2.1 Introduction:

A number of studies have been conducted in India and abroad on various aspects of employment programs. These studies have been taken up for reviewing literature in the field of employment generation and poverty. This will provide a theoretical framework and methodological focus for the research. This review of related research will provide justification and reason for the present research and help to identify the gap by which, this research could fill. Thus, present chapter on the literature review serves to explain the topic of the research and to build a rationale for the problem to be studied.

The present review of literature has been made under the following classification

1. Performance of employment programs
2. Impact of employment programs on poverty and sustainable livelihood.

Mathew K Sebastian, P.A. Azeez (2014)\(^1\) expressed that various activities being promoted under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme such as water harvesting and soil conservations could have high positive results on environment security and biodiversity and environment conservation. While this article appreciates the integration of biodiversity conservation into the MGNREGS, it points out the importance of preparing panchayat-level biodiversity registers, supporting individual and institutional efforts in biodiversity conservation and the formulation of appropriate policies.

Dr.M. Chitra, Dr.L.Ganesan (2013)\(^2\) expressed that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act later it was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee (MGNREGA) 2005. Its main objective is to provide enhancement of livelihood security to the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least 100 days later 150 days in drought hit districts (2012) guaranteed wage employment to every household in unskilled manual work (Ministry of Law and Justice, 2005) event in the history of rural development policies in India as well as in the history of poverty reduction strategies in the World. The Government of India has already launched anti-poverty programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP and Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY) to increase the level of employment, income, asset creation and thereby enhance the standard of living of the rural poor particularly the agrarian farming community. These programmes, strive
hard to reduce the rural poverty in some extent in the rural areas. These programmes of the government are, no doubt, important but the size of the problem is simply too large as compared to the size of the anti-poverty programmes. Sustained attention is needed to raise the economic status of the rural poor particularly the rural agricultural labourers by the planners and policy makers. As a matter of fact, the vicious circle of present day stagnation in the economic field begins from drastic fall in down of yield per hectare that leads to low agriculture production that directly hit the entire economy growth path. While it is true that the development of the agricultural sector is linked with the development of the non-agricultural sector, as no economy can be isolated from the rest of the national economy, no increase agriculture production can be possible and effective, even though there may be technological improvement without an active and efficient participation of the agricultural labour. The present study is focused on Implication of MGNREGA Activities in Rural Employment Opportunities – A Micro Level Analysis by taking a case study of Thethupatti village of Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu should take necessary steps to provide employment opportunities through MGNREGA and thereby enhance purchasing power of the landless agricultural labour household in the study area.

M. Arun Kumar (2013) attempted to find out the performance of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in three regions of the East Godavari District viz., Delta region, Upland area and Agency area. It covers employment, Wage earnings, family expenditure, house equipment, child education, savings etc. It becomes imperative that take stock of the experience so far in order to learn from the management and stakeholders' awareness on the impact of MNERGP. In the study, all the respondents having white ration card who are the poor. Under the Program, they got 65 days of employment. About 52-55 have said that migration has come down in the aftermath of implementation of the scheme. After the NREGS, the annual income of the beneficiaries increased and they were shifted to further income groups. The scheme has provided finance and capacity to purchase minimum needs. House equipment extended and debts was reduced. Opportunities for Child education has also extended. Meanwhile, majority of the respondents is not having awareness about facilities at work site. Thus, the concerned management should reveal the issues and conduct awareness classes to the mass. There is a need of hour to demonstrate the stake holders regarding full employment.
Tashina Esteves, K V Rao, Bhaskar Sinha, S S Roy et al (2013) study quantifies the environmental and socio-economic benefits generated by the works implemented under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and assesses the potential of these benefits to reduce vulnerability of agricultural production and livelihoods of the beneficiaries, post-implementation (2011-12) as compared to pre-MGNREGA (2006-07), to current climate variability. Agricultural and livelihood vulnerability indices developed showed reduction in vulnerability due to implementation of works under the Act and resulting environmental benefits.

Yanyan Liu, Christopher B Barrett (2013) by using 2009-10 National Sample Survey data, describes patterns of job-seeking, rationing, and participation in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. At the national level, it finds that the self-targeting design of MGNREGS leads to greater rates of self-selection into the programme by poorer and scheduled tribe or scheduled caste households. However, the administrative rationing of MGNREGS jobs is not pro-poor but exhibits a sort of middle-class bias. At the state level, roughly half of 27 states exhibit rationing and participation profiles that signal effective pro-poor targeting; the other half struggle to avoid high rates and regressive patterns of administrative rationing of jobs to which the poor have a legal right.

Grace Carswell, Rob Cripps (2013) examined Official data from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act website alongside independently collected survey and ethnographic data. The validity of the official data is verified by comparing it to field-level observations. This is done at various levels, and in doing so, it is shown that in certain ways the official Mgnrega data is robust. In other very important ways the data is shown to be highly problematic for these particular villages in Tamil Nadu, for which the exercise is done.

Esther Gehrke, (2013) assessed the effects of the NREGA on crop choice assesses the role of risk constraints in households' production decisions. It shows that the introduction of the Indian Employment Guarantee acts as input allocation in agricultural production, particularly crop choice, by reducing households' uncertainty about future income streams. Taking advantage of the fact that the Indian National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was rolled out in three phases, I show that the key innovation of the Indian public works programme, namely giving households the
right to work, encourages agricultural households to increase the share of risky but profitable crops in their portfolio. By triggering considerable increases in the fraction of inputs allocated to more profitable crops, especially to cotton, chillies and turmeric, the NREGA has the potential of raising the productivity of small and marginal farmers. The results of this paper are robust to a range of alternative specifications and to the inclusion of weather data as well as to changes in household income. Linking the Employment Guarantee to risk considerations is the key innovation of this paper. Therewith, it makes two contributions. First, it contributes to the empirical evidence on the validity of the theory of decision making under uncertainty. Second, it provides additional theoretical and empirical evidence to the ongoing debate on the effects of the NREGA on agricultural productivity.

Jitender Singh (2012) examined the impact of MGNREGS on rural wages, migration, occupational shift of rural work force; identify the profile features of the workers under MGNREGS and estimate the chances of a skilled person to work under MGNREGS. It is observed that generation of ample assured employment under MGNREGS have substantially improved rural wages, therefore, reduced distress migration from rural to urban areas. The unique features of the Scheme e.g. adjustment of wages to inflation, universality in access, self targeting and compensation in case of in ability to provide employment, probably become a credible insurance net to the rural worker. MGNREGS seems to be partially responsible for the withdrawal of workers from urban sector, especially for missing women from urban construction sector. The shift of rural workers from manufacturing to rural construction industry is also considerably attributed to the MGNREGS. It is observed that among the vocationally educated person s in rural sector who have acquired skill by hereditary or by self learning are more likely to work under MGNREGS than a no vocational education at all. This holding up of some of vocationally educated rural persons in unskilled work s under MGNREGS refuses the notion that only unskilled persons are working under the scheme. Therefore, the Scheme is likely to dampen the odd s of rural workers to acquire s kill, at least for some semi skilled , and consequently reduces their likelihood to move on to skilled jobs in future. Hence there is a pressing call to upgrade the skills of MGNREGS workers in order to transfer them in to skilled jobs to provide sustainable livelihood to rural households. It is suggested that, using the institutional and information network
of the Scheme, the skills of the MGNREGS workers should be enhanced, to improve their capability and to move them on to non-MGNREGS works such as manufacturing etc. Skill upgradation is essential even to achieve the objective of the Manufacturing Plan, which requires to shift about 50-60 million low or semiskilled people in to manufacturing by 2025. The skills upgradation should go along with better working conditions, low cost of migration, ample employment opportunities, low cost of job search, etc, and better wage in manufacturing sector.

