Chapter VII

Conclusions and Suggestions

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**Introduction:**

MEGS is one of the most important productive employment programmes of Government of Maharashtra. It has acquired the much needed political legitimacy and appeared to have a secured a stable place in the economic and social policy for many years to come. Being implemented for the past years, the programme has demonstrated varying degrees of success across the state and has been able to silent the skeptics on achieving the goals and objectives. Evidences point towards a positive trajectory of meeting the objectives. Increasingly scholars and policy makers are convinced of the potential of MEGS and its identification with the inclusive development goals of the country.

However, at the operational level the achievements so far appear to demonstrate the potential in terms of quality of implementation. This chapter has attempted to distil experiences of implementation based on the survey conducted and identified critical issues and concerns that need immediate attention from the policy makers and implementers. Specific recommendations have been offered for the consideration of the state government.

**Conclusions & Findings:**

After completion of the present study the following conclusion & findings were outlined.

- In Marathwada some districts have worked in higher position because that area has un-employment, undeveloped Agriculture, drought position due to persons have got maximum works that’s why a lot of work done. While, some districts have worked in lower
position because, in these districts most agriculture area has
developed and there were other than EGS and some other
employment opportunities were available.

- The EGS in Maharashtra has proved to be a unique and major
  programme for providing gainful and productive employment to the
  rural masses in the state and region.
- Anti-poverty programmes provided some measure of relief, and
  welfare funds covered a few groups of unorganized workers.
- Performance of EGS has been generally successful in terms of
  employment generation and investment made.
- It has made significant impact on wage employment and asset
  creation in the rural economy.
- EGS stands out for the fact that it is demand driven, has
  greater permanence than other schemes, covers the whole state, and
  has the potential both to provide a minimum income and stimulate
  local development.
- Public policy and public works in India have generally tried to
  include women as a percentage of beneficiaries, but have not paid
  enough attention to gender.
- It is seen from the study that there has been some shift out of
  agriculture into the EGS, mainly with respect to female workers.
  Since the minimum wage paid under the EGS it is far greater than
  the market agricultural wage for female workers, women who were
  not working previously started to do so on EGS sites. There seems to
  have been some ‘smoothing’ of income or consumption. The fact
that EGS wages are paid through banks, it encourages saving and, reportedly, some percentage is left in the account as savings.

- MEGS has primarily given employment to the unemployed people and BPL families and has also lead to the creation of infrastructure and development projects.

- This study has examined the long experience of Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme and drawn lessons for development policy in other Indian states.

- The study indicates that the EGS provided employment and additional income to some sections of unskilled workers in Maharashtra.

- It shows that India needs public works as one of the mechanisms for poverty alleviation.

- The public works are often criticized, with some justification, for creating unproductive assets. These programmes provide only short term relief and supplementary income and are not useful for long term benefits.

- The public works approach to unemployment would make sense if it is so organized that there will be progressively less and less reliance on it, so that ultimately it becomes redundant.

- It may be noted that they are not meant to function as a permanent escape route from poverty. One has to recognize the insurance or stabilizing function of these schemes.

- The primary objective of most of these schemes is guaranteeing employment and poverty alleviation. Moreover, as mentioned, the
success of a public works programmes needs to be judged against alternative poverty alleviation programmes.

- Effective involvement of panchayats, planning of projects at local level using local priorities, involvement of voluntary organizations, right to information at panchayat level and, social mobilization etc. can contribute for creation of high productive assets and better maintenance of the created assets.

- For the effectiveness of the programmes it is important that projects of these schemes should be identified in the framework of planned development of an area.

- Special wage employment programme is not a substitute for a sustained and broad based growth process. However, in Maharashtra where surplus labour and poor infrastructure is a problem, public works can be a useful component of poverty alleviation strategies.

- The study pointed out several lacunas in EGS, Particularly misappropriation of funds, incomplete works and lack of follow up, leakages, poor quality of physical assets created under EGS, poor wages, neutral attitude of the Government machinery, defects in the work plan of EGS are the important lacunas in the working and implementing process of EGS.

- The state government should think seriously about these lacunas so that the EGS can be implemented more effectively.
The government must also introduce policies, which will provide gainful employment to the people. The rural employment should not be left behind. For this the rural population must be educated so that they can use the available resources effectively.

Natural resources such as land and forests have a vast scope for employment generation through programmes of afforestation, regeneration and restoration of degraded land.

Providing effective rural employment and making villages’ self-sufficient would provide a strong foundation for national development.

Rural development programmes did not offer a solution to the alleviation of rural poverty without people participation, where misutilization, corruption, middleman involvement, negligence and non commitment of stakeholders are in way.

Rural employment is a weapon to fight against poverty but when it is clubbed with people participation, it becomes the powerful weapon to fight rural poverty.

A few drawbacks have been observed with regard to its organization and implementation.

No evaluation of EGS has been undertaken yet. However; Planning Commission should plan to conduct evaluation of EGS in Marathwada region.

The EGS provides a guarantee of employment to all adults above 18 years of age who are willing to do unskilled manual work on a piece rate basis. The scheme is self-targeting in nature. It is totally
financed by the state government. The main objectives of the EGS are to improve household welfare in the short run and to contribute to the development of the rural economy in the long run through strengthening rural infrastructure.

- From a modest beginning of only 1.9 crore in 1972-73, the scheme expanded to an expenditure of Rs. 578 crore in 2000-01. In 2001-02, the expenditure seems to have increased significantly to around Rs. 900 crore due to drought conditions.

- From a modest beginning of only Rs. 1.9 crore in 1972-73, the scheme expanded to an expenditure of Rs. 578 crore in 2000-01. In 2001-02, the expenditure seems to have increased significantly to around Rs. 900 crore due to drought conditions.

- The study concludes that the MEGS implementation is dominated by bureaucracy without people's participation.

