CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Knowledge is fastly growing in the modern days. In any field, so many studies have been conducted by the Universities, Government and Private Institutions. A review of related studies enables the scholar to get an idea of his area of research. Further, it helps him to identify the untouched aspects of the area under study. By going through the related studies, it is possible to identify the areas which require more attention. The scholar can carry on his/her study in a different manner from the already existing studies.

To develop clarity and comprehension in any study, it is necessary, first, to review the various concepts, research methodologies and analytical tools used by researchers to have a better and precise understanding of the perspectives of the research problem. This would facilitate the researchers to modify and improve the present study. The findings of earlier studies would guide the researcher in setting the hypotheses and objectives and enable him to compare his own findings. In this chapter, finding of past studies relevant to this study are reviewed.

It is absolutely essential that not only the likely beneficiaries under the NREGS but also the rural households of the village must participate to secure all the details of the scheme, its short and long term advantages and disadvantages as also the precise role and responsibility if all the concerned individuals, Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat, beneficiary households and government officials in planning and implementing and monitoring its progress as well as evaluating the impact of the scheme on the beneficiaries. Dr. Amrit Patel(2010)\(^1\) tries to bring out the role of PRIs in implementing rural employment guarantee scheme.
Government’s keenness to involve Panchayati Raj institutions directly in this scheme is laudable. Gram panchayats and Gram Sabhas would decide types of work to be undertaken in the villages and use of funds earmarked under the scheme. Since the scheme calls for significant involvement of local people and PRIs it is absolutely essential to impart comprehensive training for transferring various skills. It is also essential that the implementation process needs to be reviewed regularly at the PRI level thus implementing the scheme as an integral part of rural development plan.

Out of 260 million poor people in the country, about 200 million poor people are in rural areas. Around 100 districts are under the constant threat of drought and semi famine like situation every year. Other 90 districts are facing every year floods and torrential rains.

This scheme is unique in its concept and implementation and therefore, role of PRIs, state and union government needs to be well defined to avoid ambiguity and make each institution accountable in respect of achieving the objectives of the scheme.

Jogender Sharma (2009)² tires to enlist the potentials and challenges of NREGA. The NREGA has now been in operation for over three years, and is extended to all the rural areas of the country. In a relatively short span of time, it has become one of the most avidly studied programmes of the Central Government.

The huge potential of the NREGS has been evident particularly in the enthusiastic response of the local people, landless, the marginal farmers and workers in particular, where information about the programme has been properly disseminated. The programme reverses the way the Indian state has dealt with issues and envisages a complete change in the manner of interaction of the state, the local power elites and the local working classes in rural India. It is only to be expected that there will be
uneven record of implementation as well as the presence of a large number of problems that require correction.

According to the author NREGA suffers from a couple of major drawbacks. First, there is no focus on guaranteeing a minimum quality of assets that are sought to be created through the programme. Second, the emphasis seems to be on providing work opportunities to unskilled labour and no attempt is being made to upgrade the skills of rural youth and enable them to earn more. In its present format, NREGA could become yet another subsidy programme that runs the risk of becoming a burden on the national exchequer.

In 2008-09, the average duration of employment per household under NREGS was mere 47 days. While workers in Rajasthan were employed for the longest duration of 76 days, those in Kerala sought employment for an average of only 22 days.

Wages in dry land agriculture today are far below the NREGA level and no employer would or should be willing to match this. This means that the government has created an “above market” and “above productivity” wage rate that could distort labour markets by creating incentives to move away from non NREGS work in rural areas to NREGS work. This could not only retard non-farm job creation but sabotage incentives to upgrade skills and hard work. The safety net could become a hammock.

Anupam Hazra (2009)\(^3\) conducted a study on the potentials and possibilities and emerging issues and debates on NREGA. The potential of NREGA spans a range of possibilities. The primary objective of the Act is augmenting wage employment. The choice of works suggested in the Act addresses causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion, so that the process of employment generation is maintained on a sustainable basis. The uniqueness of this Act is in the fact that it
carries emphasis on issues like equality of wages for men and women, elimination of work contracting, payment of wages only through bank and post office accounts, creating transparency in workers muster rolls etc. The Act guarantees that if work is not provided within a 15 day time frame then the applicant is eligible for unemployment allowance.

In Rajasthan, where public awareness of the programme is high, 77 days of employment per rural household were provided in 2006-07. In Tamil Nadu, the participation of women was as high as 81 percent. In Uttar Pradesh and Jharkand, the NREGA has created positive changes in the implementation of public works programmes.

The potentials and possibilities identified by the scholar are strengthening democracy, encouraging natural resource management, preventing migration, controlling spread of AIDS, transforming rural economic and social relations, potential to improve health status and improvement of rural education status. The greater participation of women in the NREGA, particularly in some states, is clearly a positive indicator that shows the inclusive potential of the program in unanticipated ways.

When the Act was passed, there was a fairly strong consensus that this was an initiative that would have the potential to transform the rural India. NREGA was internationally recognised as an outstanding initiative seeking to safeguard the rights to work, which forms a part of the Indian constitution. However, as the programme has unfolded, certain questions are being raised. Many, including some of those involved in drafting the bill, now recognise that much still needs to be done to support the rights of the poor, and to defend them against corruption. The financing of the scheme continues to be an issue of debate. Criticism is also from civil society: many
argue that the poor implementation of NREGA makes beneficiaries believe that it is no better than other government schemes that have had little impact on poverty. From a poverty reduction point of view, one of the most fundamental criticisms of NREGA is that the types of activities for which work can be funded are prone to being taken over by wealthier sections of society. There are also programmatic concerns such as the absence of worksite facilities for women with children and the need for a fair revision of the schedule of rates.

A study on the need to sharpen NREGA was conducted by Dr.M.S.Tomar and Dr.B.S.Yadav(2009). Wage employment programmes have been important elements of public policy in India to provide unskilled workers with short-term employment on public works. They provide income transfers to poor households during periods when they suffer on account of absence of opportunities of employment. Beginning with Community Development Programme in 1952, the outreach of these programmes increased significantly, culminating in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme which was implemented by the enactment of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005.

