

**GENDERED MARGINALITIES & WORK: A CASE OF
MGNREGA IN RURAL WEST BENGAL**

*Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
for the award of the Degree of*

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SARMISTHA SAHA



**CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI – 110067**

India

2021

RECOMMENDATION FORM FOR EVALUATION BY THE EXAMINER/S

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation /thesis titled '**Gendered Marginalities and Work: A Case of MGNREGA in Rural West Bengal**' submitted by Mr. /Ms. **SARMISTHA SAHA** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for award of degree of M.Phil/ M.Tech/ **Ph.D** of Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi has not been previously submitted in part or in full for any other degree of this university or any other university / institution.

We recommend this thesis/dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation for the award of the degree of M.Phil/M.Tech./**Ph.D.**



Signature of Supervisor



Centre for the Study of Reg Dev.
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067
Date: 24.03.2021



Signature of Co-Supervisor

Date: 26.03.2021


17.8.21

Signature of Dean/Chairperson



Chairperson
Centre for the Study of Reg Dev.
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067

Date:

STUDENT'S DECLARATION FORM FOR SUBMISSION OF DISSERTATION
/THESIS (M.Phil./M.Tech./Ph.D.)

Name of the Student	SARMISTHA SAHA
Name of the Institution affiliated to JNU, if applicable	Not Applicable
Registration No.	08014540/08.
Enrolment No.	08/63/MS/029
Library ID No.	08014540
Name of the Supervisor	Prof.Sucharita Sen Prof.Saraswati Raju
Title of Thesis/Dissertation	Gendered Marginalities & Work: A Case Of MGNREGA In Rural West Bengal
Date of Submission	29.06.2021
Name of the Degree	PhD.
Subject Key Words	Gender, Rural Development, MGNREGA
Coverage (for time periods or spatial regions only)	West Bengal
Language of thesis/dissertation	English
Phone No. & E-mail ID	Phone No. 09735142024 Email: sarmis2008mailbox@gmail.com

N.B: None of the above columns should be left blank.

✓
I, Mr/Ms. SARMISTHA SAHA registered in the above-mentioned **PhD./M.Phil./M.Tech** Programme of the University hereby declare /certify that:

✓ 1. The soft copy (in PDF format) of my thesis titled as above is in accordance with the guidelines issued by JNU for this purpose and is complete in all respects.

✓ 2. It is also certified that the thesis has been checked against plagiarism using Turnitin, an anti-plagiarism software.

✓ 3. I am the sole owner of the copyright of this thesis. The Jawaharlal Nehru University Library is hereby granted non-exclusive , royalty-free non-transferable rights to make available in full or in part without any modifications this thesis/ dissertations in electronic /printed form for public use at no charge. Any use of material from this thesis/dissertation must be accompanied with appropriate citation.

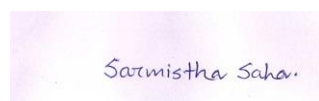
✓ 4. As per JNU Rules, Open access /Internet access to thesis /dissertation will be available after three years embargo period. However, I wish to allow open access to my thesis/dissertation:

(i) Immediately after the award of the degree

(ii) One year after the award of the degree

✓ iii) Two years after the award of degree

✓ 5. I declare and certify that this thesis /dissertation, as titled above, submitted by the undersigned at the school /Centre/Special Centre **SSS-I,CSR,D,JNU.**, New Delhi for award of the degree of **Ph.D/ M.phil/M.Tech in Geography** is an original work and has not been submitted so far in part or full, for another degree or diploma in this University or in any other University/Institution.



Signature of the Student

Date: 29.06.21

CONTENTS

Acknowledgement

List of Tables

List of Plates

List of Graphs

List of Figures

Chapter 1 Introduction	1-27
Introduction	1-3
Features of MGNREGS	3-5
Provisions for Women in MGNREGA	5-6
Theoretical Background of the Work	6-11
Causes of the Selection of MGNREGS as a Case	11
Objective, Research Questions, Database and Methodology	11-27
Organization of the Thesis	27
Chapter 2 .Literature Review	28-38
MGNREGS and Right to Work	28-30
MGNREGS and its Impact on Women’s Livelihood	31-34
Women’s Issues in MGNREGS	34-37
Issues Emerged from Survey of Literature	37-38
Chapter 3. An Analysis of Physiographic Control on MGNREGA	39-72
Introduction and Section -I	39-48
Section -II	48-72
Chapter 4 Transformative Change of Women’s Livelihood through MGNREGA	73-94
Introduction	73-75
Gap in Realization of Asset Benefits and Livelihood Opportunities	75-82
Gap in Realizing Movement of Rural Women from Private to Public Spheres	82-90
Gap in Realizing Change in Gender Roles within Household	90-94

Chapter 5 Effect of MGNREGS on Household and Other Gender Dynamics	95-114
Introduction	95-98
Change in Household Gender Dynamics	98-105
Change in Community Gender Attributes	105-114
Chapter 6 Intersectionality in Women Workers of MGNREGS: Participation & Benefits	115-139
Introduction	115-116
The Intersection of Caste and Gender in MGNREGS Participation	116-132
Intersection of Caste and Gender Attaining MGNREGS Benefits	132-139
Chapter 7 Summary and Conclusion	140-150
References	151-168
Annexure	169-182
Questionnaire	183-194

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to my supervisors, Prof. Sucharita Sen and Prof. Saraswati Raju for their constant guidance while writing this thesis. Long interactions with my esteemed professors and their continuous encouragement persuaded me to constantly thrive for perfection in my work. I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude for their patience and corrections. The comments and suggestions of Prof. Raju often helped me to get back in track. To Prof. Raju, I owe my strength to deal with most difficult situation of my life that I had to face during the tenure of this thesis.

I am thankful to the professors of my university, prof. Deepak Mishra and Prof. Anuradha Banerjee for their valuable input in my pre-submission presentation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all respondents of my field survey and all village officials who took time out to answer all my questions.

This work would not have done without the support of my friends, Dr. Deepak Yadav, Dr. Sreenita Mandal and Dr. Chetna Naskar. I am thankful to the juniors of my centre, Kirti, Soumi and Lozaan for their support, love and encouragement. They continuously supported me in my tough times and provided academic support whenever required.