- People's participation in selection and management would improve the productivity and sustainability of the assets.

- Maharashtra Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, 2006 will be fully applicable to all districts of Maharashtra. The liability of the Central Government will be restricted to providing employment to rural households for hundred days in a financial year. The State undertakes all other liability.

- The MEGS was introduced during the outbreak of acute drought of 1972 with the purpose to fight the calamity by creating livelihood assets with ensured employment provided to the unskilled rural poor
in or nearby their villages that would also prevent their migration to the cities.

- A review of social protection approaches in India shows that until the 1990s, most schemes were contributory and applicable to workers in the organized sector. The dominant majority of workers in the informal economy were excluded from social security provision. Anti-poverty programmes provided some measure of relief, and welfare funds covered a few groups of unorganized workers.

- Since the early 1990s, the better growth performance, as well as stronger political commitment, has led to many more social protection programmes being started. Among these, the MEGS stands out for the fact that it is demand driven, has greater permanence than other schemes, covers the whole state, and has the potential both to provide a minimum income and stimulate local development.

- Public policy and public works in India have generally tried to include women as a percentage of beneficiaries, but have not paid enough attention to gender sensitive design. The NREGA in its design has attempted some gender sensitivity.

- Overall, preliminary findings confirm that the MEGS has the potential to stimulate local development, if the management and delivery are good; and that women’s weak position in the labour market has been greatly helped.
In spite of the problems and limitations in its design and implementation the EGS has made positive impact on the levels of living of the rural poor in Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. However, the EGS alone cannot remove the poverty in rural areas of the state.

The reasons for the relative success of the scheme in some districts, and failure in others highlights the need to properly understand the reasons for inter and intra state variations and to replicate and adopt features of implementation of better performing states.

About 60 per cent of total labour in the state is engaged in the agriculture sector, and about half of them are landless labourers. Of the total agricultural land in the state, over one-third is rain-fed. One-third of the population faces a drought each year, and is forced to go without work during this period.

In this scenario, the EGS was extremely beneficial as it created irrigation facilities, generated employment for local labour and led to the building of more permanent water sources, better water distribution and water conservation. More land has come under year-round water supply, increasing land under dual-cropping and encouraging vegetable farming and horticulture.

The EGS saw much progress in the early years, up to 1996. In recent times, however, it has been plagued by irregularities, lack of commitment and financial indiscipline. Provisions under the scheme have been diverted to non-productive heads.
- Provisions under the EGS have been systematically brought down between 1998-99 and 2004-05. The state budget for 2005-06 provides only Rs 575 crore for the scheme.

- Absence of work under the EGS has increased exploitation of rural labour.

- Under MEGS, financial resources are released on the basis of demand for employment received in a district. A non-lapsable Central Employment Guarantee Fund has been set up to ensure availability of funds to match working season demands. Labour Budgets are being prepared by Districts to project annual fund requirements based on estimation of labour demand and works proposed to meet it. Fund releases are based on appraisal of both financial and physical indicators of outcomes.

- The operational guidelines of the MEGS detail a household as a nuclear family comprising mother, father and their children. In addition, a household refers to a single-member family. Despite this explanation, there is still a lot of confusion about the definition of this critical term. For instance, study shows that gram panchayats treat joint families as one household, thus issuing them a single job card. Our country has historically followed the system of joint families; such practices will put joint families in a disadvantageous position.

- People were under the wrong impression that an identity card will ensure them a job. They had no idea that it would be the demand form to be submitted to get the work identified by the Gram
Panchayats. Gram Panchayats didn’t have the necessary forms to forward the applications of the public works to obtain sanction to work at hand. Gram Sewaks, Talathis and Tehasildars themselves lacked ‘will’ to inform people about the act & the scheme.

- Discrimination based on caste has also been noted in some districts of Marathwada. During a survey conducted women were discouraged from registering. The aged and physically challenged were denied registration forms.

- The point of concern, however, is not just the percentage of issue of job cards but the percentage of distribution of job cards. Though job cards were prepared did not reached the people, thereby restricting their right to demand work. A probable cause for this is the workload of the panchayat sevak who undertakes the task of distribution. On average, each sevak has two or three panchayats under him/her, thus making the task extremely difficult.

- Fees for application forms are being charged. The fee ranges from Rs 5 to Rs 50 in some. Forms are also sold openly in local markets. This flouts the MEGS guidelines that state that applications may even be submitted to the gram panchayat on a plain piece of paper.

- Another general problem noted in the villages is the absence of a system to issue receipts to applicants. This could be because of lack of awareness on the part of the panchayat and the villagers. Receipts, however, are crucial as a proof of work demanded.

- The MEGS provides for facilities the safe drinking water, shade for children, periods of rest and a first-aid box at the work site. But a lot
has to be done to ensure these facilities, the notable absence of which is a problem that cuts across the region. A complete lack of facilities at the worksite was observed.

- Small children remain unattended, in the heat. As a consequence, women are hesitant to bring their children to the sites. It also forces them to rethink about applying for work in the first place. *Trees* act as the only source of shade for the rural poor working at the sites.

- Like in many other rural development programmes, contractors are increasingly becoming a threat to the MEGS. Though this may not be very apparent on the surface, private contractors are slowly finding their way into the system. The Act clearly states, that no contractor is permitted in the implementation of these projects.

- It is rare indeed to find muster rolls at the worksites. Districts show that muster rolls/attendance sheets are being maintained by people at worksites. Rough notebooks and diaries are being used to mark attendance and make wage payments.

- The Act’s launch was not accompanied by the appointment of additional staff for its implementation. This has resulted in the existing staff being burdened with additional work. At the panchayat level, the guidelines specifically advised the appointment of a ‘rozgar sevak’. Disappointingly, this has not yet been done. The lack of staff is having a negative impact on the workings of the MEGS. A survey found that sub-engineers were being burdened with the task of maintaining job cards, implying that their primary tasks suffered. Such additional appointments are a rare opportunity to provide
employment to the youth in our villages and should not be allowed to be squandered due to administrative hurdles.