Erlend Berg, Sambit Bhattacharyya, et.al (2012)\(^9\) stated that it has long been hypothesised that public works programmes, in addition to the welfare effect on those directly employed, can influence equilibrium wage rates. In this paper we test the impact of the Indian government’s major public works programme, the National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREG), on agricultural wages. The rollout of NREG in three phases is used to identify difference-in-difference estimates of the programme effect. Using monthly wage data from the period 2000-2011 for a panel of 250 districts across 19 Indian states, we find that on average NREG boosts the real daily agricultural wage rates by 5.3 per cent. It takes 6 to 11 months for an NREG intensity shock to feed into higher wages. The wage effect appears to be gender neutral and biased towards unskilled labour. It is positive across different implementation stages and months. It remains significant even after controlling for rainfall; district and time fixed effects; and phase-wise linear, quadratic, and cubic time trends. The validity of our identification strategy is confirmed by placebo tests. We argue that since most of the world’s poor live in rural areas, and the poorest of the poor are agricultural wage labourers, rural public works constitute a potentially important anti-poverty policy tool.

G.Mudukappa (2012)\(^{10}\), observed that the NREGA addresses itself chiefly to working people and their fundamental right to live with dignity. The success of the NREGA, however, will depend on people's realisation of the Act as a right. Effective levels of awareness and sustained public pressure are crucial to ensure that the implementation problems are addressed and the objectives met. The issues involved in empowering workers are in the range of enhancement of knowledge levels, development of literacy skills and organizing workers. It is important to note that the Act is still in its infancy and it takes years to put in place the tools and instruments
needed to actualise the right to employment through a scheme, even in the best of circumstances.

**Patidar, Bhurelal Gupta, Dinesh (2012)**\(^{11}\) in their article, ‘MGNREGA-issues And Challenges’ explained that Large-scale social safety net programs such as India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) are difficult to implement due to governance challenges related to elite capture, leakages, and corruption. The ability to identify how the governance challenges of program implementation can be met requires detailed insights into the actual process of program implementation, with clear views on the source of leakage and mismanagement, the sensitivity of program implementation to the influence of different actors, local power structures and informal bureaucratic processes. This paper uses a new participatory research method, referred to as Process- Influence Mapping, to shed light on these issues and related governance challenges, using the implementation of NREGA as an example. The Process-Influence Mapping tool helps identify the specific features of the NREGA implementation process that limit the program's effectiveness (for example, elite capture in the definition of work and capacity limitations due to staff shortages and lack of training) and create scope for the misappropriation of funds. The insights gained can be used to identify policy options for reforming the administrative process of NREGA implementation so as to create an effective social safety net.

**Bharat Bhatti (2012)**\(^{12}\) advocated that timely and reliable payment of wages under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is meant to be one of the initial applications of Aadhaar – the unique identity number that is supposed to be given to every resident of India. Pilot experiments with Aadhaar Enabled Payment Systems (AEPS) were initiated in Jharkhand a few months ago. This article reports the findings of an informal study of this experiment, based on a quick survey conducted in Ratu block of Ranchi district in March 2012. The AEPS pilot project currently in operation in Ranchi was very small. It was operational in just three GPs of one block, Ratu. Further, in these three GPs, workers of just five worksites had been paid through the new system. Though such a small sample makes it difficult to draw definite conclusions about the system as a whole, it gives an idea of the problems that may arise as well as of the possible benefits of the system.
Mehtabul Azam (2012) opined that Public works programs, aimed at building a strong social safety net through redistribution of wealth and generation of meaningful employment, are becoming increasingly popular in developing countries. The Mahatma Gaandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), enacted in August 2005, is one such program in India. This paper assesses causal impacts (Intent-to Treat) of MGNREGA on public works participation, labor force participation, and real wages of casual workers by exploiting its phased implementation across Indian districts. Using nationally representative data from Indian National Sample Surveys (NSS) and Difference-in Difference framework, we find that there is a strong gender dimension to the impacts of MGNREGA: it has a positive impact on the labor force participation and this impact is mainly driven by a much sharper impact on female labor force participation. Similarly, MGNREGA has a significant positive impact on the wages of female casual workers-real wages of female casual workers increased 8 per cent more in MGNREGA districts compared with the increase experienced in non-MGNREGA districts. However, the impact of NREGA on wages of casual male workers has only been marginal (about 1 per cent). Using data from pre-MGNREGA period, we also perform falsification exercise to demonstrate that the main conclusions are not confounded by pre-existing differential trends between MGNREGA and non-MGNREGA districts.

Soumyendra Kishore Datta and Krishna Singh (2012), Women’s Job Participation in and Efficiency of NREGA Program—Case Study of a Poor District in India, expressed that NREGA program 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 to analyses the issue of women’s participation and share of employment days in the context a poor region in India.

Martin Ravallion (2012) stated that the corruption is very common thing in the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. But simple indices that claim to measure corruption and make an assessment of interstate levels of corruption can end up offering us a wrong understanding. However, there is
nothing “corrupt” about people living above the Tendulkar poverty line participating in MGNREGS. The Act that created the scheme does not bar those living above any poverty line from participating. Rather it says that anyone who wants work at the stipulated wage rate should get it (up to 100 days per household). But some people in families above the poverty line may still want the work. This creates scope for corruption through the power of local officials to decide who gets work and who does not. However, using the NSS round as Bhalla, Dutta et al show that, on balance, the rationing process on MGNREGS generally favours the poor, not the nonpoor. It is not the fact that AP and Rajasthan are led by the Congress that leads to a high value of Bhalla’s “corruption index”, but their lack of poverty relative to other states. As is clear from Bhalla index is not in fact any higher, or lower, for AP and Rajasthan than one would expect, once one controls for the poverty rate. There is clearly corruption in MGNREGS, as in many public programmes, and in countries at all stages of development. But let us not pretend that Bhalla’s index has taught us anything credible about that problem.

**Indira Bishnoi, Sarita Verma and Swati Rai (2012)** conducted a study in Khota Mahawa village of Babhani Block of Sonbhadra District of Uttar Pradesh, with the objective of analysing performance of MGNREGS. For this, hundred MGNREGA beneficiaries both male and female were selected and information was collected with the help of structured Interview schedule and data was analysed with the appropriate statistical tools as; frequency, percentage and mean and result were drawn from it. It was found that respondents were well aware of the procedure of the MNREGA such as registration, having job cards, 100 days employment in a year, process of opening bank accounts, accessing bank, receiving payment from bank and about the process of wage payment in MGNREGA. The main problem faced by the beneficiaries was delay in wage payment, and accessing bank account. Other significant finding was that Gram Pradhan played a very constructive, positive and active role in giving information about MGNREGA. It can be concluded that MGNREGA can be an important step towards poverty alleviation by giving employment to rural people.

