

A Comparative Study of Women's Participation through MGNREGA Programme in India's North-eastern States of Assam and Meghalaya

Sarah Tahmeen Choudhury* and Hm Izhar Alam**

ABSTRACT

This research paper highlights women's participation, various policies, and strategies in MGNREGA's implementation. Gender is an indispensable push factor, and women have always played a critical role in growth and development. The Indian government pursued several initiatives to empower women, and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) is one of them –indeed, a women-friendly enactment because of the provisions it incorporates for the females. Along with providing social security, rural employment, and eradicating poverty, the scheme has played a significant role in rural women's upliftment. The paper is based on secondary data. The qualitative-quantitative mixed-model method is used and explores women's participation in India's North-eastern states through the programme. It analyses the implementation of MGNREGS with a comparative view of Assam and Meghalaya. The study also highlights the current status in Assam, which, despite having the highest number of job cardholders, failed to achieve the desired level of outcomes in the programme and also lagged in women participation. The paper offers inputs for better outcomes in Meghalaya and also suggests measures to overcome the lacunas of the scheme in Assam.

*Senior Research Fellow, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University. Aligarh, India **Email:** sarahchoudhury0@gmail.com

Senior Research Fellow, Department of Political Science, Aligarh Muslim University. Aligarh, India **Email: hmizhara@gmail.com

KEYWORDS: Women's participation, MGNREGA, Empowerment, North-East, Efficiency, India

INTRODUCTION

In the growth and development of a nation like India, gender is an indispensable push factor. Women's role is considered passive, and women have played a significant role in the growth and development since the dawn of humankind. Though they constitute half a portion of the Indian population, women have been facing inequalities and vulnerability in all spheres of their lives. To uplift rural women's lives and enable them to live a decent life, India's Government took steps, and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is one of the women-friendly programmes.

An employment guarantee programme addresses the factors acting as impediments for equality for women in India's context. Along with providing social security, eliminating poverty from the grassroots level, and creating a productive asset, and employment guarantee programme can reduce gender inequalities in numerous ways. MGNREGA has been playing a significant role in bringing significant changes in the lives of women. MGNREGA is empowering women economically and helping them in becoming independent and gain self-esteem (Ramesh & Kumar, 2009). MGNREGS has increased female worker participation in many Indian states like Kerala and Karnataka. However, MGNREGA has not produced a minimum of 33 per cent women participation, the desired benchmark set in all states (Nidhi, 2011).

The struggle for an employment guaranteed mechanism led to a landmark enactment of the "Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" (MGNREGA) in the Indian parliament. Indian government notified the programme on September 7, 2005, in 200 rural districts in its first phase of implementation, which took effect from February 2, 2006. It extended to include an additional 130 rural districts in 2007-08. The remaining districts were included with effect from April 1, 2008, with a mandate to provide the rural household's livelihood security. In a financial year, every household where adult member volunteers do unskilled manual work is guaranteed 100 days of wage employment. It is a right-based and demand-driven employment programme making it peculiar from the rest other employment

schemes. Besides social inclusion and employment generation, the programme is designed in such a way to help in bridging gender equality and also the development of women. Women related provisions are-

- 1) At least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women (NREGA, 2005, Schedule II, 6).
- 2) If the number of children under six years of age accompanying women employed at some site is five or more, there is a way to depute one of these women working to take care of the children. (NREGA, 2005, Schedule II, 28).
- 3) No discrimination is permitted solely on the grounds of gender, as maintained by the terms of the Act of Equal Remuneration, 1976 (25 of 1976) (NREGA, 2005, Schedule II, 34).
- 4) This scheme also allows women to plan and implement MGNREGA as Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat members. Women represent not fewer than one-third of the overall number of non-official members of the Central Council (NREGA 2005, Part II, and Sec-3i).

Some other provisions include working within a radius of five kilometres from the house, absence of contractor, flexibility in choosing periods and months of employment made are not solely for men, but those are productive for the women in rural areas (NREGA, 2005). MGNREGA has a positive impact on the employment pattern of women. Women were benefited both at the individual level and community as a whole. Women are empowered in economic terms because they can earn independently, spend some money on their own needs, contribute to family expenditure. The benefits women gained as a community can be understood by the increased presence in the Gram Sabha, an increasing number of women speaking out in the meetings, increasing interaction capacity (Das & Singh, 2013).

