungle Clearance, Gully Treatment,
Generic Work, Open Well, of Bio-Diesel Plantation, and Maintenance and Nursery Raising for Bio-Diesel Plantation.

1.16. MAHATHMA NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

The Act empowers people to play an active role in the implementation of employment guarantee schemes through gram sabhas, social audits, participatory planning and setting up of local Vigilance and Monitoring Committees. It was felt that active community participation was particularly important for ensuring transparency and public accountability. Thus, there is a role for all grassroots institutions such as workers' associations, local beneficiary committees, self-help groups and user groups in spreading awareness, mobilizing workers and in monitoring the implementation of the Scheme.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh has provided employment to 52,25,287 households from the inception of the programme. 83,28,238 individuals were provided employment of which 38,42,610 or 46 percent were men, 44,85,628 or 54 percent were women and 53,965 or 0.64 percent were disabled persons. Twenty-six percent of person days of employment have gone to members of the Scheduled Caste, and 11 percent to members of Scheduled Tribes between April 2007 and March 2008. Some 4,87,623 works have been initiated between 2006 and March 2008. The Land development, road connectivity, flood control and protection, water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, desilting of ponds, minor irrigation
works and provision of irrigation facilities to Scheduled Caste/Tribe families and other beneficiaries of land reform were amongst the types of works taken up.

1.17. MAHATHMA NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MNREGA) AND ITS PROVISIONS

The scheme is extended to all other districts in a phased manner. It is expected to enhance people’s livelihood on sustained basis by developing economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. It is a direct attack on the causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion. The scheme is different from the earlier wage employment programmes in different ways:

❖ It provides legal guarantee of 100 days work to every rural house hold whose adult member volunteer to do un-skilled manual work
❖ If an applicant is not provided employment within 15 days he / she shall be entitled to unemployment allowance
❖ Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is demand -driven instead of being supply-driven

1.18. THE FOCUS OF THE MNREGA SCHEME

❖ Water conservation and water harvesting
❖ Drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation
❖ Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works, Provision of irrigation facilities to land owned by households belonging to SC/ST or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under IAY.
1.19. MAIN FEATURES OF RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME

The focus of the scheme shall be on the following works in their order of priority:

❖ Water conservation and water harvesting
❖ Drought proofing including afforestation and tree plantation
❖ Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works
❖ Provision of irrigation facility to land owned by house holds belonging to the scheduled Castes/Schedule Tribes or to land of beneficiaries of land reforms or that of the beneficiaries under the IAH of Govt. of India
❖ Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks
❖ Land Development
❖ Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas
❖ Rural connectivity to provide all weather access and
❖ Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State government
❖ Creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor shall be an important object of the scheme
❖ The works taken up under the scheme shall be in rural areas
❖ The scheme shall not permit engaging any contractor for implementation of the projects under it.
1.20. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The MGNREGA programme was in operation in India from 2006 onwards. There are few studies on the evaluation of MGNREGA programs in India in general and in Andhra Pradesh in particular. The study Arindo Banerjee of Prascin (2007), on MGNREGA – Across – country Appraisal at the end of eight months observed key lessons from various parts of India on NREGA programme relating to initiation of the scheme and its implementation.

It also observed the issues with case studies. Sohini Paul’s report (2008) concentrated strengthening grassroots democracy through the NREGA and the Right to Information Act. Two years of NREGA: The Road Ahead by Pramathesh Ambasta, P.S. Vijay Shankar and Mihir Shah (2008), studies show why NREGA has raised expectation like no other rural development programme and how it can and must be made to deliver on its massive and unrealized potential.

The study identified under staffing, delays in administration, lack of peoples planning poor quality of works, inappropriate wage rates, mockery of social audit etc. The Report (2008) by Soweaj Pragati Sahayog concentrated on the field issues of MGNREGA regarding partners of the National Consortium of CSOs.

The Social Audit in Andhra Pradesh (2007) by Aakella and Sowmya studied on the implementation process of MGNREGA in A.P. The study of Arora S.C (2003) analysed the Good Governance and Panchayati Raj, focused on the role of Panchayati Raj Institution in
the implementation of NREGA. The public accountability and transparency in employment programmes was studied by Godbole in (2003).

The unpublished document of Dreze & K have studied the loopholes in the implementation of NREGA scheme in India. An Evaluation study of the MGNREGS in Vijianagaram district is a study by G. Ramachandrudu and others find the follows. They observed that the MGNREGS workers are earning an annual income of Rs 17.872. The study shows that a considerable reduction happened in migration, 47 per cent of the workers are female, ale the castes are involved in NREGA works. The study also revealed that muster rolls are promptly maintained and 85% of the respondents are satisfied with MGNREGS. Similarly the study focused on social audit, asset creation and also other loopholes in the NREGA programme.


highlighted the issues relations to implementation process and loopholes on it.


In this content, the present study is mainly concentrated to study the problem and prospect of the NREGA workers in a drought prone district of Anantapur in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The present study mainly focused for the evaluation of NREGA programme in four selected gram panchayats in BK Samdram mandal in Anantapur district.

1.21. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Programmes for reduction of poverty in India have to be viewed in the wider perspective of the socio-economic transformation in the country. The experiences of the working of poverty alleviation programmes are not uniform in the country as a whole. Against this background of non-uniform implementation and performance of
Special Employment Guarantee Scheme and anti-poverty programmes, the present study tries to assess the working and impact of MGNREGS in Anantapur district of Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh.