I am extremely indebted to my husband Sumeet who have helped me throughout my journey and for being extremely patient in my uncertain days. Without him, nothing would be possible. I am indebted to my sister Arundhati Saha Gupta and brother Rajib Kumar Gupta for providing me strength and comfort throughout the journey.

For any error, I am solely responsible.

Sarmistha Saha

LIST OF TABLES

Table No.	Title	Page No.
1.1	Features of MGNREGA	3
1.2	The list of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA works as per the Schedule-I of MGNREGA	4
1.3	Calculation of Indicators for State Selection	14
1.4	Composite Rank Score of Indian States	15
1.5	District Specific Gender Development Index (GDI) of West Bengal (2004).	16
1.6	Profile of the Selected Villages	17
1.7	Background information of the Surveyed Households: Demographic Characteristics	20
1.8	Background Information of the Surveyed Households: Household Characteristics	22
1.9	Schematic Representation of the Methodologies Used	25
3.1	Calculation of Average of General Indicators in Plateau	42
3.2	Calculation of Average of General Indicators in Plain	43
3.3	Calculation of Average of Indicators Related with Women in Plateau	44
3.4	Calculation of Average of Indicators Related with Women in Plain	45
3.5	Comparison between Plain and Plateau on the basis of selected General Indicators and Indicators Related with Women	47
3.6	Representation of MGNREGS Workdays across Locations	51
3.7	Distance of Regular Worksites of Women in Plain and Plateau	54
3.8	Distance of MGNREGS Worksites for Women in Plain and the Plateau	56
3.9	Awareness about MGNREGS by Men and Women	59
3.10	Contribution of MGNREGA in Household Income	60
3.11	Location and Gender wise Share of Samples Who have Worked only for MGNREGS (Category-III Samples)	61
3.12	Reason for Non -Participation in Any Work by Samples Who Worked for MGNREGS Only (Category III Samples) in Plain and Plateau	62
3.13	Average Spending of MGNREGS Wage by Samples Who Have Worked Only in MGNREGS (Category-III Samples)	64
3.14	Benefits from MGNREGS Created Assets across Locations	66
5.1	Decision Making Process Regarding Daily Household Activities	100
5.2	Decision Making Process Regarding Different Aspects of MGNREGS	100

5.3	Pattern of Sharing Household Work Burden while doing MGNREGS work for Women	103
5.4	Share of Cooking Responsibility by Men While Women are at MGNREGS Work	103
5.5	Responses Related to Attending MGNREGS Related Meeting in the Last Three Years	106
5.6	Responses Related to Attending Other Village Meetings in the Last Three Years	107
5.7	The Incidence of Meeting Attendance and Speaking in Public	108
5.8	Time of Opening Bank Accounts	110
5.9	Reason for Visiting Panchayat by Women	112
5.10	Reason for Not Visiting Panchayat by Women	112
6.1	Distribution of Population in Different Caste Categories in Surveyed Villages	116
6.2	Distribution of Population in Different Caste Categories in Sample Population	117
6.3	Comparison between Share of Different Castes to Total Population and Caste-Specific MGNREGS Participation	117
6.4	Caste-Gender Intersection in Decision Making regarding Household Activities among Focussed Group Discussion Respondents	120
6.5	Process of MGNREGS Related Decision-Making by FGD Respondents	121
6.6	Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories	124
6.7	Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories in Plain	124
6.8	Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories in Plateau	124
6.9	Caste Based Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories	125
6.10	Reason for Not Participating in Other Works by Women	126
6.11	Caste –Specific Reason for Not Participating in Other Works by Women	127
6.12	Comparison between Gender & Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays	132
6.13	Comparison between Gender and Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays in Plain	133
6.14	Comparison between Gender and Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays in Plateau	134
6.15	Major Head of Spending of MGNREGS Wage by Category III Sample	135
6.16	Cross Gender Improvement of Livelihood through MGNREGS Created Assets	138

LIST OF PLATES

Plate No.	Title	Page No.
1	Generation of Rural common Property Resources (CPR) in Field Area (i) Women in Plantation Maintenance (ii) Fruit Orchard in Basatpur Village (iii) Rabi Cultivation with the Help of Micro-Irrigation Project (iv) Transformation of Barren Land into Pond and Vegetable Cultivation in Gopendanga Village (v) Community Vegetable Garden in Mandiha Village (vi) Useful Pond Created by MGNREGS in Basatpur Village	69

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph No.	Title	Page No.
1	The Distribution of MGNREGS Workdays across Gender and Location	50
2	Distance of Regular Worksites for Women in the Plain and the Plateau	57
3	Distance of MGNREGS Worksites for Women in Plain and Plateau	58
4	Graph: Caste and Gender Intersection of MGNREGS Workdays	118
5	Gendered Pattern of MGNREGS Job Demand by Different Category of Samples	131

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. No.	Title	Page No.
1	Concept of Marginality overlap developed by Gurung and Collmair (2005)	7
2	Location of Survey Site	17
3	Location Map	18
4	Distribution of Samples across Categories and Location	19
5	Conceptual Framework of physiography-Gender-MGNREGS Link	52
6.	Role of Rural common Property Resources (CPR) in Villager's Lives	68

Chapter 1

Introduction

The background of rural development in India is agricultural distress, rural unemployment and low level of income. With a poor population of 364 million out of a total population of 1324.51 million ¹ in 2015-16, the situation has made the rural poverty a major policy concern. Heterogeneity in Indian physiography and social structure with vast diversity in physiography, size, form and patterns of settlement, population and socio-cultural attributes has made the task difficult for policy makers. Furthermore, intersection of caste and gender in rural poverty has made the situation even worse. Indian rural development policies have adopted transformative as well as improvement approach from time to time. A series of employment generating programmes have been implemented and successive strategies have been adopted to exterminate the issue of rural poverty. Some of the mentionable rural development programmes are:

1. Community Development Programme (CDP)-1952
2. Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) -1980
3. Training for Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)-1979
4. National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) -1980
5. Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP)-1983.
6. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) - 1989
7. Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY)-1993
8. Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)-1998
9. Swarana Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) - 1999
10. Swarjnayanti Gram Sworozgar Yojana (SGSY)-1999
11. Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) -2001
12. Food for Work Programme (FWP) -2004

In India, 4th Five Year Plan shows the incorporation of rural safety nets to generate employment for rural unemployed people. Community Development Programme (CDP) inaugurated on October 2, 1952 is the first ever attempt to generate rural employment. In 1979, the first ever self-employment drive was carried out under the banner of Training for Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) programme. Rural unemployed people in the age group between 18-35 years underwent self-employment training in rural field based

¹Projected : source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/263766/total-population-of-india/>

activities. This scheme ended in March 1999. After that IRDP, Development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA) and Million Wells Scheme (MWS) etc. have been merged together and emerged as Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) in 1999.