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN MGNREGA ACROSS THE NORTHEASTERN STATES OF INDIA

The implementation of MGNREGA in almost every state of India is different. Its result is different across states because of the various state governments' different strategies in implementation. A massive amount of budget is allocated to MGNREGA to enhance rural people's lives, especially women. The performance of MGNREGA in North-eastern seven-sister states has had a deleterious effect in the states of Sikkim, Meghalaya, Nagaland, and Manipur. While the states of Assam, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh have not generated 33

per cent of women participation, a benchmark set by the government (Reddy, 2014). India's government has been pursuing and hoping to achieve the scheme's objective by uplifting the rural population's condition. It is evident from the tremendous allocation of budget. The government is trying to develop and enhance rural mass lives and empower them, especially women. Table 1 below highlights the employment scenario of MGNREGA in the region.

Table 1: Employment Status of MGNREGS as on 25-08-2020

States	Total No. of Active Job Card (in Lakh)	Total households worked (in Lakh)	Households provided 100 days of employment
Arunachal Pradesh	2.54	2.03	46
Assam	53.1	15.68	11,297
Manipur	5.77	5.16	3
Meghalaya	6.1	4.15	86,473
Mizoram	2.02	1.89	56,528
Nagaland	4.4	4.18	182
Sikkim	0.85	0.68	8,401
Tripura	6.38	5.77	1,16,090

Source: NREGA programme webpage (<https://nrega.nic.in/>)

The official data in table no.1 shows that among eight states, in Assam highest job card has been issued so far, but the performance of Assam is not on par compared to other states like Tripura, Sikkim, Meghalaya and others. Upliftment, development, and women's empowerment have always been a priority for India's Government for a long. The government has promulgated various schemes for women and made various constitution provisions for women's empowerment, and MGNREGA is not an exception. The scheme has also made various provisions for women empowerment. Table no. 2 below highlights women's participation in MGNREGA among the Northeast Indian states during 2018-19.

Table 2: Women participation (%) in Northeast India during 2018-19

States	Women Participation (%)
1.Arunachal Pradesh	38.69
2. Assam	41.8
3.Manipur	47.41
4. Meghalaya	50.15
5. Mizoram	37.95
6. Nagaland	31.56
7. Sikkim	50.93
8. Tripura	46.19

Source: Gol, Ministry of Rural Development Website. (<https://rural.nic.in/>)

The official MGNREGA data in table no.2 shows that the state of Meghalaya and Sikkim are at the top in women participation amongst the North-eastern states, while the performance of Nagaland is not good enough as it has not achieved 33 per cent of women participation, a benchmark set by Government of India (2014). The government is making a rigorous effort to make the programme efficient and effective and adopt measures to overcome the hurdles and hindrances in its successful implementation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MGNREGS IN THE STATE OF ASSAM

Alike in other parts of India, the programme implemented in Assam in three phases. The first phase of MGNREGA introduced in seven districts of Assam in 2006-07. The second phase covered six districts in 2007-08, and the rest districts were covered by 2008-09. The state has 32 districts (which was earlier 27, 5 districts created in 2015), 239 blocks and 2673 Gram Panchayats. At present, in Assam alone, 51.95 lakh job cards have been issued, out of which 30.97 lakh job cards are active. The total number of workers is 88.67 lakh, of which 47.29 lakh are active (<https://nrega.nic.in/>).

Hazarika found in his study that Gender empowerment of the scheme in Morigaon and Bongaigaon districts of Assam reflects that almost 70 to 80 per cent of workers taken for the study has had meaningful income other than unpaid family work during the pre-MGNREGA.

A significant portion of the worker has felt that they have a better position to fulfill their own needs and requirement without looking at others (Hazarika, 2009).

MGNREGA has benefitted women worker significantly. However, the implementation process has numerous hurdles which need to be tackled soon. (K. Borah & R. Bordoloi, 2014) The performance of MGNREGA is poor in Assam. In Assam, MGNREGA, if appropriately implemented, can improve the socio-economic condition. After independence, a significant part of the state has been suffering from lack of infrastructure, inadequate health facilities and acute poverty (Saikia, 2017).