- Some districts have disrupted work under the scheme on account of the monsoons.
- Delays in wage payments have always been a matter of concern in the programme. Wage payments are delayed for weeks, sometimes months. The time lag varies from district to district.
- A large-scale public works programme like MEGS, creates purchasing power among workers. When those receiving tax breaks or working on sites spend this additional money, they create demand for commodities. The production of these commodities, in turn, creates demand for capital, raw materials and workers. The extra incomes so generated cause further demand, which again provides a stimulus to production, employment and demand. This demand stimulating process is called the multiplier.
- Demand in the economy is being sustained by rural buying, which has received a boost from MEGS incomes. In addition to this, it promises transformation of rural livelihoods. To understand how MEGS can deliver on this potential, we need to grasp a curious unrecognized fact about agricultural labour in the most backward regions.
- MEGS workers are not just consumers stimulating demand in an economy. They also include producers i.e. millions of small and marginal farmers forced to work under MEGS because the productivity of their own farms is no longer enough to make ends
meet. MEGS will become really powerful when it helps rebuild this decimated productivity of small farms.

- Public investment in the programme incentivizes private investment by small farmers and gives them a chance to return to full-time farming. The earthen dams on common land have recharged wells of those poor farmers who earlier worked as labourers to build these dams. These farmers are now busy making a series of investments to improve their own farms.

- Under MEGS, farmers have come back to land they long abandoned, as increased output, in an atmosphere of renewed hope, spurs further investment. Thus, the MEGS has indeed led to an economic development.

- MEGS is a contribution or a partnership of people & government. And people who have work support those who don’t have.

- In MEGS, in order to raise resources for the implementation of the scheme, the State Government has levied following special taxes - Tax on profession, trades, callings and employment /Additional tax on motor vehicles for EGS/Additional tax on Sales Tax for EGS/ Special assessment of irrigated agriculture land/ Surcharge on land revenue for EGS/ Tax on non-residential urban lands and buildings under Maharashtra Education Cess Act for EGS.

- The State Government has to make a matching contribution equal to the net collection of taxes and levies as mentioned above every year.
Many villages are reaping the benefits of using MEGS money for productive purpose like water conservation. But there are many more villages which have not been able to do so.

In MEGS, for the first time, a public wage programme has given rural Households the right to employment. It comes at a time when there is a severe rural livelihood distress. The scheme is supposed to fulfill the short-term need of casual employment while creating sustainable livelihoods in long-term.

The programme targets at raising the agricultural productivity of the rainfed areas in the country that account for 68 per cent of country’s net sown area.

The scheme aims at transforming a labour surplus economy to a labour using economy. It should use the labour demand to create village productive infrastructure.

Village communities are the drivers of the MEGS thus turning it into a major development instrument for rural India.

The low demand for works under MEGS is mostly due to less focus on creation of productive village assets. Government has not been able to implement the programme as a long-term development programme. This has brought down people’s interests on the programme.

Complex wage calculation makes creation of productive village assets difficult. Working on productive assets like water harvesting structures doesn’t fetch good wage to people. So Panchayats are now
asking for more road construction works. This may lead MEGS to meet the fate of earlier wage programmes.

- Most of the water harvesting works has not been completed for various reasons. The main reason is absence of technical assistance for Panchayat. This puts the structures into disuse.
- There is no compulsion on government to complete a work. Thus it has opened up thousands of works but is not completing many of them. In the long term these assets become useless.
- Panchayats are implementing more than 60 per cent of MEGS works but have hardly any say over its implementation as stipulated in the Act.
- There is no village level planning for MEGS works. The provision of annual village plan has become a ritual with local government officials dictating terms.
- The interim provision of adapting the guidelines and plans has provided the right excuse to local government officials to bypass the Panchayats.
- Without participation of the local communities in the implementation, MEGS will not make any impacts on local development, as it will not reflect local needs. This is the reason why very few people are attending the Gram Sabha meeting on MEGS related issues.
- Since 2002 State Government has not contributed its contribution in EGS funds. Yet, there is money to run the EGS due to these taxes, as
the financing is not dependent on the political instability or economic uncertainties.

- In MEGS act, three-tier administrative set up has been evolved to ensure close and effective liaison and continuous supervision over the programme. Committees for planning, direction, control and coordination have been set up at the State, District and Panchayat Samiti level.

- The high rank officials as District Collectors while planning budgets & demands of funds for EGS do not maintain financial discipline. At the first place, unreasonable funds are demanded. Then the funds are not utilized in the planned manner. And lastly, most of the funds are surrendered at the end of financial year.

- Simple facilities such as shade, drinking water, amenities for pregnant women etc are not provided to the labourers. And officers often ignore instructions given by respective authorities.

- At the District and Panchayat Samiti levels, District and Panchayat Employment Guarantee Committees, respectively, are appointed. In such committees, persons belonging to the backward classes, labourers and the representatives of registered unions of the agriculture labour are appointed. Adequate representation to women is also provided on these District and Panchayat Committees.

- Under MEGS a poor couple is guaranteed 624 days of work in a year (assuming work for 6 days a week for both for 52 weeks a year). The NREGA guarantees only 100 days for that couple.
There is need to treat individuals as separate units rather than families. There are large and small families. The scheme would work to the disadvantage of joint families & the ‘second’ wives of men. This could also lead to family quarrels and divisions.

There is a provision of an unemployment allowance for those who cannot be provided work in spite of a proper demand being made in both the schemes. The unemployment allowance has been pegged at 1/4th the wage rate (Rs. 15/-) for the first 30 days and then ½ of the wage rate (Rs 30/-) for the remaining 70 days. MEGS offers only Rs 10/- per day.