MGNREGA was conceived after the implementation of a series of wage employment programmes like National Rural Employment Programme (NREP: 1980), Rural landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP: 1983), Jawahar Rozgar Yozana (2001) and National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP: 2004).

The scheme is having direct impetus for the implementation of MGNREGA is Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme (MEGS) which ran for 30 long years in Maharashtra. Four major wage employment programmes have been subsumed in MGNREGA. These are Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojna (SGRY), National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Jawahar Gram Samridhhi Yojna (JGSY) etc. Among all these rural development programmes, MGNREGA got the attention of researchers from the very beginning. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act popularly known as NREGA came into existence by the legislation of Union Government in August 25, 2005 with effect from February 2, 2006. It was implemented in 200 most backward districts of the country² with a promise to cover all districts of the country within next five years.

This act is renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (M.G.NREGA) on 2nd October, 2009. “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.” (NREGA operational guidelines, 2008). This act marks a paradigm shift in the history of rural employment generating programmes in India as it empowers the rural population with a legal right of employment. According to Government of India figures, India needed 1000 lakh jobs by year 2012, most of which were in rural areas. 68th National Sample Survey (NSSO) Report indicates that the average growth of employment between 2004-05 and 2011-12 remains low at 2.5 million per year and proportion of females in labour force is much lower than the proportion of males in both rural and urban area. Himanshu (2011) and Abraham (2013) argued that a drastic fall of employment has been occurred in female participation after 2004-2005. Abraham (2013) called it “de-feminisation.” Shaw (2013) estimated that 50% of Indian workers are self-employed and a huge section of these self-

² See annexure , Table no. 1.1 (a) and 1.1 (b)

employed people is seeking meaningful work. It was argued by Centre for Science and Environment, (2008) that Indian rural self-employment is often distress-driven. Employment scarcity is pushing rural people to petty self-employment with low and uncertain income. 68th Round NSSO survey indicates that the increase in self-employment has been sharpest among the rural women. In this context, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) is surely a right step towards mitigating the gap between misleading unemployment decline and increasing need for jobs in the rural areas. Rural regeneration through the revival of common resources for rural disadvantaged communities and boosting of rural economy through employment generation is the aim of this Act.

Started with 200 backward districts of the country in 2006, MGNREGA included 330 additional districts in 2007-2008 and rest of the rural districts of the country came under its coverage in financial year 2009-2010.³This large coverage have made MGNREGA the largest social protection based initiative in the world.

Features of MGNREGS

The features of MGNREGS is diverse in character. A discussion on each aspect of this scheme is needed to understand the extensive nature of this scheme.

Table: 1.1. Features of MGNREGA

Aspects	Provisions as per NREGA operational guidelines
(i) Eligibility	<i>a) Any rural inhabitant who has attained 18 years of age. b) No upper age limit for MGNREGA work.</i>
(ii) Employment	<i>a) The maximum gap between job demand and job receiving under MGNREGS is 15 days. b) Employment is considered as a right of the employment seeker. c) Employment guarantee within 15 days of job demand. d) At least 14 employment days to every incumbent.</i>
(iii) Wage	<i>a) The wage for MGNREGS work depends on the statutory minimum wage rate of a particular state and subjected to revision from time to time. b) Equal wage for men and women.</i>

³See annexure , Table no. 1.1

(iv) Payment	a) <i>Weekly payment.</i> b) <i>Payment through bank only.</i>
(vi) Distance of the worksites	a) <i>MGNREGS work is supposed to be provided within 5 kilometer radius applicant's residence failing which the state will provide travel allowance/ living allowance in a specified rate (extra 10% of mentioned state wage).</i>
(viii) Workplace provisions	a) <i>shade</i> b) <i>Drinking water</i> c) <i>Crèche for worksites having at least six children below five years of age.</i> d) <i>First aid.</i>
(ix) Work duration	a) <i>8 hours maximum</i>
(x) Transparency	a) <i>Records and accounts are available for public scrutiny.</i>

MGNREGA guidelines have provided various kinds of work that are crucial for regeneration of the rural community. The mentioned guideline of work is expected to be done on the sites having requirement of the same.

Table.1.2.The list of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA works as per the Schedule-I of MGNREGA

Category as per Schedule 1	Works
(1)	(2)
I. Category A: PUBLIC WORKS RELATING TO NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	i. Water conservation and water harvesting structures to augment and improve groundwater like underground dykes, earthen dams, stop dams, check dams with special focus on recharging ground water including drinking water sources; ii. Watershed management works such as contour trenches, terracing, contour bunds, boulder checks, gabion structures and spring shed development resulting in a comprehensive treatment of a watershed; iii. Micro and minor irrigation works and creation, renovation and maintenance of irrigation canals and drains; iv. Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of irrigation tanks and other water bodies; and conservation of old step wells/baolis; v. Afforestation, tree plantation and horticulture in common and forest lands, road margins, canal bunds, tank foreshores and coastal belts duly providing right to usufruct to the households covered in Paragraph 5; vi. Pasture Development; perennial grasses like Stylo etc. vii. Bamboo, Rubber and Coconut plantation. viii. Land development works in common land. Improving productivity of lands of households specified.
II. Category B: COMMUNITY ASSETS OR INDIVIDUAL ASSETS	i. Improving productivity of lands of households specified in Paragraph 5 of Schedule – I through land development and by providing suitable infrastructure for irrigation including dug wells, farm ponds and other water harvesting structures. ii. Improving