MGNREGA intends to provide guaranteed wage employment and rural people's development, but Assam has hardly achieved the goals. Amongst all household that got job cards, only one third has avail 100 days of work. In 2012-13, the Ministry of Rural Development published a report on the performance and implementation of MGNREGA in all states. According to the report, the performance of Assam was abysmally low, which is quite visible in the report. In the financial year 2012-13, the total number of job cards holders were 39,49,587, out of which only 12,10,472 households got work. Among these job cardholders, only 9,780 job cardholders got 100 days' work, 3,21,300 household got less than ten days work, and 6,90,950 households had 15 days' work (Economic Survey of Assam, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15).

Table 3: Women participation in MGNREGA in Assam

Financial Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Women participation (%)	36.49	38.5	41.08	41.77

Source: GoI, Ministry of Rural Development. (<https://rural.nic.in/>)

The MGNREGA data in table no. 3 reflects the increasing women participation in Assam but slower. From 36.49 per cent in 2016-17 to 41.77 per cent in 2019-2020. The participation of women in Assam is less than in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and the other Indian States. Even the Northeastern States- Sikkim, Meghalaya, Tripura reflect better women participation in

the programme. The programme's performance is not satisfactory, and the state has not been able to successfully implement the programme even though the state has the highest job cardholders amongst the Northeastern states of India.

Many factors are responsible for the lower and less participation of women in Assam. The reasons are listed below:

- 1) **Lack of awareness:** The village workforce for whom the programme intended to cater are not aware of the programme. There is a shortage of awareness in rural areas of Assam regarding the scheme. The women are not aware of the provisions that are given to them by the Act.
- 2) **Absence of child care facilities:** The scheme provides an arrangement for childcare facilities for women having children below five years of age. However, there is no child care facility at the work-site in Assam, which results in the low participation of women in MGNREGA.
- 3) **Lack of work-site facilities:** MGNREGA guideline lays down that the work-site need to well equipped with proper facilities like-safe drinking water, restroom, proper sanitation, change room, first-aid facilities. However, in Assam, most of these facilities are absent at the work-site. There are no monitoring facilities also.
- 4) **Delay in disbursing payment:** Payment of the workers cannot disburse within the stipulated time. There are corruption and delay in payment and lack a proper payment medium - bank or postal services.
- 5) **Underemployment:** Assam government is unable to employ most of its job cardholders. The works there are undertaken under MGNREGA are not even enough to reduce underemployment.
- 6) **Absence of Social Audit:** The MGNREGA provision of Social Audit by Gram Sabha on works is either not done or flawed, requiring auditing every six months. Unfortunately, most rural masses are not aware of Social Audit because of the absence of a proper medium like Village Employment Council.

IMPLEMENTATION OF MGNREGS IN THE STATE OF MEGHALAYA

In Meghalaya, the scheme was implemented and officially enforced in West Garo and South Garo Hills Districts on May 4, 2006. In three more Districts - Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Ri

bhoi the programme was implemented in 2007-08. Moreover, in the last phase, 2008-09, the programme was implemented in the rest of the districts (Sameeksha, 2013). The state has 11 Districts, 46 Blocks, 6332 Panchayats, and so far, 6.1 Lakh job cards have been issued, out of which 5.56 Lakh job cards are active (<https://nrega.nic.in/>).

The women's participation in Gram Sabha and social audit acts as an instrument of women's political empowerment. The Act has promoted the collective strength of women in various spheres of rural life. The most crucial impact of MGNREGA on women is that they came to know each other through their work and helped each other in several ways. (Hirway, 2011) Along with provisions given in the MGNREGA guideline, several legal enactments have come into effect, and the state government took several steps to implement the scheme successfully. The steps taken are as follows:

- The distribution of the wage to the beneficiaries has been made through the postal service and bank.
- In Meghalaya, the rate of 153 Indian rupees is a fixed ceiling for unskilled labour.
- For successful implementation of the programme, new institutions have been formed viz. Village Employment Council, Area Employment Council, Block employment Council and District Employment Council.
- A Register of Works must be maintained by every Village Employment Council or Area Employment Council for work that commencement letters are received for the financial year.
- Village Employment Council and Programme officer are made responsible for organising and executing Social Audit once in six months,
- For the effective implementation of the programme, Vigilance and monitoring councils have been established at different levels.