Only watershed development in form of ‘constructing’ barriers in farms wouldn’t meet the purpose of creating livelihood for the poor. The projects as land treatment, developing habitat etc should be made part of EGS.

The MEGS has suffered the same malpractices by unscrupulous elements in the bureaucracy. Otherwise the scheme would be effective in bringing change in rural economy. Over decades of its working, MEGS has produced few permanent assets.

Some villagers not dependent on the scheme as MEGS & having their own livelihood resources were also registering their names with expectation that they may get the unemployment allowances if do not get work.

The women members in SHGs were strongly demanding work & wages under the MEGS in place of the loans. According to them,
work for wages has been a more dignified way of living instead of depending on loans.

- No village micro plans were seen in all the districts in the identified villages. However, there has been an offer from the agriculture department to the local NGOs to come forward to make village micro plans. And some non-PACS NGOs are involved in this activity.

- A number of people registered for identity cards. But they were unaware of the fact that they had to demand jobs.

- 30 to 40 per cent workers in the village are not registered yet. Their registration is going on. Some have received the job cards, some haven’t. Some village councils have created proposals to ask for jobs under MEGS but the work has not started so far. The villagers are waiting.

- The poorest, Dalits and the poorer of the tribals are generally excluded from the Panchayati activities.

- To encourage mobilizations over resource management, focusing specially on equitable distribution of benefits of assets generated by these programmes.

- Sustainable livelihoods based on the wage employment programmes have multilateral capabilities to boost enhancement of resource productivity and security of assets, resources, income-earning activities and food security.

- Income generating agro and cottage industries, self help groups, entrepreneurial activities based on the local resources can be
encouraged. These activities not only reduce rural poverty but also produce an environment for building social capital.

- The study concludes that in the year 2000-01 the total number of works completed were 32,856 and increased up to 74,724 in the year 2004-05 and thereafter it was decreased up to 12,336 In the year 2006-07. (*Table No. 5.02*)

- The total number of works completed of irrigation works were 2,314 in the year 2004-05 and increased up to 7,207 in the year 2007-08, the work of soil conservation and land development completed in number were 54,644 in the year 2004-05 and decreased up to 922 in the year 2007-08. The works completed in the forest were 3218 in the year 2004-05 and decreased its performance up to 1502 in the year 2007-08. The road works completed under the scheme in the year 2004-05 were 2774 and come down up to 859 in the year 2007-08. The other works also show the decreased performance from 2774 work to 1574 work from 2004-05 to 2007-08. (*Table No. 5.03*)

- The total expenditure on irrigation works was Rs. 13,715 lakh in the year 2004-05 decreased up to Rs. 9,264.9 lakh in the year 2007-08, the expenditure on soil conservation and land development was Rs. 51,826 lakh in the year 2004-05 was decreased up to Rs. 13,379 lakh in the year 2007-08. The expenditure incurred on the forest was Rs. 13,294 lakh in the year 2004-05 also shows the decreased performance up to Rs. 1,384 lakh in the year 2007-08. The expenditure on road works completed under the scheme in the year
2004-05 was Rs. 21,660 lakh came down up to Rs. 4,866.3 lakh in the year 2007-08. *(Table No. 5.04)*

The study shows that in the year 2007-08, 4.75 lakh households demanded for works, increased up to 10.62 lakh in the year 2001-12. In the year 2007-08 the employment provided to 4.75 lakh households increased up to 10.49 lakh in the year 2001-12. Total expenditure incurred under the scheme in the year 2007-08 was Rs.189.07 crores increased up to Rs. 904.70 crores in the year 2011-12. Total number of works completed in the year 2007-08 were 4778 show increased figures up to 4,990. The number of person days generated in the year 2007-08 were 1.9 crores, it increased up to 4.13 crores days in the year 2001-12. The share of SCs, STs and women is also indicated. *(Table No. 5.05)*

The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 11,071 which increased up to 25,016 in the year of 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 3.87 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 15.76 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 45 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 102 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Aurangabad District *(Table No. 5.12)*.

The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 10,659 which increased up to 26,458 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 5.09 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 16.14 lakh man-days in the year
2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 44 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 97 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Beed District. *(Table No. 5.13).*

- The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 12,180, which increased up to 12,378 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 4.75 lakh man-days generated, it increased up to 6.87 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 47 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 95 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Jalna District. *(Table 5.14)*

- The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 7,318 which increased up to 27,125 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 4.83 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 14.65 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 44 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 95 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Latur District. *(Table No. 5.15)*

- The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 15,631 and it decreased up to 10,354 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 8.75 lakh man-days generated, decreased up to 6.87 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 45 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 101 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Nanded District. *(Table No. 5.16)*
The study concludes that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 6,807 which increased up to 49,663 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 4.63 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 27.29 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 45 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 95 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Osmanabad district. (Table No. 5.17)

The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 543 which increased up to 4,265 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 0.42 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 3.07 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 45 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 91 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Parbhani district. (Table No. 5.18).