	livelihoods through horticulture, sericulture plantation, other kinds of plantation and farm forestry; iii. Development of fallow/waste lands of households defined in Paragraph 5 of Schedule – I to bring it under cultivation; iv. Pasture Development; perennial grasses like Stylo, vetiver etc.; v. Bamboo, Rubber and Coconut Plantation vi. Creating infrastructure for promotion of livestock such as, poultry shelter (brooder house), goat shelter, piggery shelter, cattle shelter and fodder troughs for cattle; vii. Creating infrastructure for promotion of fisheries such as, fish drying yards, storage facilities, and promotion of fisheries in seasonal water bodies on public land; viii. Bio-fertilisers (NADEP, Vermi-composting etc.).
III. Category C: COMMON INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING FOR NRLM COMPLIANT SELF-HELP GROUPS	i. Works for promoting agricultural productivity by creating durable infrastructure required for bio-fertilizers (NADEP and Vermi-composting pits) and post-harvest facilities including pucca storage facilities for agricultural produce;
IV. Category D: RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE	(vi)Construction of Food Grain Storage Structures for implementing the provisions of The National Food Security Act (2013);

Source: Adopted from NREGA Circulars, 2018 available at

https://nrega.nic.in/Netnrega/WriteReaddata/Circulars/AMC_2018-19_nk_v3_21.03.18.pdf

Provisions for Women in MGNREGA:

Some in-built and some added provisions for women in MGNREGA have made it different from earlier wage generating programmes. The summary of these provisions are:

- (i) Provision of 33% reservation for women workers.
- (ii) Equal remuneration for all workers which ensures no discrimination in wage for men and women.
- (iii) Preference for women for nearer worksites.
- (iv) Ensuring women's presence in decision making bodies (at least one third of the non-official members of the Central and District Employment Guarantee Council should be women).
- (v) Crèche facility in the worksites if there are five or more children in the age group below six years.
- (vi) Provision of special works to pregnant women and lactating mothers (incorporated in 2012 by Ministry of Rural development).
- (vii) In 2012 Ministry of Rural development has recommended to carry out special time and motion studies to formulate age, disability, gender and terrain /climate specific schedule of rates.

It is evident from the above discussion that these gender sensitive provisions mark a new paradigm in rural development programmes. It has made MGNREGA very special among the Indian developmental initiatives. This study attempts to analyze the theoretical gender

concerns and its reality over different places and spaces. The debate between the boundary of place and space is long going and much controversial. Places are conceptualized in terms of their ability to accelerate or hinder the exchanges of global flow motions (Luke and Tuathail (1998:76) . Jones (2009:497) termed space as an “abstract notion” which “recognizes the co-existence of structure and flow and also acknowledges the evolutionary and developmental nature of rationality.” This thesis discusses the overlapping of space and place over a developmental framework provided by MGNREGS with a gendered lens. Women’s access to welfare programmes and the constraints are attempted to be analyzed over two geographically different places. The objectives and research questions of the thesis is designed to address the issues related with MGNREGS implementation in different places with a concern of spaces the respondents are related with.

Theoretical Background of the Work

One most questioned crosscutting concept in the field of empirical social science research is marginalization which has emerged while examining the rationale behind spatial, economic and social disparities between different groups of people. International Geographical Union (2003) defined marginalization as a process which leads to “the temporary state of having been put aside of living in relative isolation, at the edge of a system (cultural, social, political or economic), in mind, when one excludes certain domains or phenomena from one’s thinking because they do not correspond to the mainstream philosophy”. A group of scholars like Anderson and Larsen (1998) ,Sommers et al (1999), Brodwin (2001), Davis (2003) have called Marginalization as a ‘social process’. This process makes significant contribution in analysing disparity of resource allocation in socio-cultural, political and economic spheres and disadvantaged group of people’s struggle to gain access to resources and fights to get full acceptance in social life.

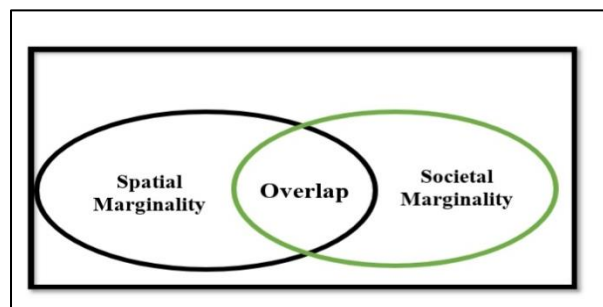
Marginalization is primarily defined and described by two major conceptual frameworks; *societal* and *spatial* (Gurung and Collmair, 2005). The societal framework focuses on human dimensions such as demography, religion, culture, social structure (e.g., caste/hierarchy/class/ethnicity/gender), economics and politics in connection with access to resources by individuals and groups. In this regard, the emphasis is placed on understanding of the underlying causes of exclusion, inequality, social injustice and spatial segregation of people (Brodwin, 2001; Darden, 1989; Davis, 2003; Gans, 1996; Hoskins, 1993; Leimgruber,

2004; Massey, 1994; Sommers et al., 1999) .The theory of social marginalization explain the underlying factors that are responsible for social exclusion and subjugation. These theories talks about the exercise of power of the powerful on powerless people. Social marginalization is a process which keeps the weaker section rejected, ignored and subjugated by powerful social agencies.

While societal marginalization focuses on social aspects of marginalization and marginalized, spatial marginalization talks about segregation of people due to geographical remoteness. Difficulty of access due to topographical factors plays an intricate role to isolate people from mainstream and they form a group of spatially marginalized people. Various scholars like Larsen (2002), Leimgruber(2004) Müller-Böker et al.(2004) Sommers et al. (1999) argue that ‘the explanation of the spatialdimension of marginalization or geographical marginalization is primarily based on physical location and distance from centres of development, lying at the edge of or poorly integrated into system’.

The idea of this work is based on various concepts that were developed in explanation of the term ‘marginalization’. This thesis uses the concept of ‘*marginality overlap*’ developed by Gurung and Collmair in 2005. Marginality overlap rationalizes marginality as a process and correlates between spatial and societal marginality. This theory provides a theoretically informed and empirically rich exploration of the dynamics of the marginalization process. It also underpinned the comprehension of the relationship between marginality and poverty as well as the implications for vulnerability in the context of identifying the root causes.