Table 3: Women participation in MGNREGA in Meghalaya

Financial year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Women participation (%)	44.28	46.8	50.15	50.51

Source: NREGA programme webpage (<https://nrega.nic.in/>)

The official data of MGNREGA for Meghalaya shows an increasing trend in women participation from 44.28 per cent in 2016-17 to 50.51 per cent in 2019-20. The government of Meghalaya has been trying hard to achieve the objectives of the programme. The various machinery helping in the attainment of MGNREGA goals in Meghalaya are:

The District Employment Council (DEC): The governing body of DRDA has been notified as District Employment Council and invested with Zila Panchayat's responsibilities. It is the principal authority to planning and implementation of the scheme.

Block Employment Council (BEC): Block Selection Committee has been notified as Block Employment Council and is vested with Block Panchayat's responsibilities. It has the authority to approve and finalise a plan that consists of a consolidated shelf of the projects undertaken under the scheme, monitors the projects taken up in the block, and performs all responsibilities delegated to it by the District Employment and State Council.

Area Employment Council (AEC): It is organised at a cluster level comprising villages within a 2.5 km radius. There are one or more than one Village Employment Council under its jurisdiction. The council consists of three elected representatives from each Village Employment Council that are under its jurisdiction. The total number of members in the council should not exceed 20, and 30 per cent of the members must be women.

Village Employment Council (VEC): It is constituted in the village under 'paragraph 7A' of MGNREGS. It is vested with the power and functions of Gram Sabha as it is provided in the Act. The Village Employment Council has played a significant role in providing livelihood and employment to job card holders and women empowerment in Meghalaya. The scheme mainly aimed to empower women by becoming VEC and Area Employment Council members. The VEC is established at the village level and constituted by male and female of each household (Cornwall, 2010).

DISCUSSION

The above discussion about both the states - Meghalaya and Assam show that among the North-eastern states, Sikkim, Tripura, Meghalaya are doing well in MGNREGA. The scheme is

implemented efficiently and effectively in Meghalaya because of the better administrative system. The state has also achieved the benchmark of minimum one-third participation of women in the scheme as given in the provisions (Das & Singh, 2013). There is a wide gap between Meghalaya and Assam regarding women participation, though participation has now increased slowly in Assam women. The administrative set-up in Assam has failed to execute and implement the programme efficiently and cannot change the life of grass-root level masses.

SUGGESTIONS TO REDUCE LOOPHOLES

There are lacunas because of which Assam is not able to achieve the desired goal of the scheme. These are some measures that can reduce the loopholes:

- 1) There is a need to make people aware of the scheme and its provisions. For this purpose, the government should make an advertisement about the schemes in newspaper, Tv, Radio. Banners and Street plays have a role to play.
- 2) The government should provide work-site facilities like safe drinking water and restroom to increase the participation of people.
- 3) Child care facility must be made available for increasing women participation.
- 4) Payment of wages should be paid within a given time, and a record should be maintained properly.
- 5) A social audit should be done accurately, and there should be transparency and accountability.
- 6) To successfully implement the scheme and increase women participation, Assam's government should strengthen the Panchayat Raj System because it is linked directly with the grass-root level.
- 7) The Government of Assam must establish Village Employment Council, Area Employment Council like in Meghalaya for the effective execution of the scheme and for higher participation of women as these organisations keep check which leads to the achievement of the aim of the scheme and the development of the grass-root level of Indian democracy.

CONCLUSION

The Government of India has launched several employment programmes and rural development programmes after independence for rural life's upliftment. MGNREGS is the most extensive poverty alleviation programme globally, described as a "Stellar example of rural development" by the World Development Report, 2014. The programme is unique and acts as a ray of hope to rural households because of providing guaranteed employment to registered workers. The programme has brought revolutionary changes in many rural parts of the country, where it has executed efficiently and effectively. While in Assam, the scheme is facing impediments as a result of which it has become impossible for the state government to achieve the programme's objectives. The state government must take adequate steps in implementing the scheme to reduce poverty, generate employment, and develop rural masses' lives. Otherwise, the story of rural development and the implementation of MGNREGA remains only in pen and paper. Non-Governmental Organisations should also join hand with the government for holistic development; only then we can realise the dream of Developed India.