The study shows that in the year 2000-01 the number of labours engaged were 2,275 which increased up to 7,548 in 2009-10. The employment generation in the year 2000-01 shows 1.73 lakh man-days generated, increased up to 6.57 lakh man-days in the year 2009-10 while the wage rate was increased from Rs. 45 in the year 2000-01 to Rs. 97 in the year 2009-10 under the MEGS in Hingoli district. (Table No. 5.19)

In the year 1990-91 there were 261.7 lakh man-days generated, it increased up to 311.4 lakh in the year 1995-96 and it also increased up 319.2 lakh in the year 1999-2000. (Table No. 5.20)
For the present study, 1700 sample respondents were selected. 53 (3.12%) respondents were selected from the special category i.e. 15 to 18 age groups, followed by 184 (10.82%) respondents were selected from the age group of 19 to 25, 330 (19.41%) respondents were selected from the age category of 26 to 35, 455 (26.76%) respondents were selected from the age group of 36 to 45, 403 (23.71%) respondent were selected from 46 to 55 age group and 275 (16.18%) respondent were selected from the age of 56 and above. *(Table No. 6.01)*

Out of 1700 respondents 929 (54.65%) respondents were from male category while remaining 771 (45.35%) respondents were from female category. *(Table No. 6.2)*

It is evident from the table 6.03 that highest number of selected respondents i.e. 467 (27.47%) were from OBC category, followed by 424 (24.94%) respondents from SC category, 329 (19.35%) respondents were selected from ST category and lowest number of respondents i.e. 207 (12.19%) respondents were from open category. *(Table No. 6.03)*

The study shows that out of the total respondents 333 (19.58%) respondents were illiterate, followed by 485 (28.53%) respondents had completed their primary education, 580 (34.11%) respondents were non-matric, 271 (15.94%) respondents completed their matriculate and only 31 (1.84%) respondents were H.S.C. passed. *(Table No. 6.04)*
482 (28.35%) respondents were engaged in MEGS were Non-agricultural labour, 388 (22.82%) respondents were agricultural labours, 273 (16.05%) respondents small agriculturists, 387(22.78%) respondents were permanent labours and 170 (10.00%) respondents were seasonal labourers. \textit{(Table No. 6.05)}

It is concluded from the study that 1 to 4 members were 691 (40.64%) respondent’s family followed by 5 to 8 members in 537 (31.58) respondent’s family and more than 9 members were 472 (27.78%) respondent’s family. \textit{(Table No. 6.06)}

The study shows that 170 (10%) respondents were having annual income of Rs. 10,000 to 20,000, 281 (16.53%) respondents had secured Rs. 20,001 to 30,000 as annual family income, 682 (40.12%) respondents family income was Rs. 30,001 to 40,000, 359 (21.12%) respondents annual family income was Rs. 40,001 to 50,000 and only 208 (12.23%) respondents family income was more than Rs. 50,001. \textit{(Table No. 6.07)}

The study shows that 276 (16.24%) respondents having own agricultural land (1 to 5 acres), 667 (39.24%) respondents told that they were having livestock population, 194 (11.41%) respondents were owner of small houses in their villages which they had given on rent basis to others, 289 (17%) respondents told that they were also small traders and visited to the weekly bazaars to the nearest places and 456 (26.82%) respondents were running small shops at their villages. \textit{(Table No. 6.08)}
The study shows that out of selected respondents 301 (17.71%) respondents were living in the Huts, 462 (27.18%) respondents were living in the cutcha own house, 345 (20.29%) respondents told that they were having their own pucca house in the village, 411 (24.18%) respondents were told that they living at rental houses and 181 (10.64%) respondents were allotted houses under Indira Awas Yojana. *(Table No. 6.09)*

The study shows that 559 (32.88%) respondents were having their own cycles, 165 (9.71%) respondents were having their bullock cart, 199 (11.17%) respondents were owner of two wheelers, 488 (28.71%) respondents told that they have television set and 517 (30.41%) respondents were having their own mobile set. *(Table No. 6.10)*

The study shows that only one member was engaged from 435 (25.59%) respondents households, two members were involved in MEGS from 641 (37.71%) respondents households, three family members joined MEGS from 378 (22.23%) respondents households and four members were engaged from 246 (14.47%) respondents households. *(Table No. 6.11)*

The study shows that highest number of respondents i.e. 393 (23.12%) respondents were known about the scheme from local residents, followed by 345 (20.29%) respondents were told by Village Sarpanch or ward members, 261 (15.35%) respondents became aware of the scheme under door to door survey, 255 (15%) respondents came to know about the scheme from the Village
gramsevak, 238 (14%) respondents became aware of the scheme in the meeting of the Gramsabha and 208 (12.24%) respondents came to know about the scheme from newspapers, televisions etc. (*Table No. 6.12*)

- About 444(26.12%) respondents were waiting at least 1 to 10 days for actual joining the scheme, 523 (30.76%) respondents told that after 11 to 20 days they were offered job in MEGS, 407 (23.94%) respondents were joined the scheme after 21 to 30 days and 326 (19.18%) respondents told that they joined the scheme at least after one month from the willingness to joining. (*Table No. 6.13.*)

- All the selected respondents were engaged in the MEGS. 266 (15.64%) respondents told that they worked under MEGS up to 25 days in a year, followed by 309 (18.18%) respondents were engaged at least for 26 to 50 days in the scheme, 318(18.71%) respondents worked under the scheme for 51 to 75 days, 383 (22.53%) respondents were engaged less than 100 days in the scheme and 424 (24.94%) respondents for told that they were working under the scheme for more than 100 days. (*Table No. 6.14*)

- Issuing of Job Cards is essential part under MEGS. Out of 1700 selected respondents under MEGS 1510 (88.82%) respondents received Job Cards while 190 (11.18%) respondents did not yet received any Job Cards under the MEGS. (*Table No. 6.15*)

- The study concludes that 341 (20.06%) respondents crossed up to 1 Km. for working in MEGS from their households, followed by 449 (26.41%) respondents joined the work place from at least 1 to 2 Km,
2 to 3 Km. distance for 510 (30%) respondents households, 191 (11.24%) respondents told that they had to cover the distance between 3 to 4 Km. from their households, 89 (5.24%) respondents walked 4 to 5 Km. for joining the worksite and 120 (7.05%) respondents told that they were crossed a very long distance i.e. more than 5 Km. per day for joining the work. *(Table No. 6.16)*