Fig: 1. Concept of Marginality overlap developed by Gurung and Collmair (2005)



Mallek, Hossain , Saha and Gatzweiler (2013) had described marginality overlap as “ the overlap between spatial and societal marginality is not only within a specific space and social setting, but also at all scales ranging from individuals to the global community and from a particular geographical area to global levels. Thus, prevalence of marginality can be observed among families, communities and countries, ranging from household to country/global level.”

Müller-Böker et. al.(2004) states that “Social as well as spatial marginalization creates an overlap between the two because of their frequent occurrence. In particular, the societal marginalization in the context of age, gender, race, ethnicity and social hierarchy is prevalent even in the most geographically isolated locations.” Components of societal marginalization such as race, caste, ethnicity, gender, age etc. are linked with geographical space and the overlapping regions exhibit intense marginalization. The theory of societal marginalization rests upon several sub-theories like *theory of social stratification, theory of class and caste differentiation, theory of cultural poverty and the theory of intersectionality.*

The theory of social stratification talks about occurrence of various social strata in any society and the process of marginalization starts with disparity in distribution of power. Kingsley Davis and Wilbert Moore in 1945 define social stratification as a division of whole population in many unequal classes depending on some social characteristics. They argued that it results in unequal share of resource, rights and privileges. While Marxist theory explains the term ‘social stratification’ in clear two classes; ‘ruled’ and ‘ruling classes’ , the limitation of this theory is that the Marxian theory is essentially related with social groups that are linked with some sort of production process. Murray (1994) defines social stratification as a horizontal division of society into ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ social units in which marginalization has an inevitable occurrence. Dahrendorm’s idea (1958:154) is based on ‘individual level’ and ‘social level’ inequalities. Parson (1979: 75) have identified ‘power’ as a core component of social stratification. ‘Power’ and ‘dominance’ these two concepts are intricately related with the theory of social stratification. Power is a sociological concept and dominance is psychological, which are intermingled in the concept of marginalization and most appropriately used to discuss the incident of gendered marginalization. The power and dominance of men over women keep the women at the base level of social stratification and marks them vulnerable, oppressed and subjugated.

The theory of social stratification relates the *theory of class and caste hierarchy*. Class forms a major component in social hierarchy. Class is seen by Harlambos (1981:46) as “a social group whose member shares the same relationship to the forces of production”. Marx and Weber’s theory of class is defined in terms of ‘market situation’ and ‘similar life chances’ .Marx’s theory states about ‘have’ and ‘have nots’ these two classes in which second category represents the oppressed marginalized groups. The idea of class and caste are rigid and inseparable, sometimes they overlap each other. While the idea of class is ‘positional’ and intervenes marginality through four criteria such as available privileges, style of life,

political activities and technical perception (Sengupta, 2017: 139). The people placed in upper level of social strata gets access to these criteria while the lower class people who lays at the bottom do not get access to these criteria and thus forms a marginalized group.

Marginalization on the basis of caste occurs due to fixed and rigid Indian social systems. Caste impose privileges to some people over social, cultural and economic rights. The theory of caste says even within a so called “lower caste” structure, women form the most disadvantaged group facing discrimination and denial of their right to livelihood.

Sengupta (2019) have identified three sources of power that contributes to caste marginalization. These are ‘numerical preponderance’ of the group members, ‘organization’ and ‘resources’. The caste marginalization is an outcome of the exercise of power on these three sources with an idea of ‘inferiority’ and ‘superiority’.

The third theory of marginalization is *the theory of culture of poverty* which was introduced by Oscar Lewis in 1966. He states “the culture of poverty is a design for living, which is transmitted from one generation to next”. The idea of culture of poverty is more related with women than men. It encompasses a “strong feeling of marginality, helplessness, inferiority and a sense of resignation and fatalism” (Lewis, 1981:183). This theory states about poor design for living, collection of ideas and habits that are fatal for a social segment, particularly for women. This fatalism transmits generation after generation and forms a network of deprivation. This deprivation network is marked by the scholars like Silburn (1996: 180), Barron and Harrington (1981: 184). Women, being placed in the bottom line of a social strata forms most vulnerable and marginalized group within a society. The extent of marginalization differs with their ethnographic characteristics, caste, class and economic status. All sub-theories of marginalization point towards women as a group with denied rights and privileges. These theories agree on the point of dominated and subjugated status of women inspite of their different ideologies. Feminist studies before 20th century did not consider women as a heterogeneous mass.

The intersectionality theory of marginalization is of recent occurrence which originated from critical Race theory of Crenshaw (1989. 1991) and further nourished by the works of feminist geographers and other fields of anti-racist theories. This theory has disrupted the binary perspectives of marginalization. Matsuda (1991:1191) stated “intersectionality acknowledges that a person may belong to multiple disadvantaged groups or identities and that this compounds and complicates their experiences of oppression in different contexts.” This

theory admits the intersection of socio-political identities of a group of people and their relative position in the society. This theory advocates about different states of discrimination and privilege for women of different backgrounds. Though this theory was originated to provide an analysis of the marginalization of black women in the society, but it gradually gained popularity in the studies related to race, sex, gender, religion and policy studies. Crenshaw in her work in 1991 stated how the intersectionality marks room for privilege for a group of people and how it creates marginalization for rest of the groups. The theory of intersectionality is essentially related with caste-class hierarchy, power and social stratification.