Various reports and surveys conducted by different organizations, researchers and institutions have pointed out various flaws in the working of NREGA. The CAG report, 2007 underlined the fact that the guidelines indicated in the NREGA have not been followed effectively. A study carried out by the Centre for Environment and Food Security in Orissa revealed that out of Rs.733 crores spent under NREGA, more than Rs.500 crores was unaccounted for, probably siphoned off and misappropriated by government officials. These reports indicate absolute non-seriousness and indifferent attitude of implementing agencies towards NREGA. Under the stipulation of the Act, the state government will be responsible for the payment of the
unemployment allowance. A number of states have not taken any interest in the disbursement of unemployment allowance or have tried to effectively scuttle it.

Some of the measures suggested by Dr. M. S. Tomar and Dr. B. S. Yadav in order to improve NREGA are: Concentrated efforts should be made to reduce the time gap between work done and payment received by workers. Full time trained employment guarantee assistants should be appointed at the panchayat level. Proper maintenance of job cards, muster rolls and other records relating to the scheme at the block and panchayat level should be ensured.

“Driver of rural economy” is a study by D. Muthamizh Vendan Murugavel (2009)\(^5\) on the performance of NREGS in India. The primary objective of NREGA, which has been under implementation since August 25, 2005, is to augment wage employment besides strengthening the natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty including drought, deforestation and soil erosion and to encourage sustainable development. During the first year of implementation (FY 2006-07) in 200 districts, more than 2.10 crore households were employed and 90.5 crore person days were employed. In 2007-08, 3.39 crore households were provided employment and 143.59 crore person days were generated in 330 districts. In 2008-09, 4.5 crore households have been provided employment and 215.63 crore person days have been generated across the country.

NREGS has been the most successful in Rajasthan. In Rajasthan 64% of the works done were water related, created 77 person days of work per household and had a women participation of 68%. In a state like Rajasthan, where women are still not empowered, the scheme seems to have provided a stage for women to come forward and assert themselves. Unfortunately, by failing to realise the potentials of the
NREGS, advanced states like Gujarat, Punjab and Maharashtra are missing out on substantial social gains.

Social Audit allows people to enforce accountability and transparency, providing the ultimate users an opportunity to scrutinize development initiatives. Social Audit is equally necessary for the effective implementation of NREGS. Social auditing involves consolidating the muster rolls and feeding it into software that verifies it with the pay order to detect discrepancies. The social auditing process has brought down fraud at the muster roll level and ensured that the rural poor receive money for work done.

Centre for Science and Environment has made some recommendations for the effective implementation of NREGS. Some of the recommendations are, focus should not be just on the wages provided but also the asset created and its effectiveness, continue emphasising water conservation works under the NREGS by providing additional incentives, equip Panchayats with the necessary personnel and funds for effective implementation of the scheme, etc.

Hema Bannerjee(2009)\(^6\) has conducted a field study on NREGA in Andaman and Nicobar islands. The government had launched different types of schemes under different headings and purposes to give employment to the rural poor to support their family economy. These programmes could have provided some relief to the rural poor through short duration casual wage employment and food security, but these could not provide and guarantee of regular employment or durable public assets towards sustainable development. NREGS has been launched to supplement the errors and gaps of all previous schemes with the involvement of Panchayats, civil society and local administration.
The Andaman and Nicobar islands launched the scheme on 1\textsuperscript{st} April 2008. For accelerating the scheme, a set of officials under the district administration have been deputed headed by Deputy Commissioner of the three districts of Andaman and Nicobar islands along with the Gram Panchayat headed by Gram Pradhan and other staff. All 67 Gram Panchayats in two districts of Andaman and 10 tribal councils in Nicobar district have started the scheme.

For Andaman group of islands, Rs.156 per day wage was fixed and for Nicobar Islands the wage was fixed at Rs.167 per day. On an average 40% jobs have been given to women workers.

Some of the observations of the study conducted by Hema Bannerjee are, response of the people to register their name is very enthusiastic, on an average only 20% registered households have engaged in the scheme, Social Audit system is ineffective/absent, more funds are expending for administrative maintenance than actual scheme benefits, etc.

Dr. Sanjoy Roy(2009)\textsuperscript{7} conducted a study about the impact of NREGA on the villagers in Tripura. In Tripura, the NREGA was introduced in Dhalai district along with 200 most backward districts of the country and gradually by 2008, the remaining three districts had been brought under this scheme. The introduction of the NREGA in Tripura is worth mentioning. In Tripura about 83% of the total population live in rural areas and 55% of the total population is below poverty line. The economy of the state is agrarian with a low land holding of 0.97 hectare.

Available information shows that the poor are happy to work in the NREGS and they are getting employment in various projects. Due to NREGS, the agony of income uncertainty of the tribal people has withered and both tribal and non tribal rural poor get regular and assured flow of income commensurate with the labour and
time involved. NREGS has lessened the incidence of poverty among the villagers on one hand and on the other hand it has emboldened the confidence of rural unskilled labours and women and most particularly the aged women and widows who could hardly go out of villages for searching a work. The NREGS has regenerated self belief amongst the poor that they can earn money for their family. Field study shows that 10% of women participating in NREGS have been subscribing to LIC policies or recurring deposits. Majority of women have reported that NREGS has enabled them to be health cautious.

“Facet of rural women empowerment” is a study in Karimnagar district in Andhra Pradesh by Gundeti Ramesh and Dr. T.Krishna Kumar(2009), conducted in the year 2009-10, selecting 500 women beneficiaries of the programme. The study finds that NREGP has become a beacon of light in the empowerment of rural women, and contributed substantially for the increased living and economic conditions by creating equal wages to male and female workers and increasing the minimum wages.

Under NREGS, in Karimnagar district 2 lakh 63 thousand households are covered which has created 104500 works by sending 1234 crores. The study reveals that 51.6% of the workers are from backward class communities, and 46.6% of workers are from S.C category and the rest are from S.T and O.C communities. Out of the 670 NREGP workers, 74.62% are women.

The study also reveals that the expenditure levels before implementation of this programme was met by workers through debt to meet their minimum needs expenditure. Further they expressed that this programme helped in easing out the debt burden to some extent after the implementation of the NREGP.
The study reveals some of the suggestions expressed by the beneficiaries. Wages should be paid to workers on time, the nature of work should be amicable to all the workers and beneficial to the community, etc. are some of the suggestions.

“NREGA in West Bengal: Success and challenges” by Dr. Subhabrata Dutta (2009) discusses some of the important challenges that plague the NREGS. NREGS has been a subject of controversy since its inception.

The study revealed that pamphlets were distributed and road dramas were organised apart from announcements at the village markets so that the message of the NREGA reached everywhere. The NREGA scheme has increased man-days, employment, created durable assets and strengthened infrastructure. Distress migration has reduced. Many innovative projects, afforestation, road construction, digging of ponds, renovation of water tanks and many other labour oriented schemes have been undertaken.