- The study concludes that highest number of respondents i.e. 533 (30.76%) were getting up Rs. 501 to 1,000 as monthly wages under the scheme, followed by 454 (26.71%) respondents received Rs. 1,001 to 1,500 as monthly wages, 301 (17.71%) respondents told that they were secured up to Rs. 500 only in a month, 269 (15.82%) respondents told that they received wages Rs. 1,501 to 2,000 during the month and very lowest number of respondents i.e. 153 (9%) received highest amount of wages i.e. more than Rs. 2,000. *(Table No. 6.17)*

- The study shows that highest number of respondents i.e. 513 (30.18%) respondents told that their amount of wages transfer in to their bank account, followed by 478 (28.12%) respondents have been distributed the wages among the public, 391 (23.00%) respondents told that the officer gives their wages at their home or work place independently and lowest number of respondents i.e. 318 (18.71%) told that the amount of wages received through local post offices. *(Table No. 6.18)*
- It is interesting known from the table 6.19 that all the selected respondents i.e. 1700 told that muster roll were maintained at the work place on daily basis. *(Table No. 6.19)*

- The study concludes that highest number of respondents i.e. 619 (36.41%) told that there was drinking water facilities available at the worksite, followed by 275 (16.18%) respondents were told that the arrangement of shades for rest are available, 198 (11.65%) respondents opined that emergency health care facilities are provided under the programme, 170 (10%) respondents (women) told that there were creche arrangement provided under the scheme and 219 (12.88%) respondents expressed that transportation facilities from their home to worksite were provided to them. *(Table No. 6.20)*

- The respondents done various works under the scheme. Various works were undertaken under MEGA. Majority of the respondents worked under road works, irrigation work, horticulture work and forest works. The work wise classification of respondents was analyzed in. The study concludes that highest number of respondents i.e. 1,403 (82.53%) were worked for the construction of road followed by 1,318 (77.53%) respondents told that they were engaged for irrigation works during the year, 611 (35.94%) respondents told that they were also engaged in horticultural and a very few number of respondents i.e. 489 (28.76%) were working in the forest for plantation and other similar works. *(Table No. 6.21)*

- The study shows that 1,556 (91.53%) respondents felt that the MEGS is very important programme for them, followed by 1,373 (80.76%)
respondents expressed that MEGS programme is very helpful to them for the problem of hunger, 977 (57.47%) respondents expressed that due to MEGS they did not migrate to the city area for works, 881 (51.82%) respondents told that the money earned under the scheme were useful to them for their daily livelihood including their healthcare and child education and 385 (22.64%) respondent told that before they were engaged in the MEGS they had no work at their villages, so after joining the scheme they were engaged in the work activity. (Table No. 6.22)

- It is concluded from the study that maximum number of respondents i.e. 1241 (73%) told that their socio economic status is definitely improved after joining MEGS while only 312 (18.35%) respondents did not agree with the question statement. Another 97 (5.71%) can’t judge their improvement status after joining the programme and only 50 (2.94%) respondents shown no response in this matter (Table No. 6.23)

- The highest number of respondents i.e. 714 (42%) respondents were fully satisfied about the work status and wages received under the programme, followed by 489 (28.76%) respondents felt just satisfied from the said parameters whereas 413 (24.29%) respondents were not satisfied with this structure and 84 (4.95%) respondents could not response in this matter. (Table No. 6.24)

- Problems faced by respondents under the MEGS is (Table No. 6.25)
  - Maximum number of respondents i.e. 1,453 (85.47%) told that the distance of worksite was too much from their homes.
- 1,437 (84.54%) respondents out of 1,700 respondents told that very less wages are offered under the programme.

- 1,294 (76.12%) respondents complained that their wages were disbursed to them after a very long time.

- 1,155 (67.94%) worker respondents told that they have been allotted work without consideration of their health conditions.

- 1,133 (66.65%) respondents expressed that the food grains are not provided under the programmes.

- 1,109 (65.24) respondents explained that they were harassed from site supervisor or officials on the workplace.

- 1,090 (64.12%) respondents told that the worksite facilities i.e. drinking water, Crêches & first aid facilities are not provided on the site.

- 418 (24.59%) respondents complained that the workplace is changed without the prior intimation to them.

- 385 (22.65%) women respondents told that there was no sanitary arrangement made for women workers on the site.

- 190 (11.18%) respondents told that they have no job cards while a month for work was completed under the scheme.

- On the basis of observation, experience survey and discussion with the people, the researcher ranked the drawbacks and lacunas in the programme which is implemented in Marathwada region. Misappropriation in Payment of wages is ranked first, Unequal distribution of employment opportunities ranked second,
Mechanization of work under the scheme ranked third, Involvement of contractors under the scheme ranked fourth, Lack of coordination at local administrative level ranked fifth, Lack of coordination at local administrative level ranked sixth, Lack of coordination at local administrative level ranked seventh, Employment survey could not be conducted in the village ranked eighth, Lack of infrastructural development in the village ranked ninth and Uptrend employees and officers were appointed under the scheme is ranked tenth.

Formulation of Hypotheses:

Hypothesis No. 1:

One of the hypotheses formulated for the present study that - *There will be a need of Employment Guarantee Scheme in Marathwada Region for socio-economic development of rural people.*

1,556 (91.53%) respondents feel that MEGS is very important programme for them, 1,373 (80.76%) respondents expressed that the MEGS programme is very helpful to them for the problem of hunger, 977 (57.47%) respondents expressed that due to the MEGS they did not migrate to the city area for works, 881 (51.82%) respondents told that the money earned under the scheme were useful to them for their daily livelihood including their healthcare and child education and 385 (22.64%) respondents told that before they were engaged in the MEGS they had no work at their villages, so after joining the scheme they were engaged in the work activity. *It is
concluded from the study that (Table No. 6.22) the hypotheses formulated for the study is highly accepted.

Hypothesis No. 2:
The researcher had formulated one of the hypotheses for the present study that-

Socio-Economic condition is improved by implementing EGS scheme in Marathwada Region.