**Diganta Mukherjee and Uday Bhanu Sinha (2011)** advocated that a developing economy like India is often characterised by a labour market with demand and supply of labour and a wage that even if competitively determined may not be adequate for the poor household to reach their target income; what they consider as
means of a decent living. Envisaging situations like these, the Indian government has implemented the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in recent past, to complement the income of the poor by providing them employment for certain number of labour days in a year. In this paper, using a simple theoretical model, we have analysed the impact of NREGA scheme on (i) rural labour market, (ii) income of the poor households and (iii) overall agricultural production. It is seen that the income from NREGA alone can be a substantial part of the target income of the poor. It shows that in such a situation, the poor may exhibit a backward bending supply curve of labour which may lead to an aggregate reduction in agricultural output. This adverse production effect can happen even when the NREGA activities lead to a moderate improvement in agricultural productivity. Data on food prices tend to support our finding to some extent.

Dhananjaya K and Prathibha M.S, (2011) 18, Role of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Rural Asset Creation in India –An Analysis, observed that The Rural Economy in India is wholly agriculture based and it is of tremendous importance because it has vital supply and demand links with the other Indian industries. Agriculture is the main stay of the Indian economy, as it constitutes the backbone of rural India. But the contribution of agriculture to national income has fallen dramatically in recent years but more than 600 million of our people still depend on farming (Mihir Shah, 2008). This is not a small number that can be just wished away. In fact, the growing divergence between the share of agriculture in GDP and in the workforce, alerts us to the urgent imperative of raising farm productivity in India, which languishes way below potential. On a sound agrarian base, we can build a whole range of other location-specific, nature-based rural livelihoods.

Usha Rani Ahuja, Dushayant Tyagi, Sonia Chauhan and Khyali Ram Chaudhary (2011) 19 conducted study in the state of Haryana has investigated the impact of implementation of MGNREGA in two districts, one agriculturally-advanced (Karnal) and the other agriculturally-backward (Mewat). Besides demographic characteristics, the paper has investigated the difference in the employment status, income, landholding size, herd size and other assets of the sample farm households in these two districts by taking 120 farm families, 60 from each district. The impact of
MGNREGA within a district has also been studied in terms of income and employment security, migration, debt repayment, extent of participation in MGNREGA works, socio-economic status, etc. by seeking information from 30 participating and 30 non-participating households in MGNREGA works in each district. A significant difference has been found in the extent of employment under MGNREGA works in agriculturally-advanced Karnal (13.7 per cent) and agriculturally-backward Mewat (24.6 per cent) districts. The study has observed that despite being a source of employment, MGNREGA has not been able to check the migration from the developed region because of higher market wage rates at destinations. The study has concluded that farmers owning large size of landholdings and more number of animals are not much interested in participating in MGNREGA works.

**Kamala Sankaran (2011)** explained that while for several decades now there has been an unresolved debate about the feasibility of having a national minimum wage, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act with its provision for a country-wide wage rate has placed the possibility to do so squarely on the agenda. The NREGA wage rate must logically be a need-based national minimum wage under the Minimum Wages Act (MWA). Declaring a need-based minimum wage rate under NREGA which is linked to the schedule of rates allows for sufficient flexibility to account for regional/geographical variation. There can be no dispute that ensuring a basic minimum for a decent life is a first charge upon any government. The crisis around the NREGA wage rate can be an occasion to rationalize wages both under NREGA and under the MWA and bring about a true need-based minimum wage, a necessary prerequisite for the millions in the informal economy in India today.

**Rishabh Khosla (2011)** in this paper attempts to measure the effect of caste-reservation policies on the provision of public goods and services in gram panchayats in Andhra Pradesh using data from the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. The investigation finds that the effect of reservation varies tremendously in different social, political, and institutional contexts, shedding light on the conflicting results of similar studies. It provides important lessons for future research and policy about the caste-political conditions in which reservation can produce positive or perverse results.
Sushanta Kumar Mishra (2011)\textsuperscript{22} stated that National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2005), later renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one of the most significant interventions of the Government in post-Independent India. This act addressing the principal causes of hunger and starvation in rural areas, the Act ensures to the poor that they can expect to earn a living wage, without loss of their dignity, and demand work as their right. In addition to the immediate impact in terms of poverty reduction, the program has the potential to lead the economy in labor intensive growth path through the creation of assets. However, the positive achievements of the intervention have been lost in the noise of critical reports and anti-MGNREGA propaganda. The productive value of MGNREGA work has been criticized as a futile attempt “to play with mud, to create road that goes from nowhere to nowhere, to dig ditches that will be wasted away in the next monsoon”.

Prattoy Sarkar, Jagdish Kumar and Supriya (2011)\textsuperscript{23} examined that the socio-economic impact of MGNREGA on the rural poor who are mainly comprised of small and marginal farmers & agricultural labourers. Their study is based on a random sample of 102 respondents (82 beneficiary and 20 non-beneficiary households) drawn by the PPS method from two good-performing and two poorly-performing Gram Panchayats randomly selected from one randomly selected good-performing block in the Burdwan District of West Bengal. It has been found that significant changes have taken place in the socio-economic variables like annual per capita income, monthly per capita food expenditure, annual per child expenditure on education, per capita savings, condition of the dwelling houses, access to healthcare facility and possession of other assets or luxury items for those households which are regularly working in the scheme. According to the value of the socio-economic index prepared, it has been found that in the initial year of implementation (2007-08) of MGNREGA in the study area, 43.9 per cent beneficiary households were in poor socio-economic conditions which have gradually improved in the succeeding years and decreased to 32.9 per cent in 2008-09 and further to 18.3 per cent in 2009-10. The study has made some suggestions also for incorporating improvements in the present MGNREG scheme based on the constraints reported by the workers associated with this Scheme.

Anindha Adikari and Karthika Bhatia (2010)\textsuperscript{24} stated that the government of India has shifted from cash payment of wages under the renamed MGNREGS to
settlement through bank accounts. This has been done in order to prevent defrauding of workers and to give them greater control over their wages. Has this been achieved after the switch? Based on a survey in December 2008 in one block each in Allahabad (UP) and Ranchi (Jharkhand) districts, this article probes questions related to payment of wages through banks. Prior to the introduction of bank payments, NREGA wages were paid in cash based on the entries made in the muster roll’ by simple meeting agency in most cases the gram panchayat. In this system the work implementing and payment agencies are the same. This makes embezzlement of funds easier, as the money from inflated or fake muster roll entries made by a corrupt official will come into his own hands.

Dey and Bedi (2010) 25 studied the functioning of the NREGS between February 2006 and July 2009 in Birubham district, West Bengal. Their study reveals that in order to serve as an effective “employer of last resort”, the programme should provide more job days during lean season and wages should be paid in a timely manner. This study shows that, in Birubham, there is universal awareness about the NREGS, job card have been made available to all those who have applied and NREGS related information is well maintained and relatively accessible. But there are long delays in wage payments during 11 the first year of the programme, since then, the payment lag has declined and it is now in the range of 20 days.