The programme has generated a great hope among the rural population but it has its own problems. One of the major problems is related to corruption and leakages, second problem relates to variation of wages. The list of works that could be undertaken under NREGS has to be expanded. Social audit of NREGA should be made mandatory. It enhances the quality of performance, minimizes corruption, nepotism and eliminates contractors and middlemen.

Barna Maulick (2009) has conducted a study on implications of NREGA in the district of Barabanki, in Uttar Pradesh. The NREGS is possibly the most ambitious income security programme for India’s rural poor in post independence era. The rural poor principally comprise of landless laborers, who are not even assured of finding work on a daily basis. It is in this context that the NREGS assumes importance since it guarantees 100 days of work to anyone desirous of it at the
minimum wage. The NREGA works are intended to create permanent assets in the rural areas for future needs.

Some of the positive features of the NREGA are: (i) a high share of female employment (ii) the benefits are reflected in greater economic security, higher farm wages, lower migration and building of infrastructure. On the other hand, failures are recorded in the distribution of job cards and large numbers of needy households are in queue and the selection of design and execution of projects, results in leakages.

Barabanki has a SC population of 27% of the total population. Out of the total households, 47.21% households, having a population of 3.14 lakh are from BPL families. NREGS report of Barabanki dated 8-12-2006 shows that total fund available stands Rs.5175.36 lakhs i.e. 68.39% has been spent on implementation of the scheme. The contribution of SCs in the total man days generated has been 64.82% and 0.08% was the contribution of women. It is laudable that all the labourers demanding work got employment opportunities. 934 projects have been completed and 4374 projects started under NREGA in the district.

NREGP can have a positive impact on the social and economic well-being of rural labourers and their families. In particular, it holds the powerful prospect of bringing major changes in the lives of women. This is essentially true in a state like Tamil Nadu, where women constitute an overwhelming proportion of NREGP workers. V.Sankari and C.Siva Murugan (2009) conducted a study on the impact of NREGA in Udangudi Panchayat Union, Tamil Nadu. This study covered over 16 villages. The primary data were collected during the month of March 2009 and a total of 80 beneficiaries were interviewed by random sampling method to assess the impact of NREGP as a facet of inclusive growth.
The study was carried out with the following hypothesis. 1) there is a high degree of correlation between income and expenditure, 2) there is a low degree of correlation between income and savings.

The NREGP helped a lot in reducing the seasonal and disguised unemployment in the agriculture sector and also contributed to empower the women folk in the rural areas. After joining the NREGP, the family income of the workers had increased. The incremental income not only enhanced the expenditure of the family but also promoted the savings of the family after joining the NREGP.

Some of the findings of this study are, most of the beneficiaries belong to the age group ranging from 26 years to 35 years (40%), there is reduction of wage difference in various works by creating equal wages to male and female workers, there is increase in living and economic conditions, etc.

For the success of the scheme, it is imperative that a village level micro plan is prepared and the works taken up under the NREGP form part of the village area plan. PRIs should be made solely responsible for the implementation of the NREGP successfully.

Dr. Mamidipally Rajanna and Gundeti Ramesh (2009) conducted a field study on facet of inclusive growth of Karimanager district in Andhra Pradesh. The study has been made in the year 2008-09 in Karimanager district of Andhra Pradesh by selecting 500 beneficiaries of the programme randomly to assess the impact of the NREGP as a facet of inclusive growth.

The concept of inclusive growth is increasingly being embraced by most of the developing countries; it emphasizes ensuring that the economic opportunities created by growth are available to all, particularly the poor.
The present study also covers emphasizing the economic conditions like income and expenditure levels along with the deficit and saving pattern of the families, community, age wise particulars, occupational pattern and also evaluated the impact of the programme before and after it is launched.

The study reveals that 51.6% of the workers are from backward class communities, and 46.6% of workers are from S.C category and the rest are from ST and OC communities. As far as the age wise distribution of participant workers in the programme is concerned 39% of the workers are from the age group of 30-40 years, 35% are from 20-30 years of age, and rest of them is in the age group of 40-50 years. Out of the participant workers 66% of the workers are from the agricultural labourers and 11% are from small farmer category and 10% are from daily wage earners and rest of them belong to the artisans and beedi rollers. The study also reveals that the expenditure levels before implementation of this programme was met by the workers by indulging debts to meet their minimum needs expenditure. Further they expressed that this programme helped in easing out the debt burden to some extent after the implementation of the NREGP.

“Rural Employment Programmes fueling development of Indian economy” is a study of SGSY and NREGS by Dr Shankar Chatterjee (2009). Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) has, to bring rural BPL families above the poverty line by ensuring appreciable increase in income on a sustainable basis through creation of income generating assets, as the primary objective. SGSY is a credit linked programme where credit is the key component and subsidy is the enabling element. Banks play key roles in every stage of implementation of the scheme. SGSY also has the provisions of taking up special projects in the area where it is felt that BPL families are required to be brought above the poverty line in a time bound
manner. It is a centrally sponsored scheme financed on 75:25 cost sharing basis between the center and the states, except in the case of North Eastern states where it is 90:10. NIRD, Hyderabad conducted a study in 10 states of India in 2007-08. The study covered 1116SHGs and 1111members of SGHs in the 10 states. The study revealed, after getting assistance under SGSY income of Swarojgaris has substantially gone up in almost all cases. Moreover most of the Swarojgaris are involved in activities in primary and secondary sectors, thus this leads to grow our GDP also.

NREGS is the only wage employment programme presently in operation in rural India. The objective of the Act is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. NREGS have been generating employment vis-à-vis community assets. In many parts of the country like Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh etc., water table has gone up after constructing various projects of water conservation.

NREGS was implemented in Hoshiarpur in 2005-06. Later on in 2006-07, it was expanded to three more districts namely Amritsar, Jalandhar and Nawanshahr subsequently extended to all districts of Punjab. This study by Dr. B K Pattanaik (2009)\textsuperscript{14} is based on the findings from primary data collected from 95 job card holders in the 10 panchayats of the two blocks i.e. Mahilpur and Dasua of Hoshiarpur during the financial year 2007-08.