REFERENCES

1. Pankaj, Ashok and Tankha, Rukmini (2010). Empowerment Effects of the NREGS on Women Workers: A Study in four States. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 45(30), 45-55. <https://www.epw.in/journal/2010/30/special-articles/empowerment-effects-nregs-women-workers-study-four-states.html>.
2. *Assam Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme*, Assam Law House, Gandhi Boston, Guwahati, 2009.
3. Pandey, Babita and Ahmed Wani, Tanweer (2014). A case study of women participation in MGNREGA in Kashmir. *International Journal of Allied Practice Research and Review.*; Borah, Kabita, Bordoloi and Rimjhim. (2014). MGNREGA and Its Impact on Daily Waged Women Workers: A Case Study of Sonitpur District of Assam. *IOSR Journal of Economics and Finance*, 4(4), 40-44.
4. Bhattya, Kiran (2008, March 16). Falling Through the Cracks. *The Hindu, Sunday Magazine*. <http://www.hinduonnet.com/mag/2008/03/16/stories/2008031650040200.htm>

5. Cornwall, A. (2016). Women's Empowerment: What works?. *Journal of International Development*, 28, 342-359.
6. Das, D. (2020). Empowerment of Rural Women through MGNREGA-A Study of MGNREGA Implementation in Barpeta Development Block of Barpeta District of Assam. *Journal of Critical Review*, 7(7), 334-339.
7. Das, M. (2006). Do Traditional Axes of Exclusion affect Labour Market Outcomes in India? Washington DC, World Bank.
8. Das, S. and Singh, A. (2013). The Impact of Temporary Work Guarantee programs on Children's Education: Evidence from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Guarantee Act from India. Whitewater, WI: Department of Economics, University of Wisconsin. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2368011>.
9. Economic Survey of Assam, 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17.
10. Ghosh, Jayati (2008). Equity and Inclusion through Public Expenditure. Paper presented at the International Conference on NREGA, Ministry of Rural Development and ICAR, 21-22 January 2009.
11. Gnyaneswar, D. (2016). Women Empowerment through MGNREGS. *Anveshana's International Journal of Research in Regional Studies, Law, Social Sciences, Journalism and Management Practices*, 1(7), 68-75.
12. Government of India (2012). MGNREGA Sameeksha: An Anthology of Research Studies on the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, 2006-2012.
13. Ministry of Rural Development. (2013). Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 (Mahatma Gandhi NREGA): Operational Guidelines, New Delhi, Government of India.
14. Ministry of Rural Development. (2016). Annual Report, 2015-2016. Government of India, New Delhi.
15. Hazarika, Pranati Gogoi. (2009). Promoting Women Empowerment and Gender Equality through the Right to Decent Work: Implementation of National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) in Assam State (India): A Case Study. *Graduate School of Development Studies, A research paper presented in partial fulfilment of the degree of masters of arts in development studies*.
16. Hirway, I. (2011). MGNREGA & Women Empowerment. U.N. Women Press. New York.