Eva Schiffer and Katharina Raabe et.al (2010)26 opined that Large-scale social safety net programs such as India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) are difficult to implement due to governance challenges related to elite capture, leakages, and corruption. The ability to identify how the governance challenges of program implementation can be met requires detailed insights into the actual process of program implementation, with clear views on the source of leakage and mismanagement, the sensitivity of program implementation to the influence of different actors, local power structures and informal bureaucratic processes. This paper uses a new participatory research method, referred to as Process-Influence Mapping, to shed light on these issues and related governance challenges, using the implementation of NREGA as an example. The Process-Influence Mapping tool helps identify the specific features of the NREGA implementation process that limit the program’s effectiveness (for example, elite capture in the definition of work and
capacity limitations due to staff shortages and lack of training) and create scope for the misappropriation of funds. The insights gained can be used to identify policy options for reforming the administrative process of NREGA implementation so as to create an effective social safety net.

Ashok Pankaj, Rukmini Tankha (2010) have examined the empowerment effects of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on rural women in Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. It argues that women workers have gained from the scheme primarily because of the paid employment opportunity, and benefits have been realised through income-consumption effects, intra-household effects, and the enhancement of choice and capability. Women have also gained to some extent in terms of realisation of equal wages under the MGNREGS, 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 mobilisation, more so in laggard states.

Katharina Raabe, Regina Birner et.al (2010) expressed that Large-scale social safety net programs such as India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are difficult to implement due to governance challenges related to elite capture, leakages, and corruption. The ability to identify how the governance challenges of program implementation can be met requires detailed insights into the actual process of program implementation, with clear views on the source of leakage and mismanagement, the sensitivity of program implementation to the influence of different actors, local power structures and informal bureaucratic processes. This paper uses a new participatory research method, referred to as Process-Influence Mapping, to shed light on these issues and related governance challenges, using the implementation of MGNREGA as an example. The Process-Influence Mapping tool helps identify the specific features of the MGNREGA implementation process that limit the program’s effectiveness (for example, elite capture in the definition of work and capacity limitations due to staff shortages and lack of training) and create scope for the misappropriation of funds. The insights gained can be used to identify policy options for reforming the administrative process of MGNREGA implementation so as to create an effective social safety net.
Dr. Rajkumar Siwach and Sunilkumar (2009) states that the MGNREG Act, by and large, has the potentials not only to strengthen social security of India, but also strengthens community’s mobilization to ensure better responsiveness of local government to community’s needs and priorities. Before the MGNREGA came into operation, there was no institutional mechanism to check irregularities, pilferage, extravagance and misuse of funds. So to ensure transparency and accountability, the government has made a provision of ‘Social Audit’ under the MGNREGA. He found that Social Audit is a salient feature but experience reveals that there is a wide gap between the intended aims of the act and cultural milieu of the villages in Haryana.

Dr. B.K. Pattanaik (2009) reveals that Initial findings of his study were the scheme has been successful in achieving the equity, while its efficiency is still a question to be effectively dealt by the implementers of the programme. The better nexus and coordination between the government and the panchayats would enable efficient implementation of the scheme at the village level. It was observed during the field survey that panchayats have taken up mostly the soil work activities such as construction and reparation of road and renovation of ponds in the villages which are underneath priorities of the scheme. The work force participation rate of women in MGNREGS is 37.78 per cent, which clearly indicates that the workforce participation of women in rural Punjab has enhanced marvelously with the implementation of MGNREGS.

Vinayak Uppal (2009) advocated that the NREGS is an ambitious public works program intended to provide a basic safety net to the rural poor in India. Institutionalised in 2005, it is currently the largest public works program in the world. Despite its scale and the political importance attached to the program, its success in targeting and its impact on participating households has not been well studied. This paper attempts to study two aspects of the program’s functioning using data from the Young Lives longitudinal Study conducted in Andhra Pradesh. Firstly it looks at the targeting of the program and the characteristics of those who self select into it. We find that poorer and lower caste households are more likely to register as are those affected by drought. We also find that having more than 5 influential relatives increases the probability of registration by 10.3 percentage points. We next attempt to estimate the impact of program participation on the children in participating households, looking specifically at anthropometric scores as indicators of health.
outcomes, and the incidence of child labour. While there seems to be a positive correlation between program participation and health outcomes, this does not remain robust across specifications. On the other hand we find that program registration reduces the probability of a boy entering child labour by 13.4 per cent points and program take up reduces it for girls by 8.19 per cent points. We find that the targeting efficiency of the program seems to be largely effective and it seems to offer a viable security net for households with variable employment opportunities. It also seems to have an important effect on children, further strengthening the program’s significance.

**Bidyut Mohanthy (2009)** expressed that Bureaucratic implementation of the NREGA has bypassed the Panchayat Raj institutions which were intended to play an important role in planning and executing this Flagship programme to respond to the local needs of the people. Corruption, poor planning and arbitrary management of the scheme have crippled the potentially valuable measure to provide sustenance to the rural poor. This was true tenor of the deliberations of some 1200 panchayats delegates who assembled in New Delhi at National Conference on NREGA and Panchayats delegates who assembled in New Delhi at National Conference on NREGA and Panchayats organized by Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), New Delhi on October 14-15 2008. The delegates discussed various issues not only recounting some positive impacts of the scheme but also highlighting the problems which may face while implementing it at the village level. All most all the representative expressed concern about the commission that they have to pay to get the project sanctioned. It includes many levels from Patwaries to other officers. From the panchayat perspective it is clear from the discussions that the NREGA has not been able to help in deepening grass root, democracy or strengthening the Panchayat Raj’s even though the scheme has brought about some positive impact on the beneficiaries.

**Arun Jacob and Richard Varghese (2009)** felt that the case study of how the government’s employment guarantee scheme is being implemented in one Kerala district reveals the vital role played by the local bodies. While implementation has been largely fair and corruption free, the scheme needs to be more efficiently and effectively used so as to meet the long term requirements of the state and its people. The existing socio-economic conditions in a state have great influence on the successful implementation of schemes like MGNREGS. The role played by the local bodies in informing the masses about the MGNREGS act and its provisions. The
higher participation by women in the scheme and minimal corruption levels are the important features observed.

Mohinder Singh and Dr. Vijay Kumar (2009)\textsuperscript{34} felt that of all other poverty alleviation programmes MGNREGS is the largest rural employment program ever undertaken in India. It guarantees the right to work for 100 days in a year for any rural household. They explained a success story of labourers who worked in constructing a pond in Garhipadla in Kaithal Block in Haryana. The villagers were in great need of a pond for a long time. Under MGNREGS the villagers not only dig up a pond but also got remuneration. And it is clear that this scheme has done a great job in empowering the women of Garhipadla village reducing the poverty and enabling them to meet their needs. The study concluded that MGNREGS is a boon for the poor and there are some drawbacks in implementation in this scheme.

Ritesh Saxena (2009)\textsuperscript{35} felt that successful implementation of NREGA depends on the establishment and operationalization of a proper computer based Management information system (MIS), through an information and communication technology (ICT) network inter connecting all the blocks, districts, states and the Union Ministry. He also states that the operations will run with the use of latest information and communication technology (ICT) to provide solutions to complaints on a real time basis. Geographic Information System (GIS), Remote Sensing. And he expresses that significant emerging trends in three years of implementation of NREGA have been evident in the increase in employment opportunities compared with earlier wage employment programs, increase in minimum wages, stemming of distress migration, implementation of a large number of works related to soil and water conservation, afforestation and plantation resulting in increased productivity.