The NREGS is a holistic measure and aimed at fulfilling one of the most important Human Rights, i.e. Right to employment at least to one member of the family. The main objective of NREGS is the creation of durable assets and strengthening the livelihood resource base of the rural poor for fighting poverty. Ambasta and others (2008) pointed out some of the lacunas, which are: (i) lack of
professionals; (ii) under-staffing; (iii) administrative delays; (iv) lack of peoples planning; (v) poor quality of work undertaken; and (vi) poor social audit process. Despite all these demerits, the NREGS ranks among the most powerful initiatives ever undertaken for transformation of rural livelihood in India.

The study also reveals that only 5.56% of households have received full 100 days employment in the year 2006-07. Most of the panchayats opined that the release of money from block is not only slow but also in piece meals, which create confusion in the mind of the people, who subsequently suspect panchayats.

The data shows that more than 90% of the beneficiaries of the NREGS are Scheduled Castes. This means that the flow of funds and benefits of NREGS have largely gone to and availed by the disadvantaged sections of the society. The scheme is found to have promoted gender equity.

The workforce participation rate of women in NREGS is 37.78%, which clearly indicates that the work force participation of women in rural Punjab has enhanced astoundingly with the implementation of the NREGS. For unskilled impoverished women NREGS is one of the most suitable wage employment programme to enhance their household income. However, education has a neutral effect on the NREGS. Illiterate, literate and educated unemployed have equally benefited from NREGS.

Initial findings of this study shows that 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.
Dr. Raj Kumar Siwach and Sunil Kumar (2009) carried out a study to examine the status of Social Audit in the selected villages of Sirsa District of Haryana. Sirsa block consists of 54 villages and the investigators selected five villages including Sikanderpur, Rasulpur, Dardi, Bharokhan and Baruwali-1.

Before the NREGA came into operation, there was not any 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 NREGA. A noted social scientist, George Mathew defines social audit as, “an in depth scrutiny and analysis of working of any public utility vis-à-vis its social relevance”. Social audit is a systematic procedure involving participation of the members of any organization to identify needs and provides monitoring of progress and measuring social performance in a comprehensive way.

Some of the important findings of the study are stated below. Under the NREGA there is a provision of the special meeting of the Gram Sabha for social audit after six months, but on the basis of feedback given by the villagers and Gram Panchayats, no regular meeting of social audit took place in the selected villages. The PRIs, the officers of Panchayats and Rural Development Department and local community leaders are the pillars upon which social audit is hinged on but a great hiatus of understanding among these functionaries on local issues come to the fore in the meetings. During discussion with the officials, it was found that officials responsible for the implementation of social audit lack enthusiasm, commitment and motivation. Another important finding is that there is no congruity between official’s rules, dictates and prescriptions and social norms prevailing at the grass root level. There is inconsistency between spirit of social audit and cultural ethos at the local level in rural areas. In Sonepat district, the villagers publically declared that they do
not want to undertake any work under NREGA. This simmering anger against the development scheme is a matter of grave concern.

Raj Samand(2009)\textsuperscript{16} conducted a study on the India’s grand experiment with public expenditure, the NREGA. Some of his inferences from the study are explained in “Rural job guarantees, Faring well”.

One reason India weathered the financial crisis of the past year was the strength of rural demand, and one reason for that strength was the expansion of NREGA to every rural district in April 2008.

The idea has appeal even in rich countries. Paul Gregg of Bristol University and Richard Layard of the London School of Economics have called on the British Government to provide a “job guarantee” to anyone out of work for more than 18 months.

In India, wages under the NREGA often exceed the market rate. State governments are fee to raise the minimum wage, knowing that the central government will pick up most of the tab. Policy wonks argue that cash handouts to the poor would be easier to administer, and would leave the recipients free to work the fields or for private employers.

In rich countries, workfare is meant to stop people living off the state rather than finding gainful employment. In rural India, where you see brittle women breaking the earth with pickaxe, the poor do not have the option. Indolence and inertia is a problem only with the officials administering the payments, not the workers receiving them. In the country’s worst run districts, India’s villagers will only enjoy the right to work when India’s apathetic bureaucrats forfeit their right not to.
Ms. Yasmeen Akhtar (2009)\textsuperscript{17} conducted a study of Mr. Hemraj Dhave from the Betul district of Madhya Pradesh. The people of Betul district were facing many hardships in their daily life due to water scarcity.

Hemraj Dhave was an agricultural land owner, whose land was barren and served no purpose. Life was a desperate struggle for Hemraj. Hemraj regularly attended the Gram Sabha meetings and through such meetings he got to know about the NREGA. He applied for a job card and got himself and his wife enrolled in the scheme. In 3 months time a well was constructed on his land in which he along with his wife and 12 others worked. He took care of the plants whole heartedly and this can be seen in the growth of the plants. This increased the financial capacity of the family.

Hemraj is also happy about his bank account which he opened under NREGA. This has uplifted his social status and he has also started to save money.

The Union Budget 2008-09 has been announced with an objective to boost economic growth along with augmenting employment opportunities, alleviating poverty and ensuring regional equity and prosperity. “Budget 2008-09 and Rural Development: A Review” by K.K.Tripathy and Ishita G.Tripathy(2008)\textsuperscript{18} analyses the impact this Budget on some of the important social and physical infrastructure concerning the rural economy.

The recent prime challenges for the policy makers have been to sustain the growth momentum, to insulate the domestic economy from the adverse effects of the global uncertainties and recession like situation, to contain domestic inflationary price rise, to resolve domestic agri-crisis and to ensure livelihood support to all. Besides, the greatest challenge has been to ensure an all inclusive growth. The Union Budget entails the doubling of agricultural credit flow, providing employment to the needy, ensuring empowerment of the poor, bringing more children under the purview of
formal education, improving rural health care and engendering development initiatives. While the emphasis of the previous budget was more on growth, this budget has stressed on rural India, taking steps for consolidating efforts on rural development and social sectors. The budget has now proposed a positive move by committing to extend NREGA to the remaining 266 districts and central outlay for NREGA has been expanded by 33% to Rs.16,000 crore. As far as rural self-employment programme is concerned, Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana will have an outlay of Rs. 2,150 crores. The budget has proposed a central plan outlay of Rs.110 crore for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. An additional central assistance to State Plans under the Backward Regions Grants Fund has been kept at Rs.4,670 crore.

The budget has attempted to ensure an all inclusive growth. Its emphasis on the social sectors, in general, and rural and agriculture, in particular, indicating that the policy makers have earnestly attempted to make the growth process more inclusive.