This thesis is concerned with the relationship between gendered marginality and work. It contends that the understanding of this relationship is significant for exploring the complex network of social structure and policy intervention. Focussing on the various aspects of a hugely discussed Indian rural development policy, this thesis tries to find out how marginal spaces are fashioned and altered through a policy intervention. This work is oriented on the exploration of practices, experience and legacies of gendered marginality that are existent in social structure of rural India. This thesis uses Gurung and Collmair's marginality overlap approach and for this reason one large state policy and two different physiographic units are chosen. The policy is chosen to see how work opportunity shapes up gendered marginalities in two different physical/socio-cultural settings. Both spatial and societal marginality are taken into consideration. In this context Larsen's (2002) comment on marginality overlap is most relevant. He wrote "marginalization may be seen with many overlapping connotations. One major way of minimizing or eradicating the process of gender marginalization is effective state interventions". So the caste-class-livelihood-gender components are seen in the light of work opportunity and benefit provided by the state. The difference of responses are measured with certain indicators. Difference in responses is analysed with the help of the theory of 'caste-class hierarchy' and on the basis of intersectionality theory. An analysis is done on the intersectionality of women in MGNREGA to explore the nature of marginalization they face in community as well as in their own households. In this research the concept of intersectionality has been applied in myriad ways. This work draws upon the empirical observation of certain people's experience of space and place, and how these experiences are perplexed by the presence of other dimensions of the identity.

In short, the theoretical background of this thesis involves women's position in a stratified society and their responses to an opportunity of work that is provided by MGNREGA. The

nature of women's response to a public policy (primary/ secondary job recipient) is analysed on spatial context and an attempt has been to identify the overlap. The practices which are responsible for keeping women in bottom of the economic strata are identified and differential outcomes/ benefits of MGNREGA is mapped through the theory of intersectionality.

Causes of the Selection of MGNREGS as a Case

MGNREGS is different from earlier Indian rural development programmes in many ways. It targets the unemployed or marginally employed people across class, caste and gender. The gendered provisions embedded in the design of the scheme have opened the avenue for discussion related with gendered marginality and work. Gendered provisions of MGNREGS include definite representation of women in household identification process, at least one third of women beneficiaries out of total direct beneficiaries, adequate representation of women in MGNREGA meetings, equal wage for men & women for equal work, provision of worksite facility like crèche for women workers with children, preference of women to work in nearer worksites, fixing of social audit time convenient for women etc. Apart from these women-friendly provisions, vast coverage of the scheme is another facilitating factor for this study. It provides good scope of the analysis related with gendered marginalities in different socio-cultural contexts.

Objectives

Given the implicit attention to gender concerns in conceptualizing the programme, the objectives of this research are:

- (i) To assess the space-specific gender sensitivities in the provisions and implementation of MGNREGS.
- (ii) To examine the changes that have been brought about by participation in MGNREGS in household and other gender dynamics.
- (iii) To understand the intersectionality between social attributes in accrual of benefits from MGNREGS.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent, physiographic characteristics of a region have bearing over MGNREGS's implementation and its outcomes?

2. How the promises of MGNREGA is translated on the ground and how this is affecting gendered marginalities?
3. Is there any changes in household as well as community attributes of women that are directly related to MGNREGA?
4. To what extent intersectionality of various social attributes among women workers of MGNREGA affects the participation and benefits of this scheme to them?

Database

The study draws upon both primary and secondary data. The secondary sources include Census of India, 2011, Reports of the Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics, Government. of West Bengal, NSS,55th & 68th Round Report, Website of NREGA, www.nrega.nic.in, Website(www.rural.nic.in) and Publications of the Ministry of Rural Development, Human Development Reports for India and West Bengal. Primary data consists of field survey in the selected villages and required data is generated through questionnaire-based survey, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and case studies.

In addition, published and unpublished sources of research are also used to complement the information derived from the field survey.

Methodology of the Study

(i) Selection of Sample Area:

(a) Selection of State

The state of West Bengal is selected for the study after a detailed study of the MGNREGS indicators across states. These are:

(i) Increase in women persondays to total in between 2006-07 to 2011-12 (in %).

(ii) Increase in MGNREGS Wage rate in between 2006-07 to 2011-12(in Rs./Day) .

This analysis is done on the basis of secondary data available in official website of MGNREGA. First indicator taken for the state selection is the increase in share of women persondays to total persondays from 2006-07 to 2011-12. Since this was the only women related indicator present in official website of MGNREGA so it is taken to understand the

temporal change of women participation across states. At first the percentage of women persondays to total is calculated .The difference are then ranked. The highest difference is given rank 1 and so on.

Second indicator is increase in MGNREGS wage rate in between 2006-07 to 2011-12. This indicator is taken with a hypothesis that the states having higher increase in MGNREGS wage will attract more number of male and female casual workers. At first the notified MGNREGA wage rate is taken for two time periods and then the difference has been calculated and converted in percentage. The difference are then ranked. The highest difference is given rank 1 and so on. These two indicators are ranked according to the above mentioned principle and a cumulative rank score has been generated. Since the highest score is given rank 1, so the lowest cumulative score= highest performance and vice versa. With a composite rank score of 18, West Bengal ranks four among Indian states. So this state is taken for the study. Low composite rank score of West Bengal has generated the idea the state has progressed well in terms of MGNREGS implementation and it was assumed that this progress has touched the lives of women casual workers too. Following Tables provide an insight about these three selected indicators across states.

Table: 1.3. Calculation of Indicators for State Selection

State	MGNREGA minimum wage 2006-07	MGNREGA minimum wage 2011-12	Difference of wage in between 2006-07 to 1011-12	Indicator-I	Share of Women Person Days to total(%) 2006-07 ⁴	Share of Women Person Days to total(%) 2011-12 ⁵	Indicator-II
				Change of wage (%) in between 2006-07 to 2011-12			Change in women person days (in %) from 2006-07 to 2011-12
Andhra Pradesh	80	137	57	71.25	54.79	57.79	3.00
Arunachal Pradesh	57	124	67	117.54	30.02	34.27	4.25
Assam	66	136	70	106.06	31.67	24.95	-6.72
Bihar	68	68	54	79.41	17.38	28.86	11.48
Chattishgarh	62.63	132	69.37	110.76	39.32	46.17	6.86
Gujrat	50	191	141	282.00	50.20	46.20	-4.00
Haryana	99.21	173.19	73.98	74.57	30.60	36.46	5.86
Himachal Pradesh	75	157	82	109.33	12.24	59.36	47.12
Jammu & Kashmir	70	131	61	87.14	4.46	18.63	14.17
Jharkhand	76.68	122	45.32	59.10	39.48	31.37	-8.11
Karnataka	69	155	86	124.64	50.56	46.13	-4.42
Kerala	125	164	39	31.20	65.63	92.92	27.30
Madhya Pradesh	63	132	69	109.52	43.24	42.87	-0.37
Maharashtra	47	145	98	208.51	37.07	45.92	8.85
Manipur	72.4	144	71.6	98.90	50.89	33.78	17.11
Meghalaya	70	128	58	82.86	194.05	41.68	-152.37
Mizoram	91	136	45	49.45	33.38	24.25	-9.13
Nagaland	66	124	58	87.88	29.97	26.80	-3.17
Odisha	55	126	71	129.09	35.60	38.71	3.10
Punjab	105	166	61	58.10	37.76	43.21	5.44
Rajasthan	73	133	60	82.19	67.14	69.31	2.17
Sikkim	85	124	39	45.88	24.79	44.75	19.96
TamilNadu	80	132	52	65.00	81.11	74.14	-6.97
Tripura	60	124	64	106.67	75.00	38.71	-36.29
Uttar Pradesh	58	125	67	115.52	16.55	17.18	0.63
Uttarakhand	73	125	52	71.23	30.47	44.69	14.23
West Bengal	69.4	136	66.6	95.97	18.28	32.50	14.22