Pramathesh Ambasta (2009)\textsuperscript{36} expressed that a homogeneous programme like NREGS needs an independent body that looks after IT, human resource development, evaluation, social audit and grievance redressal, without which quality outcomes will remain illusive. National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme marks a historic opportunity for pushing ahead with governance reforms in rural India. However, much more needs to be done before NREGS possibilities become a reality. For, the average days of work per household were only 48 in 2008-09. The record of productive assets creation has been poor if not altogether dismal. Long delays in wage
payments, sometimes for several months, and the spectra of corruption rearing its ugly head indicate the failure of entitlements reaching the poorest of the nation, thus defeating the very purpose of NREGS. We strongly believe that the largest employment programme in human history must be armed with an independent, dedicated National Authority to anchor and steer it. Such a national authority for NREGS (NAN) should be set up as an autonomous body. The function of coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the programme by the States would remain with the Department of Rural Development, as at present. But evaluation, social audit and grievance redress would become independent of the department. For, as a matter of principle, the agency executing the programme should not be the one evaluating its own work. In addition, NAN would be charged with the key functions of human resource development (deployment as well as capacity-building) and streamlining IT systems to facilitate effective monitoring and social audit. In order to ensure maximum autonomy, the chairperson of NAN should be an individual of established integrity and eminence chosen from public life. The road map for autonomy along with its legal-constitutional implications should be worked out through detailed deliberations in the public domain. The executive arm of NAN should be headed by a Director-General (DG), an officer not below the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, competitively recruited from the open market using a search committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary and including persons of eminence/experience working on NREGS. Serving government officers would also be able to apply for the post. The DG will report to the chairperson of the authority.

Sainath.P (2009)\textsuperscript{37} in his article entitled that Drought of justice flood of funds. He asks for expansion of the NREGS, universal access to the PDS, more spending on health and education and there’s no money. But there’s enough to give away to the corporate world in concessions. Even today there are very useful things that could be done to counter the worst ahead. A positive step taken by the Rural Development Ministry now allows small but vital assets like farm ponds to be created on the lands of farmers through the NREGS. A pond on every farm should be the objective of every government. Incidentally, this would help hugely with the rabi season. It would also ease the hostility of quite a few farmers towards the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. A massive expansion of the NREGS will also help cushion the lakhs of labourers struggling to find work and devastated by rising food costs. But it
would call for throwing out the entirely destructive 100 days per household limit on work under the scheme. With the prime Minister calling for anti drought measures on “a war footing” this should be the time to do it. The NREGS covering millions of impoverished people received Rs. 39,100 crore in the 2009-10 budget. If the government wants to act on a war footing. It could start with a serious expansion of the NREGS. It could launch, among many other things, the pond-in-every-farm programme. It could restructure farm loan schedules. It could start getting the idea of monsoon management into its thinking. It could curb forward trading linked speculation that was driving one of our worst price rises in history long before the drought was on the horizon. And it could declare universal access to the PDS. That cost could probably be easily covered by, say, cancelling the dessert from the menu of the unending corporate free lunch in this country.

**Rakesh Tiwari, H I Somashekar et.al (2009)** assessed the activities undertaken under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Chitradurga district, Karnataka, for their potential to enhance and provide environmental services. Key programmes were implemented in 20 villages during 2009 and studied about using rapid scientific assessment methods. An indicator approach was adopted to analyse environmental services such as water for irrigation and improvement in soil quality. The status of environmental services before and after implementation of the activities was examined and vulnerability indices were constructed and compared. The activities were found to have reduced the vulnerability of agricultural production, water resources and livelihoods to uncertain rainfall, water scarcity and poor soil fertility.

**Swaminathan. M.S. (2009)** highlighted that Synergy between food security Act and NREGS. The successful implementation of NREGS and the Right to Information Act indicates that the climate is conductive for a far reaching rights based legislation to eliminate hunger and deprivation. He also stated that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act which came into force in February 2006, now covers across the rural India. It has generated over 450 core person days of employment, a major share going to women and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe families over 35,00 crore has been paid as wages. The priorities of the work to be undertaken include watershed management and water conservation, minor irrigation and rural
connectivity. Such work is important to strengthen the ecological foundations of sustainable agriculture. The NREGA is probably the world’s largest ecological security programme. A major awareness has been the absence of effective technical guidance and support from agriculture and rural universities and institutes. The union Ministry of Rural Development has taken steps to achieve convergence of brain and brawn, by enlisting the enhance farm productivity without causing ecological harm. India’s occupies the 132nd position among 179 countries in the UNDPs 2009 Human Development Index. That position may worsen. NREGA workers represent some of the most economically and socially underprivileged sectors. Mostly, these workers are undernourished, with poor opportunities for health care. Hence, there is need to bring about a convergence of child care, nutrition health and education programmes at NREGA sites. Education can be imported in the evenings, using the joyful learning techniques. Such a convergence in sustainable development along with convergence in human development will be creditable. There is also a need to raise the self-esteem of NREGA workers, making them feel proud of the fact that they are engaged in checking eco-destruction. Due to recognition could be given to the NREGA groups that have done outstanding work in water harvesting, water shed development and soil health care with environment savior Awards. This will help spread awareness of the critical role of NREGA workers play. The NREGA will then help to improve both food security and Human Development Index. There are uncommon opportunities to erase India’s image as the land of the poor hungry and illiterate. To utilize them, an import requirement is a change in the mindset from patronage to partnership and from undervaluing the human resource to considering our youthful population as our greatest asset.

Vidya Subrahamaniam (2009) has been attempted that Rajasthan became the second government after Andhra Pradesh to set up a Directorate of Social Audit. The Rajasthan experiment is itself based on the Andhra Pradesh government’s success with conducting NREGA Audits. The A.P government did this off its own bat, at the urging of Y.S. Rajasekhar Reddy, whereas in Rajasthan the push came from civil society. The A.P government was the first to institutionalize social audit by means of a social Audit Directorate. Since then the state government has gone a further step with a committed budget for social auditing and provisions to host audit results on its NREGA website. At a meeting the Bhilwara audit team had with Rajasthan
government officials and other experts, Sowmy Kidambi, an MKKSS activist deputed to work with the A.P. government, strongly advocated bringing audit results into the public domain via computerization, arguing that this had greatly increased transparency in Andhra Pradesh. Accountability could also impact social evils like untouchability, which the audit team found was widely prevalent in NREGA sites. In many panchayats, scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe NREGA beneficiaries were given separate utensils and prevented from accessing common resources. Yet the Bhilwara social audit also revealed that funds can easily get into the wrong hands. Indeed even as the MKSS team deservedly takes credit for the massive Bhilwara social audit, it must know that it can hardly rest on its laurels. The Bhilwara exercise is worth emulating by other states.

Institute of Applied Manpower Research (2009), 41 revealed through the study based on evaluation of the NREGS which assess its impact by taking 20 districts from Northern, Western, Southern and North-East region of India and 300 beneficiaries from each districts. This study reveals that in many districts, affixing of photograph on job cards is not fallowed and in some places the beneficiary paid money for getting it. Job card was not designed to have sufficient space for all the entries in detail. Many households did not get the work within the stipulated 15 days time of demand for work, neither were they paid any unemployment allowance. On the utility of maximum number of days of works, only small fractions of households could utilize more than 35 days of work, remaining still lagging behind. The reason for non-utilization of maximum permissible 100 days of work is late starting of the scheme. In most of the worksites, excepting crèche, other facilities like shed, drinking water were provided. Due to the income generation through this scheme, the numbers of beneficiaries at the low earning level are reduced to nearly half in size. There is a rise of families who are spending more on food and non-food items.