“Employment and unemployment situation in India: 2005-06” is a study by Dr. Jitendra Ahirrao(2008)\textsuperscript{19}, based on the data of 62\textsuperscript{nd} round survey of National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). The field work of the survey was carried out during July 2005 to June 2006. This report provides some broad features of unemployment situation in India and some characteristics associated with them at the national and state levels. Information regarding participation in public works was collected for the first time in this round for persons of age 15 years and above in h rural areas. The survey was spread over 4,798 villages and 5,125 urban blocks covering 78,879 households and enumerating 3,77,377 persons.

Some of the important findings of the survey contained in this report are, about 74% of the households belonged to rural India and accounted to nearly 76% of
the total population. The proportion of female casual labourer was about 1% point higher than that of male casual labourer in both rural and urban areas. The average wage rate for regular wage/salaried employees in rural areas was Rs.138.74 for male and Rs.87.71 for female. The corresponding wage rates in the urban areas were Rs.205.81 for the male and Rs.158.23 for the female. The average number of days worked in public works, during the last 365 days, by male and female was almost the same- 17 for male and 18 for female. Average wages received per day, for work in public works was Rs.56 for male and Rs.54 for female. The rater of under-employment was found higher in rural than urban, and higher for female than for male as per the study.

Mr. Manohar Puri(2008)\textsuperscript{20} through his article “The NREGA: Rural People to Grow with the Nation” tries to identify the salient features of the NREGA. The NREGA is a revolutionary step for India’s poor. Between 1993-94 to 2004, unemployment rate for males increased from 5.6% to 9% in rural areas and from 6.7 to 8.1% in urban areas. Similarly, unemployment rate for females increased from 5.6% in 1993-94 to 9.3% in 2004 in rural areas and 10.5 to 11.7 in urban areas. The objective of the NREGA is to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by generating wage employment through works that develop the infrastructure base of the area.

The social security measure makes the right to work a fundamental legal right for the first time. The parliament passed the National Rural Employment Bill, 2005 which provides 100 days assured employment every year to each and every household in 200 districts to begin with. This will include 150 districts under the Food foe Work Programme. The government through this Act, aim at removing poverty in the rural areas and thus improve infrastructure. Keeping this in view, the works to be done
under this scheme are related to drought, deforestation and soil erosion. The objective behind this is to rejuvenate natural resources to stimulate the local economy and to stop local population from migration to the cities.

According to the analysis made by the government agencies, the key to this Act lies in the word “Guarantee”. How ambitious is this scheme can be judged from the fact that this project will cost about Rs.40,000 crore which comes to about 2% of the total GDP of the country. The main purpose of this scheme is to bring the landless families in the social safety net. One of the salient features of the scheme is that one-third of the proposed jobs would be reserved for women.

“The Road Ahead” is a study on NREGA by Pramathesh Ambasta, P S Vijay Shankar and Mihir Shah (2008)\(^{21}\). NREGA is the largest ever public employment programme visualized in human history. NREGA came into force in 200 of India’s most backward districts in 2006. in 2007 it was extended to cover another 130 districts and with effect from April 1, 2008, the Act is to cover al of rural India. The most important change NREGA represents is that it gives rise to programmes that spring not from its willful benevolence, but as a legally binding response by the state to a right to work that is, after NREGA, enshrined in law. Perhaps the most novel and remarkable feature of NREGA through which it makes a decisive break with the past is the complete ban on the use of contractors. There is also provision for unemployment allowances being paid to workers in case the state is unable to provide the guaranteed days of work. NREGA visualizes a programme where the local people are centrally involved at all stages – planning, implementation and social audit. There is also an unprecedented emphasis on the use of information technology.

Given the low level of support infrastructure provided for NREGA works, it is not surprising that quality of works undertaken is uniformly reported to be poor. In
Rajnandgaon, the emphasis is more on spending large amount of money than on ensuring quality in work execution.

It appears that the existing bureaucratic machinery is just not willing to play ball with the strict provisions of NREGA and are at times actively sabotaging its implementations. An elaborate mechanism has been evolved in Bolangir and Niapada districts of Orissa to escape doing NREGA work by suppressing such demands if it arises.

There is a need to continuously upgrade the capacities of the massive support structure human resources needed for NREGA. An inadequate emphasis on capacity building has been a characteristic failure of rural development programmes in India.

Information Technology must been seen as a key player in NREGA reforms. The use of IT can effectively make possible, reduction in time taken for tasks such as estimation, planning and managing fund flows and also standardization of procedures. As the software developed for NREGA in Andhra Pradesh has shown all stages of NREGA work, from registration of workers to issue of job cards, preparation of estimates for works, muster rolls and transfer of payments to workers can be very effectively computerized, leading to reduction in time taken and administrative cost.

The MIS has already ensured that most all stages of NREGA implementation can not bypass it. Thus, work estimates, pay orders, muster rolls etc, must be generated from the system for work to continue. There is scope to take the NREGA MIS even further. The other major contribution of this MIS is that it opens up NREGA for public scrutiny, thus engendering greater transparency and better public audit.

The NREGA ranks among the most powerful initiatives ever undertaken for transformation of rural livelihoods in India. However, for NREGA to realize its
potential, it must focus on raising the productivity of agriculture in India’s most backward regions.

Contrary to media reports, the draft CAG report on NREGA does not present much evidence of large scale embezzlement of funds, nor does it conclude that NREGA is a failure. The report focuses mainly on procedural lapses, and constructive ways to address them. Jean Dreze, Reetika Khera and Siddhartha(2008) suggest that “this is a useful wake-up call, just a few weeks ahead of the extension of NREGA to the whole country”. Some findings of recent “muster roll verification exercise” coordinated by the G.B. Pant Social Science Institute, Allahabad are stated here. The new series of verification exercise started in May – June 2007 in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh, in areas where we had found evidences of large scale corruption just two years earlier under the National Food for Work Programme. In the same Districts, we were interested to hear that the enactment of NREGA had led to a steep decline in the incidence of corruption. This was borne out by the muster roll verification exercises; in a random sample of 9 works implemented by gram panchayts, we found that 95% of wages that had been paid according to the muster rolls had actually reached the labourers concerned. In Jharkhand, detailed muster roll verification of NREGA works in five randomly selected gram panchayts of Ranchi District suggested leakage of around 33 per cent.

In Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu, they found much evidence of serious efforts to prevent the spread of corruption in NREGA. A brief follow up visit to Andhra Pradesh enabled the team to observe and appreciate various initiatives to prevent corruption in NREGA. For instance the government of Andhra Pradesh has taken the bold step of paying all NREGA wages through post offices.
After these relatively upbeat discoveries, the team had a rude shock in Orissa. The transparency safeguards had been sabotaged by vested interests and the system was virtually unverifiable. The silver lining is that even in this corruption ridden regions, there were many indications of positive change. The clamp down on corruption has recently intensified, after Orissa earned a bad name for mass corruption in NREGA.

Corruption can be eradicated from NREGA, and the way to do it is to enforce the transparency safeguards that are built into the Act and the guidelines. Along with this, swift action needs to be taken whenever corruption is exposed.

M.L.Dhar (2008) talks about the employment scenario in India through his article “Employment Scenario in India”. Employment generation is one of the major priorities drawing the attention of the governments and economic planners all over the world. India is no exception. The focus on economic growth was viewed as essential for improving the employment situation. Thus, in the five year plans, the generation of employment was viewed as part of the process of development. It was, however, observed that the rate of growth of employment was generally much lower than the GDP rate of growth of the economy. The seventies and eighties saw the emergence of special schemes like NREG, RLEGP to provide wage employment through public works programmes and schemes to promote self-employment and entrepreneurship to the unemployed and the poor.

More than 90% of the 37 crore strong labour force is employed in the unorganized sector and are largely bereft of social security and other benefits of employment available in the organized sector. 60% of India’s workforce is self-employed and nearly 30% are casual workers who are seasonally employed. The bane
of the India’s labour force is that over 70% of workers are either illiterate or educated below the primary level.

There is also a wide variation in unemployment rates across the states. Measured on Current Daily Status basis, unemployment ranges from a low of around 3% in Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan to a high of 21% in Kerala. While there may be divergence of opinion on the extent of under employment and unemployment, there is convergence of views on the need to expand employment. According to Dr.C.Rangarajan, a sustained growth of 9% per annum will totally eliminate unemployment by 2012.

One of the most significant interventions by the government to generate employment has been the launch of the NREGA in February 2006 in 200 most backward districts of the country.

Skill development of labour force is fundamental for both employment generation and improving productivity of labour. Increasing pace of globalization and technological change provides both challenges and growing opportunities for economic expansion and job creation. Responding to meet the challenge of the present and future needs of skill development, the Ministry of labour and Employment has initiated a massive skill development programme. Under this initiative vocational training will be provided to one million persons in 5 years and subsequently to one million people each year in close collaboration with State Governments, industries, trade associations and other training providers. A provision of Rs.555 crore has been made so far for this purpose. The ministry has also embarked on upgrading it is for meeting the emerging market needs.

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 functioning of the labour market.

Dhruva Kumar Singh and Ekta Choudhary (2008) conducted a study on
NREGA in the light of the C&AG report. In the view of the report submitted by the
office of C&AG, on the functioning of the NREGA, it is congruous to prepare a
balance scorecard of the scheme. The report points to the cases of incomplete records,
diversion of funds, cases of bogus muster rolls and so on in particular, in the states of
Bihar, Orissa, Chattisgarh etc. Almost all irregularities pointed out by the report are
only procedural flaws and hence these are not gross violation in nature. The
significance of the report lies in the fact that it has suggested where and how course
corrective actions could be undertaken.

Employment generated by the NREGS is in the nature of livelihood security of
those people who are marginalized in the society. That is why the scheme is a demand
based scheme. In the year 2006-07, livelihood security cover has been provided to the
99% of the people on demand basis. In the remote tribal villages, like Dindori and
Churachandpur, presence of NREGS worksites is a testimony of the fact that the
NREGS has reached to the remotest parts of the country. The payment of minimum
wage and provision of worksite facilities such as medical aid, drinking water, shade,
creche etc are the salient features of this scheme. The qualified adherence of the
scheme on the minimum wage aspect has been taken notice of by many of the state
governments. Consequently, many of the state governments have decided to revise
minimum wage upward by more than 15% on a varied scale. Various studies show
that because of NREGS tendencies of migration among rural poor has considerably
subsided thus saving them of physical torture and psychological humiliation in hostile
environment. Under NREGS, the both poverty and environmental factors are taken
care of simultaneously. It cannot be denied that in the next few years the scheme has the potential to single handedly restore ecological balance in the rural India.

The NREGS is not only providing legal guarantee of work but it is also protecting and upholding the right to Lives of crores of Indians standing on the social margins.

Abhay Singh(2008)\textsuperscript{25} conducted a study in the rural district of Sonbhadra, the most backward district of Uttar Pradesh. Sonbhandra is regarded as a den of ignorance, conservation and superstition. Most of the people in this area are unable to access most of the welfare and development schemes because of lack of education. Without education every work is incomplete. 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. Due to its topology a large number of populations are destined to live in the hilly forests. There is a paucity of available land. Therefore most of the people earn their livelihood by doing manual labour.

Most of the labourers in the district of Sonbhadra of Utter Pradesh 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. While they enter large amount of wages in the records, as paid, they actually pay less. Since workers and villagers are not aware of their rights, they are exploited at every level. Many works are being completed through machines and those works are shown wrongly on the job cards of the workers as done by them.

In Sonbhandra district, there is a big problem regarding panchayat Mitras and it is that they are not being paid honorarium regularly.
In the district, the pardhan and the secretary, themselves, decide about the plan\work, without involving anybody else. Thus, the villagers are not aware of the works to be undertaken in their areas.

In view of the cited scenario and problems, the author suggest the huge need for spreading awareness in this area, so that they may be self reliant and empowered to use their rights only then, they can take advantage of the manifold schemes launched by the government for their welfare.

The article entitled “How can livelihood be ensured in just five rupees and 25 paise?” by Uma Chaturvedi(2008)\textsuperscript{26} points out 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. The experience of two years of those NGOs and voluntary organizations who have been working in this field, narrates a sad story. On the basis of their experiences it can be said that there is no synergy between the Act and its implementation at the ground level. Despite spending crores of rupees, jobs could not be ensured and were not be guaranteed. At the same time the issue of social audit of gram sabhas is also being ignored.

The displaced Sahariya community of Vijaipur block of Sheopur district has been provided hardly jobs for ten days. This is a situation where a household cannot survive and ensure food security. To worsen the situation, the minimum wages in Madhya Pradesh is not more than Rs.79. So, even if jobs for 100 days are provided, the minimum wage of a family of 4 will only be 7900 for the entire year.