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in⁴ See annexure Table 1.3.(a)⁵ See annexure Table 1.3.(b)

Table: 1.4. Composite Rank Score of Indian States

SL No.	State	Rank	Rank	Composite Rank Score	Final Rank
		Change of wage in between 2006-07 to 2011-12 %	Change in women person days from 2006-07 to 2011-12(in %)		
1	Himachal Pradesh	9	1	10	1
2	Maharashtra	2	8	10	1
3	Chattishgarh	7	9	16	2
4	Odisha	3	13	16	2
5	Arunachal Pradesh	5	12	17	3
6	West Bengal	13	5	18	4
7	Gujrat	1	19	20	5
8	Jammu & Kashmir	15	6	21	6
9	Uttar Pradesh	6	16	22	7
10	Karnataka	4	20	24	8
11	Bihar	18	7	25	9
12	Madhya Pradesh	8	17	25	9
13	Uttarakhand	21	4	25	9
14	Haryana	19	10	29	10
15	Kerala	27	2	29	10
16	Sikim	26	3	29	10
17	Assam	11	21	32	11
18	Nagaland	14	18	32	11
19	Rajasthan	17	15	32	11
20	Andhra Pradesh	20	14	34	12
21	Punjab	24	11	35	13
22	Tripura	10	26	36	14
23	Manipur	12	25	37	15
24	Meghalaya	16	27	43	16
25	Tamilnadu	22	22	44	17
26	Jharkhand	23	23	46	18
27	Mizoram	25	24	49	19

(b) Selection of Districts

The districts are chosen keeping the consideration of the focus of the study. Since the focus is the gendered marginalities and work, an attempt has been made to trace the districts having regional variation in terms of Gender Development Index.

Table: 1.5. District Specific Gender Development Index (GDI) of West Bengal (2004).

Districts	Gender Development Index	Districts	Gender Development Index
Darjeeling	0.57	Nadia	0.49
Jalpaiguri	0.45	N 24 Paraganas	0.55
Kochbihar	0.46	Hugli	0.56
N.Dinajpur	0.39	Bankura	0.46
S.Dinajpur	0.45	Puruliya	0.4
Maldah	0.39	Midnapore	0.55
Murshidabad	0.41	Howrah	0.56
Birbhum	0.42	Kolkata	0.59
Bardhaman	0.54	S. 24 Paraganas	0.51

Source: Human Development Report of West Bengal, 2004.

The entire state has been divided into three Gender Development Index categories and one (Bankura) from the lowest category and another (Bardhaman) from the high category have been selected for further study. The districts from the highest Gender Development Index are ignored because of homogeneous physiography (Darjeeling) and urban impact (Howrah and Hoogly).

(c) Selection of Villages

Selected districts are divided in broad physiographic units. The presence of plain in the eastern part and plateau in the western part of both selected districts. One block from each physiographic unit is chosen from each district. Out of the four chosen block, one village from each is selected through the process of filtering. The filters are percentage of female literacy, 0-6 sex ratio and percentage of SC population. These three filters are used respectively to identify the sample villages. From the final group of 31 villages, 4 villages are chosen randomly. Table 1.6 presents a brief profile of the demographic indicators in selected villages.

Table: 1.6. Profile of the Selected Villages

District	Block	Village	Physiography	Total Population	Female Literacy (%)	0-6 Sex Ratio	Sex ratio	Share of SC Population (%)
Bankura	Onda	Mandiha	Plain	542	42.47	848	936	35.05
Bankura	Ranibundh	Haludkanali	Plateau	530	45.02	2428	1046	58.30
Bardhaman	Bhatar	Basatpur	Plain	1019	45.67	1226	1018	84.59
Bardhaman	Durgapur-Faridpur	Gopendanga	Plateau	536	43.41	634	829	31.74