It is concluded from the study (Table No. 6.23 ) that out of 1,700 selected respondents 1,241 (73%) respondents agree with that their socio economic status is improved after the joining of MEGS programme. The hypothesis formulated for the study is highly accepted on the basis of Table No. 6.23.

Hypothesis No. 3:
The researcher had was formulated one of the hypotheses that -

Worksite facilities are not provided to the workers such as drinking water, crèches, rest shade, first aid facilities etc. at the work place.

619 (36.41%) respondents told that there was drinking water facilities available at the worksite, 275 (16.18%) respondents told that the arrangement of shades for rest are available, 198 (11.65%) respondents opined that emergency health care facilities are provided under the programme, 170 (10%) respondents (women) told that there were crèche arrangement provided under the scheme and 219 (12.88%) respondents expressed that transportation facilities from their home to worksite were provided to them. The percentage of positive opinions is very less but all
these facilities were provided at the worksite under the scheme. Thus; the hypotheses formulated for study is rejected. (Table 6.20)

Suggestions:

The present study suggested the followings specific suggestions to better implementation of EGS in Maharashtra.

- Information about MEGS should be provided in meetings of Gram sabha.
- The local government should make awareness about MEGS.
- Increase the wage rate to attract more people towards this scheme.
- Provide unemployment allowances timely and adequate according to living cost.
- Try to extent benefits of this scheme to poorer and economically as well as socially backward people.
- In the drought areas and lower developed districts MEGS plays very significant role to provide employment opportunities.
- It is the urgent need for imparting training to Gram Panchayat functionaries, government officials and even specially appointed MEGS personnel.
- The Job Card should be issued immediately after the verification is completed and shall be handed over to the applicant not later than a week after registration. Photographs of adult members who are willing to do unskilled manual work should attach to Job
Card as early as possible after the Cards are issued. The cost of photographs should be borne as the programme cost.

- Individual identity card should be given to each registered applicant of the family. A card holder may apply for a duplicate card if the original card is lost or damaged. The application should be given to the Gram Panchayat and processed in the manner of new application with the difference that the particulars can also be verified from duplicate copy of the job card in the Gram Panchayat.

- To ensure authentic muster rolls are used, numbered muster rolls are to be issued for each sanctioned work by Programme Officer and maintained on the work site by the executing agency.

- Muster rolls must have Job Card numbers of workers, days worked, quantum of work done, the amount paid and must have space for recording inspections.

- Muster rolls are should be read out on the work-site during measurement and wage payment to prevent bogus records. Entries in the muster roll have to be correspondingly recorded in the Job Cards of the workers.

- Updating of muster roll data at the block level computers in a 15 days cycle needs to be ensured. All muster rolls are to be made available for public scrutiny on the state government’s website.

- By maintaining proper muster rolls and keeping timely measurement and record of the books, supervision of the work
can be done easily and also a fair record of the work can be kept, which helps checking any kind of corruption.

- Regular measurement and supervision of works should be done by qualified technical personnel on time. Measurement needs to be recorded in authenticated measurement books and measurement details need to be read out to workers.

- The act stipulates that a worker working for seven hours should normally earn an amount equal to the wage rate. The act directs that task rates should be fixed so that this objective is fulfilled. The rate needs to be reviewed on the basis of Work-Time-Motion-Studies and be made transparent so that workers know the rates payable for a specific quantum of work.

- Since the act seeks to establish a rights-based framework for wage employment, it places a strong emphasis on vigilance and transparency.

- A web-enabled Management Information System (MIS) has been developed that seeks to place all information in the public domain. It is a household level data base and has internal checks for ensuring consistency and conformity to normative processes. All critical parameters get monitored in public the domain: a) workers’ entitlement data and documents such as registration, Job Cards, muster rolls (b) work selection and execution data including shelf of approved and sanctioned works, work estimates, works under execution, measurement (c) employment demanded and provided (d) Financial indicators such as funds
available, funds used, and the disaggregated structure of fund utilization to assess the amount paid as wages, materials and administrative expenses.

- Since MIS places all critical data on the web and this data is software engineered, it has significant advantages in terms of transparency as it allows cross verification of records and generation of reports on any parameter of the scheme. The aim is to ensure connectivity at the block level on priority and wherever possible. At the Gram Panchayat level a Geographic Information System should be developed in order to monitor the works undertaken.

- While placing data in the public domain, monitoring and evaluation, create systems of accountability, the scheme contains specific provisions for public accountability which is advantageous for the workforce and others as there would be check on corruption. Based on the statutory directives, a systematic strategy for public accountability has been adopted.

- Social audit of all works in a Gram Panchayat has to be carried by the Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat has to provide all its records for the same.

- Social Audit is a compulsory element in MEGS. Social audit processes can be divided into pre social audit processes, processes during social audit and follow-up processes after social audit.
- Enforcement of the right to employment requires setting up an effective grievance redressal system. The scheme vests the responsibility for grievance redressal with the Programme Officer. Efforts are on to strengthen grievance redressal mechanisms at all levels.

- In this scheme since there is a captive workforce a lot of projects should be undertaken, as well as experts should be hired for the same which will help in better implementation of projects.

- At the State level, 4 per cent of the total cost is to be used as the administrative cost enabling resource support for deploying additional personnel critical to implementation, viz. the Gram Rozgar Sewak at the GP level and Programme Officer, engineers, IT and accounts personnel at the Block Level.

- To strengthening the administrative systems pertains to training of different stakeholders under MEGS. The requirements of training are considerable at all levels and include functionaries, PRIs, and the local vigilance committees.

- Wage calculation must be rationalized so that all works fetch the same wage, or the basic minimum wage.

- Road construction must be kept out of the MEGS, as there are dedicated programmes for rural connectivity.