The experience of gram sabhas of Rohini village is that the labourers were provided jobs for only 40 days, but even after lapse of 14 months, they have not been paid their wages.
Dr. A. Ramachandran and N. Kavitha(2007) brings out the actual situation of poverty in India through “Eradicating Poverty in Rural India”. All those whose income or expenditure is below the minimum per capita consumer expenditure are considered to be below the poverty line. The percentage of poor population is higher in rural areas (39.9%) as compared to urban areas (27.7%). The reason for poverty in rural areas are, lack of employment opportunities in rural areas, low productivity of agriculture etc. The two categories of rural poor are small and marginal farmers and landless labourers.

Millions of people in the developing world’s rural areas are poor not because they cannot manage money, but because they have too little of it. While studies show that rural micro entrepreneurs produce high rates of return on the capital they invest, the problem is they lack access to sufficient finds, which means their aggregate return remains low, thus perpetuating a life in poverty.

Apathy, dependency, dishonesty, ignorance, disease are some of the causes of poverty.

There is higher concentration of poverty in rural India as to given statistics. Government’s plans and procedures have failed in many times. Some reasons for this are alarming population growth, lack of investment, lower literacy rate etc. The recent experiences tell that the urban India is also facing the same problem as of the rural India.

Government’s policy initiatives for eradicating the problem of poverty are, Nehru Rozgar Yojana, Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana, IRDP, National Rural Employment Programme etc.
Even the richest of countries have impoverished families living within their borders, but the poverty line differs according to the average standard of living in that country.

Our global leaders often speak of eradicating poverty as well as national and international economic growth, but when their speeches are analyzed, it becomes clear that they are talking about growth for a very small proportion, at most 5% of the world’s population. The remaining 95%, the majority, are hardly included in these plans of growth.

Dhruv Singh(2007)²⁸ conducted a study on the issues on the horizon of rural development. Presently, the Ministry of Rural Development runs more than a dozen programmes or schemes for poverty alleviation and rural development in India. The main focus of the Ministry is to provide housing facilities with sanitation facilities for BPL people, providing guaranteed 100 days wage employment along with asset creation through them, nurturing self employment through extention of micro credit facilities, providing rural connectivity through creation of all weather roads. The progress under all schemes for rural development has to be sustained over a period of time to have a worthwhile impact. At present, the progress is not uniform across all schemes. Achievements are also not similar in all states.

Basic idea behind all of these schemes is to impart an element of self sustenance in the rural areas. But what is required is to infuse not only elements of self sustenance but also factors of prosperity. Only with the emergence of rural prosperity, India can achieve sustained high growth rate, and above all what may be called an integrated national happiness.

The ministry already has an SGSY scheme committed for promotion of rural enterprise in India. Marketing is the most important area for rural enterprise. It is true
that market discriminates and it discriminates in favour of those well empowered. The only way to counter market is not isolation from it but more strategic integration with it. The second issue is that of predictable, equitable and secure energy supply. The issue is a significant one in the global polity. However, the energy market is quite distorted also within the nation, between urban and rural sectors. Unless adequate focus is given to fulfill rural energy needs, it will be difficult to bring out any significant change in the quality of lives in the rural India.

The success of rural development is dependent to what extent various schemes and programmes are interwoven with the lives and needs of those for whom these schemes are meant.

Budget presentation provides an opportunity to the government to articulate its priorities and allocate resources to achieve these goals and objectives. The budget 2006-07 emphasized the role of economic growth in rural development and eradication of poverty. Nagesh Singh (2006) through his article “Rural Development” tries to measure the magnitude of emphasize given to rural development. The finance minister in his budget speech had indicated that growth of the economy would go a long way in combating poverty and unemployment. The budgetary allocations for Ministry of Rural Development provided in this budget represent only one component of the Government’s rural development policies. Allocations for various other Ministries which are likely to be spent in the rural areas to promote social and economic activities also need to be considered. Of the eight flagship programmes, seven are expected to bring about a change largely in the rural areas. The various programmes of Ministry of Agriculture, Education, Health and Family Welfare and Social Justice & Empowerment, Tribal Affairs and few other ministries would need to
be examined to tease out the thrust of the Budget 2006-07 for the development of the rural areas.

Promotion of productive employment opportunities was one of the commitments of the National Common Minimum Programme. Swarnajayanthi Gram Swarozgar Yojana assists identified BPL families to setup self employment ventures. SGSY helps poor families to move out of poverty on a sustainable and long term basis. In this budget, allocation for this scheme has gone upto Rs.1200 crore. The Finance Minister has proposed to direct the banking sector to credit link additional 3.85 lakh SHG’s in 2006-07. The wage employment programmes provide immediate supplementary income and are critical to rural poor whose only asset is their labour. NREGP aimed at generating wage employment in 200 least developed rural districts in 2006-07. The NREGP marks a paradigm shift in delivery of Government programmes in the country. The major responsibility for programme implementation has been given to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The NREGP is the single largest scheme in terms of allocation. Rs11300 crore has been provided for NREGP in 2006-07. An analysis of allocations provided for wage employment programmes in 2006-07, compared to the revised estimates for 2005-06 show that the allocation in terms of cash, has been increased to Rs.14,300 crore, an increase of 43%.

Development of rural areas has been a priority of the government since advent of the planning process. Budget 2006-07 carries forward this process further. The NREGP would be the largest centrally sponsored scheme implemented by the Government of India. A combined impact of all these programmes in likely to bring a qualitative change in the lives of the people in rural areas.

Backward linkages or the advance planning is critical to the successful implementation of the NREGS. J N Singh and Anurag Mishra(2006) discusses on
the backward linkages of the NREGS through their article “Backward Linkages of Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme”.

The situation of unemployment has been compounded by the absence of any social security mechanism. There was, therefore an urgent need to ensure a certain minimum days of employment in the shape of manual labour to every household in the rural areas. This was recognized by the UPA government, resulting in the enactment of NREG act. The focus of the scheme shall be on the works like water conservation and water harvesting, drought proofing, irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works etc. The cost of NREGA’s entitlement works out to Rs.40,000 crores per year at 2004-05 prices or 1.3% of the GDP. Accordingly, the total cost of the scheme with phased implementation from 0.5% of GDP in the first year would be 1% of GDP in the last year of the inception phase (2008-09). Since the scheme is being operated in such an area where most of the people are uneducated and even the officials are also indifferent towards the scheme, there is an urgent need of creating awareness amongst all concerned through distributing concise literature, pamphlets and audio visual aids. Funds have been provided to District level authorities for publicity purposes. However, its purposeful utilization is still awaited.