Abusaleh Shariff, (2009) 42 opined that NREGA, an ambitious mass employment guarantee scheme implemented since the last four years, intends to sustain income and consumption in Indian rural outback. A large programme, backed by budgetary allocation promises 100 days of manual work to households who register and apply. Failure to provide employment through the gram sabhas creates cash entitlements as a matter of law. This paper analyses official statistics and survey
data from seven northern states. The future of NREGA is strongly linked to the cherished national goal to strengthen and broaden base decentralisation of local governance. But there are wide variations amongst the states not only in the level of decentralisation but also in the capacity to implement such a large scheme and lack of convergence amongst relevant government departments and functionaries. NREGA has the potential to address both sustenance of income and enhance the social welfare of households in rural areas.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) (2009) examined that National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is primarily a programme aimed at creating public assets that would be useful for the society at large. When NREGA was created, it relaxed this principle by allowing projects in private lands of selected marginalised communities including SCs and STs. The Minister for Rural Development is now trying to extend this by permitting works in private lands owned by small and marginal farmers who are not SCs and STs. This proposal has been welcomed by some like Mihir Shah and has been sharply criticised by Aruna Roy and Jean Drèze among others. I believe that the proposal has merits and problems, and can be taken up cautiously with some institutional safe guards. NREGA can used to create assets like small ponds or wells in private lands and this can assist in improving the productivity of these lands. If these are created in lands of people who need these facilities but cannot afford it, NREGA can serve an important social purpose. In fact, I would go further and say that NREGA will serve a useful purpose even if it is used in private lands of relatively well-to-do farmers. If this is done, it is implicitly like giving a subsidy for creating useful assets and this may not be a bad thing especially at a time when farming is not considered a lucrative option. This may also help in winning the support of farmers who are now upset with NREGA since it puts pressure on them to increase wages of labourers. A few that I met mentioned that they were given a lump sum for the project and they paid labourers according to market wages that was lower than the NREGA wage. This goes against the very spirit of NREGA and extends the exploitation of labourers by paying the less than minimum wages.

Vidya Subrahmaniam (2009) has said that the Bhilwara Social audit team repeatedly came up against resistance. Yet the coming together of civil society and government in Rajasthan augurs well for the future of NREGS. IN Bhilwara finding
is that in Barana village of Rajasthan, a young women auditor who reported irregularities in NREGA work was heckled by sarpanches who told her plainly that she was a busybody. In Taswaria, the village heads insisted on being spared punishment for wrongdoings, unmindful of the presence of Minister Bharat Singh. The social auditors confronted irregularities almost everywhere, and these went well beyond the expected complaints around delayed and stalled payment of wages. Job cards, required by law to be in the beneficiaries possession, were routinely witheld by the panchayat staff, resulting in NREGS workers not being able to claim what they earned. NREGA is premised on simple transparency, an example being the use of village walls to display work and payment details so that these become public knowledge. Yet the auditors repeatedly found fake muster rolls, bare walls and misplaced job cards. The material used in construction work was substandard and record books showed inflated figures against usage. In the villages in Panchayt Samiti of Hurda, the auditors were stonewalled by a vexing collusion between the panchayati staff and powerful sector of villager’s for the use of earthmovers for digging trenches. NREGA’s cost components are just two, labour and material with asset creation being the end product. Yet because the programmes primary objective is labour employment machines which would speed up asset creation are excluded from it unless justified by impossible difficult terrain. Even in such a situation, machines must be separately accounted for and not adjusted against material costs As Mr. Singh explained to the Hindu an estimated Rs. 9,500 crores will be spent on NREGA in 2009, making the programme lucrative for big corporate.

Ragbendra Jha, Raghav Gaiha, Shylashri Shankar (2008)\(^{45}\) in their article presents the results of the participation of rural workers in the National Rural Employment Guarantee programme based on a pilot survey of three villages in Udaipur district in Rajasthan. Its focus is on participation in the Nregs programme of different socio-economic groups and the determinants of the participation of these groups. It is found that the mean participation was 59 days and that targeting was satisfactory. The performance of the programme has been far from dismal.

Siddhartha, Anish Vanaik (2008)\(^{46}\) evaluated the draft report of the Comptroller and Auditor General on the working of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. They discussed the questions which appear by studying the CAG
report like What did the CAG actually say? Where did the CAG fall short in its investigations? And what can we learn from the CAG to improve the functioning of the NREGA? They try, in this article, to understand what the CAG report can (and cannot) be interpreted to say? Such an exercise is necessary, they argue in the first section, because of the way in which the media coverage has unfolded. Much of the coverage was sensationalist and many of the opinions expressed would not be borne out by a plain reading of the report. For instance, the reportage and initial controversy centred on three aspects – the national average estimates (including the figure of 3.2 percent of the beneficiaries availing 100 days of employment), the alleged violations of operational guidelines and claims about corruption.

Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), (2008), examined that MNREGS has huge potential for regenerating the village economy in India, but only if its focus remains on the creation of productive assets. The report gives the example of Hiware Bazar village in Maharashtra which has used the state's Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS), predecessor to the NREGA, over the past 14 years to increase per capita income by 16 times. It gave top priority to water conservation structures and reforestation and the village has since become a water-surplus one from a water-scarce one. It now witnesses reverse migration from urban areas for better economic opportunities. The study found that bad planning in the case of water conservation structures puts a large number of created assets into disuse. For instance, water harvesting structures are built without any provision for catchment protection. In Kanchanpur village in Sidhi district, three huge tanks were built under the NREGS but their catchments are in forest areas. Most catchments are degraded and the forest department doesn't allow anyone to treat them, a social worker told the CSE team. So, in two years, the tanks silt up.

Anish Vanaik (2008) revealed that Tapas Soren, a tribal of Birakhap in Jharkhand, committed self-immolation, impoverished by the constant demand for bribes by local officials for work done under the National Rural Employment guarantee Act. His death soon after the murder of Lalit Mehta who had exposed corruption in NREGA Scheme in Palamu is a damning comment on how the scheme is being implemented in Jharkhand. Tapas was caught between three forces. On the one hand were the labourers- his neighbours and relatives- who had not been paid and were unable to break through the rocky earth. On the other stood the BDO and
authorities who held Tapas responsible for not being able to complete the project. The triangle of pressures was completed by their demand for a steady stream of kickbacks.

**Sudha Narayanan (2008)** explained that a Social audit in Tamil Nadu finds the NREGA 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. NREGA clearly states that in the event where there are at least five children under the age of six years at the worksite, one of the female workers should be deputed to look after them and she should be paid the same wage as other workers. The provision of effective child care facilities at worksite is an important issue that calls for creative thinking and action.