17. Imbert, C.; Papp, J. (2015). Labour market effects of social programs: Evidence from India's Employment Guarantee. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 7(2), pp.233–263.
18. Agro-Economic Research Centre for North East India. (2011). Impact of NREGA on Wage Rates, Food Security and Rural-Urban Migration - A Study in Assam. Study No. 138. Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat.
19. Jha, R and G Raghav (2012). NREGS: Interpreting Official Statistics. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 47(40), 18-22.
20. Jha, R., Gaiha, R. & Shankar, S. (2008). Reviewing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(10), 44-48.
21. Kar, S. (2013). Empowerment of women through MGNREGS: issues and challenges. *Odisha Review*, 69(7-8), 76-80.
22. Khera, R. & Nayak, N. (2009). Woman Workers and Perceptions of the NREGA. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44, 49-57.
23. Kumar, D.U and Bhattacharyya, P. (2013). Participation of Women in MGNREGA: How far is it Successful in Morigaon, Assam?. *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*, 1(2), 38- 48.
24. Ministry of Rural Development (2013, February). Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005: Report to the People. Government of India.
25. Meena K and Sen, V (2017). Participation of Women Worker in MGNREGA: A Case Study of Jaipur District of Rajasthan. *Journal of Agricultural Development and Policy*, 27, 61-68.
26. NCUES. (2007). *Report on conditions of work and promotion of livelihoods in the unorganised sector*. Government of India, New Delhi.
27. Narayanan, S (2008). Employment Guarantee, Women's Work and Childcare. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43, 10-13.
28. Narayanan, N.C., and Lokhande, N. (2013). Designed to Falter, MGNREGA Implementation in Maharashtra. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 68 (26/27), 6-66.
29. Narayanan, S. and U. Das., (2014). Woman Participation and Rationing in the Employment Guarantee Scheme. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 49 (46), 46-53.
30. NSSO (2013, June). Key Indicators of Employment and Unemployment in India, 68th Round July 2011-June 2012, National Sample Survey, Government of India.

31. Panda, B. & Umdor, S (2011). Appraisal and Impact Assessment of MGNREGA in Assam. North-Eastern Hill University.
32. Panday, S. and Mehta, S. (2020). Women Participation in MGNREGA: Study on the Northeastern States. *Sustainable Humanosphere*, 16(1), 1624-1637.
33. Pankaj, A., & Tankha, R. (2009). Women's Empowerment through Guaranteed Employment. *New Delhi: Institute for Human Development*.
34. Planning Commission. (2011). *India Human Development Report 2011: Towards social inclusion*. Institute of Applied Manpower Research, Government of India.
35. Rani, R. (2016). Women Participation in MGNREGA with special reference to Tehri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand. *Abhinav National Monthly Refereed Journal of Research in Commerce & Management*. Online ISSN-2277-1166, 5(1), 42-51.
36. Ravi, S., & Engler, M. (2015). Workfare as an effective way to fight poverty: The case of India's NREGS. *World Development*, 67, 57-71.
37. Comptroller and Auditor General of India. (2013). *Report on MGNREGS* (Report No. 3 of 2013). Government of Assam. https://cag.gov.in/cag_old/content/report-no-3-2013-report-comptroller-and-auditor-general-india-mahatma-gandhi-national-rural.
38. Gangadhara, R. Y., & Aswath, G. R. (2016). Performance of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in Karnataka, India. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(1), 15-19.
39. Saharia, R.P. (2014, April-June). MGNREGA: Empowerment of Women through Employment Generation (A Case study of Chhattisgarh). *International Journal of Reviews and Research in Social Science*. 2(2), 99-104.
40. Sharma, A. (2012). SC/ST Employment Guarantee: Women's Empowerment in Rural India by MGNREGA. *International Journal of Human Development and Management Sciences*, 1(1), 1-22.
41. Saikia, T. N. (2011). Impact of National Rural Employment Programme: A study in Lakhimpur and Jorhat District in Assam, Agro-economic Research Centre for NE India, Jorhat.
42. Shah, Mihir. (2004). A Historic Opportunity. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39(50), 5287-5291. Retrieved February 2, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4415889>.

43. Sudarshan, Ratna (2011). India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: Women's Participation and Impacts in Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Rajasthan. *Research Report Summary 06*, Institute of Development Studies.
44. Tripathi, T. (2011, December). Women's empowerment: Concept and empirical evidence from India. In *annual conference ('Winter School') of the Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics*, 10-13.
45. V. L. Lavanya & S. Mahima (2013). Empowerment of rural women through MGNREGA with special references to Palakkad. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(7), 271-276.
http://zenithresearch.org.in/images/stories/pdf/2013/JULY/ZIJMR/28_ZIJMR_VOL3_ISSUE7_JULY2013.pdf
46. www.nrega.nic.in.
47. <https://megsres.nic.in/implementation-mgnregs-meghalaya>.
48. <https://rural.nic.in/>