The key institution and functionaries are responsible for the effective implementation of the REGS. Hence, it is essential that the functionaries are properly posted on respective positions. Since NREGS is such a scheme which along with generation of employment promises to create durable public assets leading towards sustainable development, needs long term planning. The rapid studies conducted in few of the districts by UPVAN, Lucknow revealed that so far no worthwhile perspective plans have been prepared. Consequently the activities under the scheme are being undertaken in the districts on ad-hoc basis. Any programme affecting the
community at large anticipates community participation. Active participation is pertinently important for ensuring transparency and public accountability.

Any central act needs either straightway adoption or adoption through the formulation of conformity Acts by the respective state governments. Most of the states have not conceded to them. The scheme has been implemented without seriously considering the outcomes of other rural employment schemes. United efforts and strict vigilance by all would go a long way towards earning bread for the empty bellies.

**Literature on assets generated**

Singh A(2014)\(^{31}\) through his article “Assessing the Status and Environmental Implications of Works Under MGNREGA in Uttarakhand”, opine that MNREGA not only provides employment to the people but also benefits them through creating durable assets for sustainable natural resources and leads to strengthen people towards the risks of natural and climate calamities. From the literature, it is likely to conclude for Uttarakhand also that all types of works operational under MNREGA are environmental friendly and make people adaptable towards environmental risks. MNREGA generates income for people while assets created under MNREGA improve the other livelihood resources available in rural areas. All the selected MNREGA works have the capability of improving the lives of rural people. Theis analysis found that these works performed better in initial years in both terms whether number of works or asset creation however later failed to maintain the continuity. Expenditures on the selected works also reduced heavily after few starting years. MNREGA can be a remedy for ailing rural economy of this hill state but there is great need of encouraging environment for MNREGA and government has to increase expenditures on all type of MNREGA works for wellbeing of rural people. Other than
that, findings of this study feel a need of further broad study to assess the environmental implications of MNREGA works and to identify the reasons behind declining trend of works under MNREGA in recent years.

“Effectiveness of MGNREA in Generating Assured Wage Employment and Creation of Durable Assets” is an Endeavour to review rural development programmes in India with a special reference to MGNREGA by Ravi Kant Dwivedi (2014)\(^{32}\). A humble attempt has been made to understand impact of MGNREGA in wage employment generation and durable asset creation in rural areas. Development of unorganized-informal sector aims to enhance people’s lives; residing in both industrial and nonindustrial societies, geographically centered and remote areas, earning their livelihood through modern manufacturing or service oriented employments and conventionally dependent on rural areas. As India has the largest population of poor people included in unorganized sector, their development has assumed high priority. After the first three decades of experimentation, the government launched major schemes those were precursors to MGNREGA. MGNREGA guaranteed wage employment as a legal right. The scheme is credited for reducing distress migration, providing household food security, enhancing the bargaining power of rural labour, generating eco-friendly employment and strengthening climate resilient agriculture. However, scope of this paper is limited to only employment generation and creation of assets in rural economy and suggestions have been made likewise.

Sudha Narayanan, Krushna Ranaware, Upasak Das and Ashwini Kulkarni (2014)\(^{33}\) in their paper “MGNREGA WORKS AND THEIR IMPACTS A Rapid Assessment in Maharashtra”, presents the results of a survey of over 4100 works created under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
(MGNREGA) and over 4800 randomly selected users across 100 villages in 20 districts in Maharashtra. The survey first verified the existence of the assets and the secondly tried to find out user perceptions of the problems and benefits they associate with the work. The survey indicates that 87% of the works exist and function and over 75% of them are directly or indirectly related to agriculture. A bulk of the rest constitutes rural roads that connect habitations to farms and provides access to agricultural markets. The study also finds that 92% of the randomly selected users paper that their main occupation is farming; half of them are small and marginal farmers, owning less than 1.6 hectares of land. An overwhelming 90% of respondents considered the works very useful or somewhat useful; only 8% felt the works were useless. There is some evidence that where people feel that have played a part in deciding the type of work, these are more likely to be ranked as useful and well-maintained. Likewise, works on private lands tend to score better in terms of perceived usefulness and in terms of present condition. Overall it appears that the works are supportive of agriculture and of small and marginal farmers. The authors hope for scope to improve the design of assets and to have a more inclusive process of work selection.

Dhananjaya K and Prathibha M.S(2012)\(^{34}\) tries to bring out state wise performance of MGNREGA in terms of rural asset creation has been analyzed using the data for three years (2008-2010) obtained from the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) website. A total of 3791510 assets have created during the last three years (2008-2010). A few states like Andhra Pradesh(19.7%), Uttar Pradesh(14.7%), Madhya Pradesh(13%), Gujarat(8%) and West Bengal(6.4%) have major share in the total assets created. Even the states like Maharastra, Haryana, Bihar and Tamilnadu lag behind in this respect though there is lot of potential for creating
new assets in these states. Among the total assets created, highest number of assets are created in the area of water conservation and water harvesting (25%) followed by rural connectivity (16%), provision of irrigation to the land owned by backward classes (16%), Land development (15.5%), renovation of traditional water bodies (7.5%), micro irrigation works (6%), drought proofing (5.5%), flood control and protection (4.5%) and any other activity approved by Ministry of Rural Development (1.8%).

Sushanta Kumar Mishra (2011)\textsuperscript{35} tries to take a more informed look at the MGNREGA to assess the effectiveness of the assets created in three districts of Madhya Pradesh. The MGNREGA scheme is not merely about transferring cash to people in rural India rather it is about creating durable assets that will ultimately lead to a reduced dependence of people on MGNREGA. The study in the three districts indicates that there is a significant impact of assets created through MGNREGA on rural households. About 58 percent of the workers agreed that assets in individual land are required. In Dhar about 39 percent of the respondents believe that MGNREGS has a positive effect on water conservation, whereas in case of Jhabua and Rajgarh the percentage of respondents believing positive effect on water conservation was 33 percent and 27 percent respectively. However, the productive value of assets created by MGNREGA works could be enhanced further with proper monitoring activities. In case of assets in individual land monitoring is not an issue rather, in case of assets created in community land, monitoring is an important factor. Officials need to explore the ways to enhance ownership of assets created among the villagers and provision for maintenance of assets created. The productive value of MGNREGA works could be enhanced further with moderate doses of convergence.
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