**M.L. Dhar (2008)** expressed that India’s labour force is growing at a rate of 2.5 per cent annually, but employment is growing at only 2.3 per cent. Thus the country is faced with challenge of not only absorbing new entrants to the job market (estimated at seven million people every year), but also clearing the backlog. Seasons of severe drought and failure of monsoons exposed large sections of population to extensive deprivations and compounded the situation. Successive plan strategies, policies and programmes were therefore, redesigned to bring about, a special focus on employment generation as a specific objective. One of the most significant interventions by the government to generate employment has been the launch of NREGA in 2006. In his opinion it may not be difficult to meet the formidable challenge of providing job opportunities to 8 million people every year. For this the growth rate of economy has to be accelerated, special emphasis to be given to labour intensive sectors, improving labour skills and function of the labour market.

**Dhruva Kumar Singh and Ekta Choudhary (2008)** explains that the NREGA, in principle, provides legal guarantee of work and hence it is a milestone in the way of Right to work. But in practice, it is a manifestation of the Right to life (a fundamental right enshrined in the part III of constitution of India). NREGS work sites in almost each village is a testimony of the fact that the NREGS Scheme has reached to the remotest part of the country. In the states like Madya Pradesh and Rajasthan where panchayat raj institutions are strong, the NREGS has got the shape of a movement. This study finally concluded that NREGS is also protecting and upholding the Right to lives of crores of Indians standing on the social margins.
Lalit Mathur (2008) explained that MGNREGA should instead, be treated as a National Program of the Government of India and receive the same commitment as the Green revolution did. It is indeed the first tangible commitment to the poor that they expect to earn a living wage, without loss of dignity and demand this as a right. The unique character of the MGNREGA lies in the remarkable opportunities it opens up to transform the development scenario in India. Perhaps for the first time in a government program, transparency and accountability has been seen to be possible as a participatory process. This is the direct outcome of social audits, the conduct of which has been mandated not only in the Right to Information Act but also in the NREGA itself. An important aspect is the undeniable construction of the program to capital formation in agriculture. The experience from the field in the first year shows that 75 per cent of the 8.3 lakh works with an expenditure of Rs.9000 crores, have been water harvesting structures, minor irrigation tanks, community wells, land development, flood control, plantation and so on. Benefits included the creation of over 12 crore cubic metres of water storage capacity, 3 lakh hectares each of plantations and land development. The awareness of the guarantee of employment, the direct impact of employment, wages on the household – which enabled children to go to school, improved nutrition within the family, brought down the dependence on money – lenders, reduced the abject poverty and migration – these bring a more enduring confidence amongst the poor.

Anupama Goswami (2008) discussed the key findings of CAG report on the delivery of the NREGP. It pointed out an abysmally small portion of the poor people sought employment under NREGP. In the period of April 2006 to March 2007, 10 per cent of all such applications received minimum wage jobs. Between April 2007 to December 2007, the number of actual beneficiaries has dropped to just 3.3 per cent of total job seekers registered under the scheme. Even within the beneficiaries, the average employment per person under the scheme was 45 days in April 2006-March 2007, whereas it has dropped to just 38 days during April-December 2007. She also felt the worst performance in this regard has come from the poorest states of Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh, though these are the very states that have the greatest need for a comprehensive rural employment scheme.

K.Hanumantha Rao and P.DurgaPrasad (2008) opined that the agriculture growth in many states is low and stagnant and well below the targeted four
per cent to enhance livelihood security of the agriculture dependent population. In the transition to modernized and highly productive agriculture, the small farmers and workers community need to be provided with livelihood support in terms of supplementary (wage) income. The Ministry of Rural Development’s flagship programmes and in particular the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) is an opportunity to address the issues of rural unemployment and poverty besides revitalizing agriculture. The Guaranteed employment of 100 days for rural households at statutory minimum wages of unskilled agriculture workers itself would contribute to more than one fourth to one third of income required for meeting basic needs (Poverty line).

Raghuvansh Prasad Singh (2008)Former Union Minister of Rural Development, stated that the significance of MGNREGA lies in the fact that it operates at many levels. It creates a social safety net for the vulnerable by providing a fall back employment source, when other employment alternatives are scarce or inadequate. By prioritizing natural resource management and emphasizing the creation of durable assets it holds the potential of becoming a growth engine for sustainable development of agriculture based economy. Two years of implementation of NREGA indicates the self targeting, demand based nature of the programme. It is also evident that the nature of employment is seasonal and that the duration of employment sought varies according to the prevailing opportunities of employment offered under local agriculture practices and other alternative forms of employment. NREGA addresses the geography of poverty as it generates higher employment in the most deprived areas. An innovation feature of this act is that it gives a central role to social audits as a means of rigorous public vigilance. And it also places a strong emphasis on transparency and on voluntary public discloser.

Pradeep Baisakh (2008) expressed that despite many odds NREGA remains the ray of hope of the poor people in rural Orissa. Social audit of government works is a unique tool of establishing government’s direct accountability to the people. In Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act itself has been made an integral and important part with the purpose to enforce the constitutional and democratic right of the citizens to take the “hisaab” of the public money. Social audit is probably the best form of generation of awareness and mobilization of people. The impact of social audit process has been both immediate
and long term. During the recent Social audit in Pandasguda GP of Borigumma block of Koraput district, the authorities distributed about 300 job cards within seven days to the villagers which were not given for last two years. The process of social audit has also proved to be an effective tool in the hands of common people to ensure transparency and demand entitlements.

Uma Chaturvedi (2008) explained that the state government should make an all out effort to focus on the reforms needed to implement the programme in the true spirit of the Act. There appear to be several aspects of the NREGA on the basis of which this act can be ungrudgingly be termed as “Law of Rights”. On the recommendations of the NGO’s social audit was accepted as a prominent procedure to maintain transparency and coordination between administration and community. It was intended that this will close the ideological differences between the administration and community. As regards to its implementation in Madhya Pradesh, the state has launched this programme in right earnest and with commitment. The minimum wages no-where in Madhya Pradesh is more than Rs. 79. So, even if jobs for 100 days are provided the minimum wage of a family of four, will be only Rs.7900 for the entire year, which amounts to only Rs5/25 for each member of the family. He questioned that How can they ensure the food security of a person with this much of an amount.

Abhay Singh (2008) advocated that the rise of our Nation we will have to tell everybody that, “Read All, Move All”, “Be educated and move ahead”. In the district of Sonbhandra(UP), the main problem in the development of the tribals is lack of education. Due to this very reason a great part of the district is lagging behind in development works and is considered as a backward district just because of lack of education, this part of the state is regarded as a den of ignorance, conservation and superstition. To upgrade the level of education government needs to build libraries for rural development at various selected places, so that people may educate themselves and raise the standard of education. Most of the labourers in the district of Sonbhadra are illiterate and uneducated. They are unable to apply for jobs. So the head and secretary of the local village panchayat misuse the rules and exploit them by arbitrarily deciding their wages and work. They maintain the muster roll themselves. Many works are being completed through machines and those works are shown wrongly on the job cards of the workers as done by them.
Gopinath Gosh (2008) explained that Social audit is an effective tool, which returns to the poor and deprived people its right of ownership along with democratic awareness. According to the rules, the authority of social has been entrusted to the grama sabha, but in Jharkhand nobody had any knowledge about social audit with the efforts of some progressive people came to know about the procedure of social audit. For creating awareness about social audit, organizations like Majdoor Kisan Sakthi Sangathan and Parivarthan played significant role. After conducting social audit at national level in Dungarpur of Rajasthan and Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh, the same was introduced in Ranchi district of Jharkhand along with community hearing. Various people’s organizations and non-governmental organizations engaged in Jharkhand formed together a common platform-“Jharkhand NREGA Watch” and through this platform social audit and mass hearing were organized for Social audit is such a process which promotes mass awareness and also ensures people’s participation. For ensuring transparency and accountability, people’s involvement is a must and it will trickle down to the lower levels only when the process of social audit is adopted and done through citizens groups and gram sabhas.