Anantapur district is one of the chronically drought prone districts of India and has been identified by the World Bank for special assistance. So, it is hoped that the study of the impact of MGNREGS on income and employment generation in Anantapur district would be of considerable interest both to the planners and to the administrators. The MGNREGS is a demand driven scheme and has its focus on works relating to water conservation, drought proofing, land development, flood control and rural connectivity in terms of all weather roads. If it is implemented effectively, MGNREGS is going to be biggest social security programme for the unorganized workers.

The results of MGNREGS implementation are that the programme is supplementing the meager incomes of rural poor and reducing their dependence on moneylenders. The empowerment of rural poor by placing the right to demand for work is in the hands of poor is the biggest gain of the MGNREGS. The scheme is in the process of implementation and has also yielded productive assets in villages, especially in the form of village tanks, new school buildings, roads and repairs of old ones in those areas.

The special feature of the MGNREGS has been as one third of the scheme's beneficiaries must be women. This type of programme becomes employment oriented, village oriented, poor oriented and
basic needs oriented probably has more effective 'trickle down effect.' In these circumstances, the MGNREGS has become very vital for providing employment to poor people in rural India. The study is based both on primary and secondary data, official reports concerning the working of MGNREGS have been widely used. Along with these, a sample study has also been undertaken.

1.22. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- to examine the status of MGNREGS in Andhra Pradesh
- to analyze the performance of MGNREGS in Anantapur district of Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh
- to find out the socio-economic characteristics of the sample respondents
- to examine the awareness of the MGNREGS respondent workers on the implementation process of MGNREGS at field level
- to work out the extent of additional employment generation from the MGMGNREGS in the study area
- to assess the changes in the income levels of the job seekers/rural poor after the implementation of MGNREGS
- to evaluate the contributions of the MGNREGS in the socio-economic transformation of rural households and
- to summarize the findings and to suggest the policy recommendations based on the field study.

1.23. METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the present study, Anantapur district of Rayalaseema region in Andhra Pradesh has been selected in the first
stage. In the second stage three revenue mandals covering one from each revenue division in the district have been selected. In third stage, five villages from each selected revenue mandals have been selected. All the villages in the selected mandals have been considered for the selection of second stage units. For the selection of villages, all the villages in the sample mandal have been grouped into five categories on the basis of percentage of MGNREGS workers. One village was selected from each group using random sampling method. Accordingly five villages were selected from each mandal again by adopting random sampling procedure. Thus the study covers 15 villages.

**TABLE 1.1: SAMPLE DETAILS OF THE STUDY**

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<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name of the Mandal</th>
<th>Name of the Village</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Settur (Dharmavaram Revenue Division)</td>
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<td>Thippanapalli</td>
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<td>Thippareddypalli</td>
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All the MGNREGS households of each village have been classified on the basis of castes, viz., Other Castes, Backward Castes,
Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The sample of 280 MGNREGS households have been covered for the purpose of the study. Out of these, 52 households belonged to Other Castes, 188 to Backward Castes, 68 to Scheduled Castes and 42 to Scheduled Tribes.

1.24. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The preset study, after reviewing various earlier studies, uses the most suitable methodology with utmost conceptual clarity in analyzing the evaluation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which provides 100 mandays of employment for the job seekers to prove the economic transformation of the rural poor in the selected mandals of Anantapur district in general and in the selected gram panchayats in particular. To study the socio-economic characteristics of the MGNREGS workers, to know their awareness about NREGA programme and to know its impact on job seekers three mandals in the district have been selected. The study confines 15 villages in the district.

The study, besides suggesting a prescriptive policy, also attempts to highlight the awareness of NREGA workers on NREGA Act, the status of income and employment generation of the NREGA house hold respondents before and after the NREGA Programme in the selected mandals. The study also covered various aspects relating to the income and employment generation, asset creation among the sample households. The social audit, works undertaken, facilities available at work spot, increase of purchasing power were also studied.
and analysed. The saving levels, consumption particulars were also studied and made suitable suggestion to improve their savings income and overall employment, among the MGNREGS workers in Anantapur district.

1.25. SOURCES OF DATA

For the purpose of the study, primary and secondary data were collected from different sources to assess the impact of MGNREGS on the living conditions of rural poor. The primary data was collected with a well prepared schedule. The secondary data was collected from the concerned gram panchayat offices, mandal offices, DWMA office, Anantapur and other concerned offices and research institutes at Hyderabad.

1.26. STATISTICAL TOOLS

To analyze the primary and the secondary data to find out the impact of MGNREGS on the living conditions of rural poor in the sample areas, the data was interpreted by way of simple percentages, averages, pie and bar diagrams and with the help of other statistical tools wherever applicable.

1.27. PLAN OF THE STUDY

The study comprises with seven chapters. The first chapter presents the introduction of the study, importance of Mahathma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), review of literature, methodology, objectives and the chapter scheme. The second chapter overviews the poverty alleviation programmes in
rural India. The third chapter analyses the Unemployment scenario and employment generation programmes and its problems in India.

The fourth chapter is a review of the structure and status of MGNREGS in India in general and in Andhra Pradesh in particular. The profile and progress of NREGA in Anantapur district and in the study area will be explained in chapter five. The sixth reviews the impact assessment of MGNREGS on income and employment generation and asset creation in the rural areas under study. The last chapter is devoted for summary of findings and policy recommendations.
1.28. REFERENCES