- Elaborate Monitoring and Information System (MIS) associated with MEGS is perhaps one of the important efforts to address issues of transparency as well as efficient implementation. However, there are gaps in such information base as often
it does not capture process dimensions. In a programme of this nature, process evaluations become more meaningful than mere output and outcome measurements.

- The MEGS should be treated as a component of this full employment strategy for the state. Study has shown that the scheme has a positive multiplier effect on local village economies. Thus, the scheme’s long term developmental potential to achieve full employment must be recognized.

- It needs to be recognized that MEGS does provide an excellent platform for productive asset creation within a political economy context. The list of Assets could be extended to include developmental works such as Anganwadi Centres etc. However, creation of assets which actually contribute to the long term development of the village requires community involvement in selection of works and an ownership structure which incentivizes productivity and greater contribution to village development. These community assets could be owned by the government and the surpluses generated could be distributed among the workers themselves. The assets could also be constructed on land owned by marginal and small farmers belonging to deprived sections (apart from SC and ST) to increase the productivity of their lands.

- Convergence with the health and Anganwadi schemes to ensure greater emphasis on creating sustainable livelihoods. Coupling of work activities offered under the MEGS with provision of social services (e.g. involving workers in activities such as
preparing meals for the Mid Day Meal Scheme, housekeeping services for primary health centres, care givers for crèche etc.)

- Breast feeding breaks should be incorporated into the work schedule of women at MEGS worksite.
- Success of MEGS critically hinges on the mechanisms of transparency and accountability that are built into the programme. While the guidelines provide some elements of the same, there are gaps identified in terms of mandatory rules. Towards this end, strong transparency rules should be framed at the national level.
- Accessibility of all MEGS records for public scrutiny should be accorded at all levels within a stipulated time period.
- Proactive measures by the state governments for fulfilling the mandate of 33 per cent norm of women’s share of MEGS should be enforced forthwith. Incentive and dis-incentives should be developed for enhancing women’s participation in MEGS.
- Equal participation of women in MEGS should be promoted at all levels, not just in terms of labour participation at the worksite. Fifty per cent should be the standard minimum target for women’s share of MEGS posts, e.g. Programme Officers, Gram Rozgar Sevaks, trained mates, social auditors, data entry operators, Junior Engineers, technical assistants, and so on.
- Widows, separated women and other single women should be entitled to separate Job Cards irrespective of their living arrangements.
- Payment of women’s wages through men’s (e.g. their husbands’) bank accounts should be prohibited. Women workers should have their own bank accounts, or, at the very least, be equal co-signatories of joint accounts.
- Frequent on site monitoring, control of the local people, Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha and mobilizations of the workers working on that particular site, have proved as effective alternatives. Further, more attention is needed in this regard.
- Rural housing, Sanitation, Jal Swaraj, Self-help/cooperative groups, women’s self-employment/ business activities and adult education centers are some of the arenas where these programmes can contribute indirectly to improve rural environment. They should be integrated with MEGS.
- To create knowledge base of these schemes among the rural masses by providing training and concentration. Education and awareness, particularly environmental, can contribute to capacity building, reduction of vulnerability.
- To avoid the interference of politicians in the implementation, government officers should be empowered with more rights.
- Local youth leaders, educational organizations and village study circles can play crucial role here. The help and suggestion of these factors should be considered.
- To welcome NGOs and action groups to take more interest in the programme implementations, monitoring and planning.
- Good governance by narrowing the discrepancy between the ideal and the actual of these programmes, timely and sufficient work opportunities for those in real need and proper weekly wages with on site actual amenities are some of the symptoms of good implementation and governance.

- To create a sense of collective participation and participatory democracy through the gram Sabha and Panchayati meetings.

- Most importantly, effective and accountable local institutions at the grass roots are preconditions for ensuring sustainable development and livelihoods security. To build the capacity of Gram Sabhas and Panchayats at village and taluka level is not an easy task.

- **The suggestion given by the selected respondents are as follows:**
  - 1,489 (87.59) respondents told that good quality of worksite facilities should be provided to them.
  - 1,422 (83.64%) respondents expect that wage payment and distribution should be in time.
  - 1,295 (75.18%) respondents told that full payment of wages should be made on time.
  - 1,276 (75.06%) respondents suggested that present wage rates in cash should be increased.
  - 1,255 (73.82%) respondents told that wage should be paid on weekly basis instead of fortnight basis.
  - 1,217 (71.59%) respondents requested to supply the tools on work site.
1,177 (69.23%) respondents suggested that employment under MEGS should be available during non-agricultural season.

750 (44.11%) (Women) respondents told that there should be the equal involvement of the male and female.

681 (40.05%) respondents suggested that transportation facilities should be provided for long distance.

642 (37.76%) respondents suggested that food grains should be provided other than regular wages.

- It is necessary that the State Government should think seriously about these problems, drawbacks and lacunas so that the EGS can be implemented more effectively. No doubt, the EGS in Maharashtra has proved to be a unique and major programme for providing gainful and productive employment for the rural masses in the state.

**Future Studies:**

The present study is limited up to Marathwada Region. The study is focus on implementation strategy of State Government for MEGS find out the problems in implementing, problems faced by beneficiaries, and various obstacles therein. The present study at the outset reviews trend of rural employment in India. The study broadly consists of trend of rural employment in India, reviews Government policies related to rural employment in the country and Maharashtra State and made some suggestions and policy recommendations for augmenting rural employment in India. The focus is on the Maharashtra government schemes only. It is not possible to map the special programmes of all the states. It must be noted here that some of the progressive States have added additional components.
or given further subsidy to enhance the benefits of the central schemes. On the following area; another researcher may focus in future.

1. Assets produced under MEGS.
2. Impact of MEGS on rural development.
3. Drawbacks of MEGS in implementation.
4. Performance of MEGS in other region like Vidarbha.
5. Comparative study of MEGS and NREGS in Maharashtra, etc.