Dreze (2007) looks at the corruption in rural employment programs in Orissa and how this has continued in a NREGS as well. However, he believes that there is tremendous potential of NREGA in the survey areas. Where work was available, it was generally found that workers earned close to (and sometimes more than) the statutory minimum wage of Rs 70 per day, and that wages were paid within 15 days or so. This is an unprecedented opportunity for the rural poor, and there was evident appreciation of it among casual labourers and other disadvantaged sections of the population. There is the hope among workers that NREGA would enable them to avoid long-distance seasonal migration. Further, there is plenty of scope for productive NREGA works in this area, whether it is in the field of water conservation, rural connectivity, regeneration of forest land, or improvement of private agricultural land.

Mathur (2007) states that in social audit undertaken in Andhra Pradesh, it was found that in certain villages, some people stated that they had not been paid for the work done. When comparisons were made of the payments as per the pass-book with the payment as per the job card, it was discovered that the job card did not contain the inner pages that record the work done by each person; the job card itself
was incomplete. Earlier, several officials, Field and Technical Assistants and Mates admitted to irregularities and about Rs. 50,000 were returned.

N.C. Saxena (2007) in his paper ‘Rural poverty reduction through centrally sponsored schemes’ discusses about the evolving profile of poverty in India and reviews the national performance of selected anti-poverty programmes between 1997-1998 and 2005. For each programme, it outlines the budgetary allocation principle used for the States and districts and analyzes budgetary performance over the period. The main objective is to explore the extent to which the anti-poverty programmes are reaching their target groups effectively. Finally, it identifies the specific factors responsible for under-performance and provides a set of recommendations for policy makers and programme implementers which could help improve the outcomes of the schemes.

Shaji Joseph (2006) expressed that various non political outfits were involved in the introduction of Maharashtra’s Employment Guarantee Scheme. Once introduced, these organizations understood the potentialities of EGS as a means to address various issues relating to the marginalized sections including dalits, women, tribal’s and the landless among others. This paper analyses how these groups engaged with the state in defining the scope and reach of EGS and how overtime this definition of EGS was enlarged by these same groups to ensure the empowerment of the poor.

A.Vaidyanathan (2005) states that the standing committee’s recommendations on the MGNREGS call for basic changes in the concept and design envisaged in the draft bill. They are essential, indeed imperative, if the programme is to be effective and thus deserve strong support. It should be obvious however that concurrence of the state governments and their willingness to abide by the operational implications of the legislation are essential. The most serious lacuna in the report is that it side steps the problems involved in ensuring that this precondition is met.

K.S.Gopal (2005) explained that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA has been described as land mark legislation by the Newspapers, Political parties and commentators. However, scepticism about the promised benefits persists unless we learn from past experience of implementation of government programmes and devise corrective measures, there will be few gains for the rural poor. The MGNREGA must create confidence among the poor and this can be done
by developing user friendly guidelines. Towards this end, a massive publicity campaign explaining these scheme and operational details and responsibilities. He suggested that the Rulers must pay attention to the implementation frame work and monitoring without leaving these jobs to bureaucrats. He expressed that the task is to address the twin objectives of food security and asset creation by center staging the voice of the poor.

Amitabh Kundu and Niranjan Sarangi (2005) examined the rationale for excluding urban areas from the scope of guaranteed employment given socio economic deprivation and vulnerability in small and medium towns. The study found that lack of employment has affected their demographic growth, leading to distortions in the urban hierarchy. The possibility of utilizing the educated unemployed in non manual work is explored. The rural poverty has been higher than urban poverty over the past 30 years and this continues to be so even today. A higher level of relative deprivation for the rural population can be established in the context of calorie intake as well. It would be extremely difficult to bring the educated unemployed under NREGS, in the activities are restricted to earth work and land development.

Mihir Shah (2004) felt that the proposed employment guarantee programme will generate work for the poorest; it is also an opportunity to revive public Investment in agriculture, tackle the prevailing environmental crisis that is gripping rural India and galvanize the panchayat raj institutions. The proposed legislation should not put in place a weak and diluted jobs programme. The NREGA that aims to cover all of rural India within five years is an attempt in this direction. It is an act with a potential socio-political significance for the rural poor that is matched only the 73rd Amendment. One version of the proposed NREGA bill seeks to provide “at least one hundred days of guaranteed employment at the statutory minimum wage”. For this a dedicated National Employment Guarantee Fund is to be set up that will be expanded exclusively for implementation of the act.

Minh Quang Dao (2004) analyzed the determinants of rural poverty in developing countries. Using data from a sample of 32 developing countries we are able to show that income redistribution in favor of the poorest 10 percent of the population, improving the productivity of agricultural workers, raising the economic and social status of women, especially of rural women, government policies aimed at
reducing systemic discrimination against ethnic minorities, encouraging tourism where possible, and programs designed to assist the irrigation of croplands are called for in the quest for alleviating poverty in rural areas. As the extent of rural poverty is reduced, an added benefit is the deceleration of the rural-urban migration process, which results in less pressure on government to provide additional spending on services such as sanitation, health, and education in urban areas as well as having to deal with a host of problems associated with overgrown cities such as a higher incidence of crime and of shanty towns on the outskirts of these cities.

G.S. Bhalla, Peter Hazell (2003) discussed the likely scenarios regarding employment and income growth in agriculture and non-agriculture in rural and urban areas under various assumptions about sectoral growth rates and employment elasticities. It is evident that India faces a problem in generating enough employment in the years ahead to keep pace with the growth in the labour force as also in raising wages and productivity of workers. Against this backdrop the authors consider possible strategies for increasing employment significantly reducing rural and urban poverty by 2020.

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen (1997) argue that poverty alone is not an adequate explanation for low achievements in health and education in UP. The scope and quality of public services in UP has more to do with defective and inequitable functioning of these services, the shortcomings are rooted in deeper failures to achieve basic social change. Factionalism rather than ideology is the main basis of Political mobilization in these societies. Patronage plays a dominant part in the use of Public resources Development programs are treated by factional leaders as useful channels for the recruitment and reward of supporters. Rewards for political support are distributed in the form of government employment, subsidies and contracts.

2.2 Conclusion:

The views of different economists and scholars reveal the advantages of MGNREG Scheme and the demerits in implementation. Different authors explain the Scheme by observing the implementation of the scheme in different study areas. They also gives the reasons for the success in some areas and failures in some other areas.
They also gave the suggestion for the better implementation of the Scheme. They also considered the environmental concepts like sustainability and biodiversity. They critically studied about the scheme and its impact on poverty, employment, and agriculture and asset creation. In Andhra Pradesh they focused on the Social audit which is successfully implementing when compared to other states. There is no uniform opinion among the scholars and authors on MGNREGA. Some are positive and some are negative. Many scholars mention different works taken up by the Scheme but they did not explain the sustainability of those works. Therefore it is relevant to study the impact of MGNREGS on the poverty, agriculture and asset creation.

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