Source: Census of India, 2011

Fig. 2. Location of Survey Sites

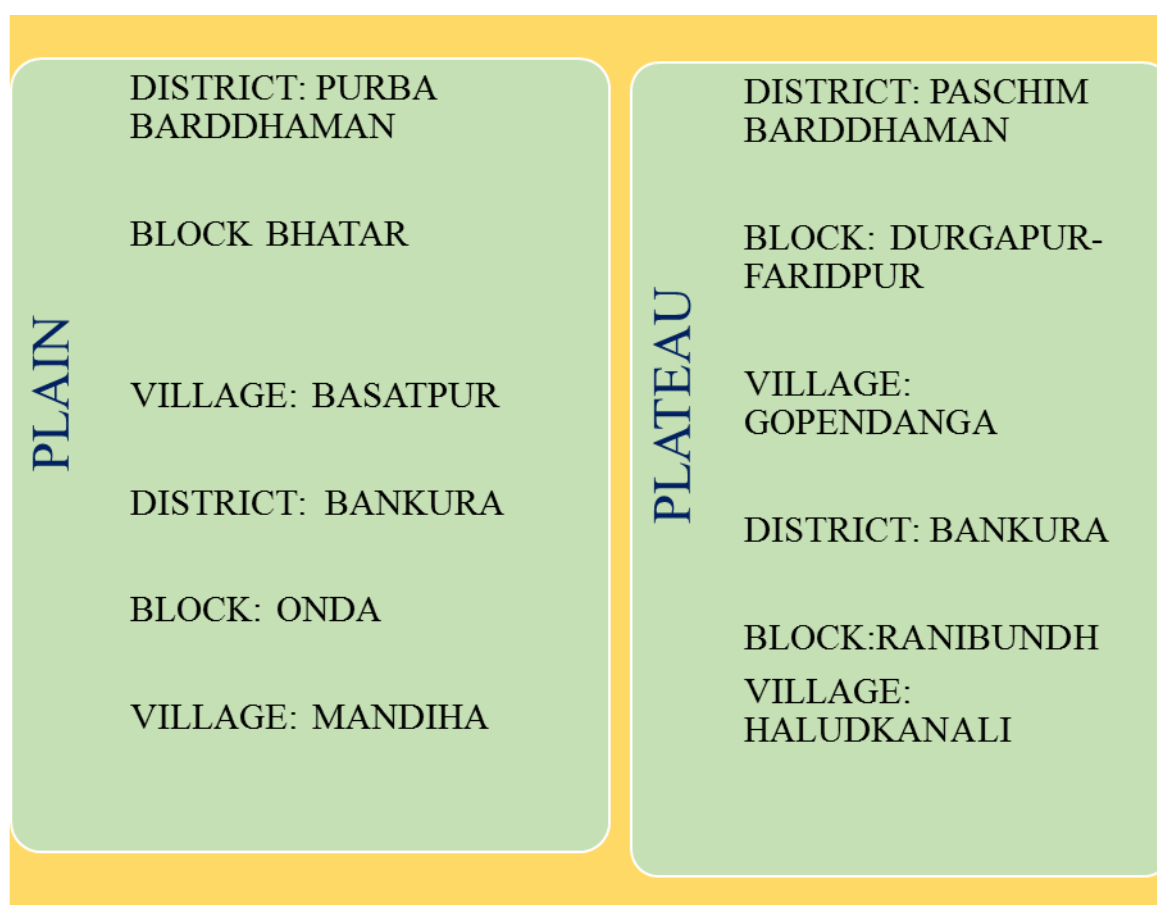
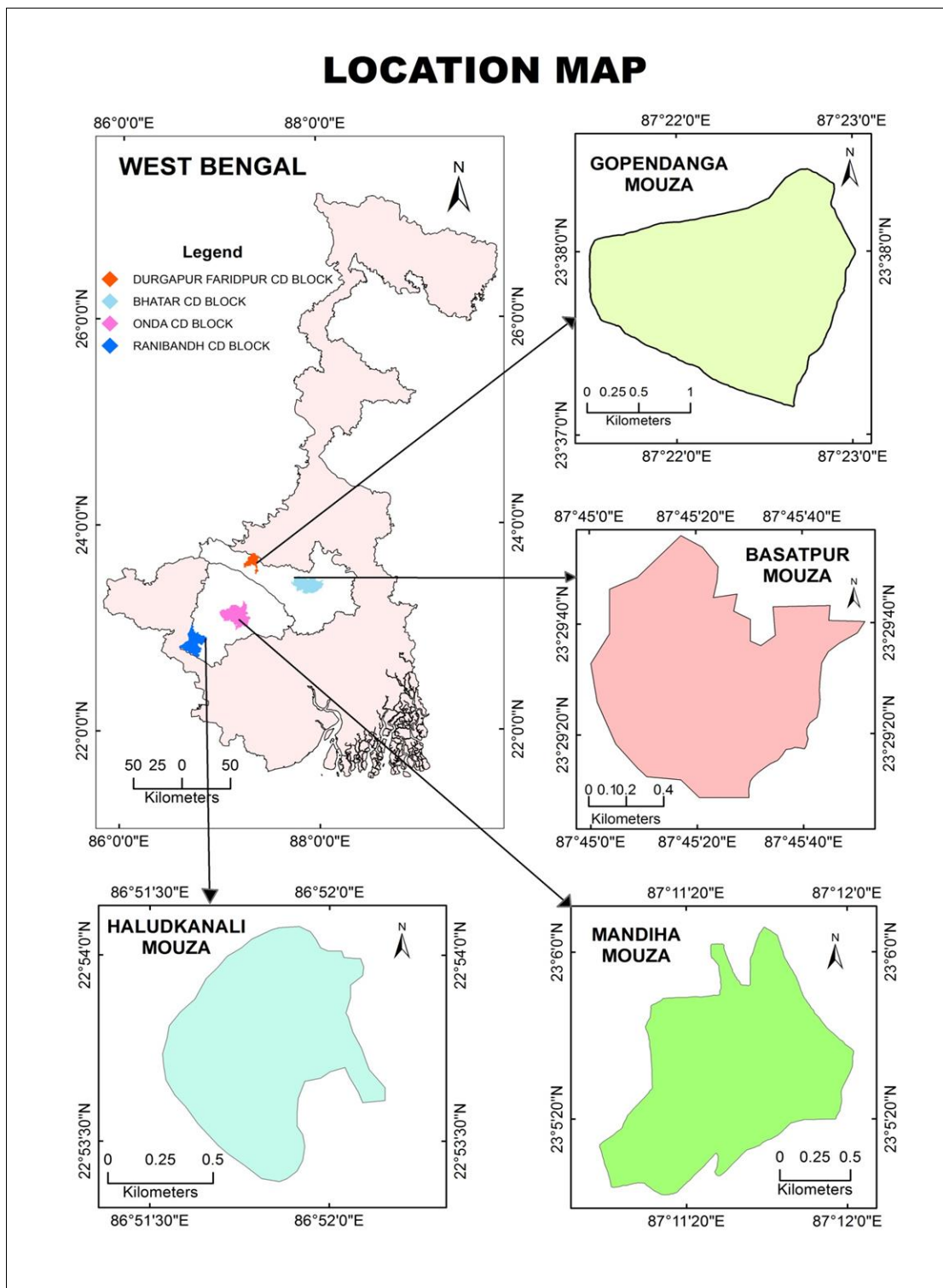


Fig.3. Location Map

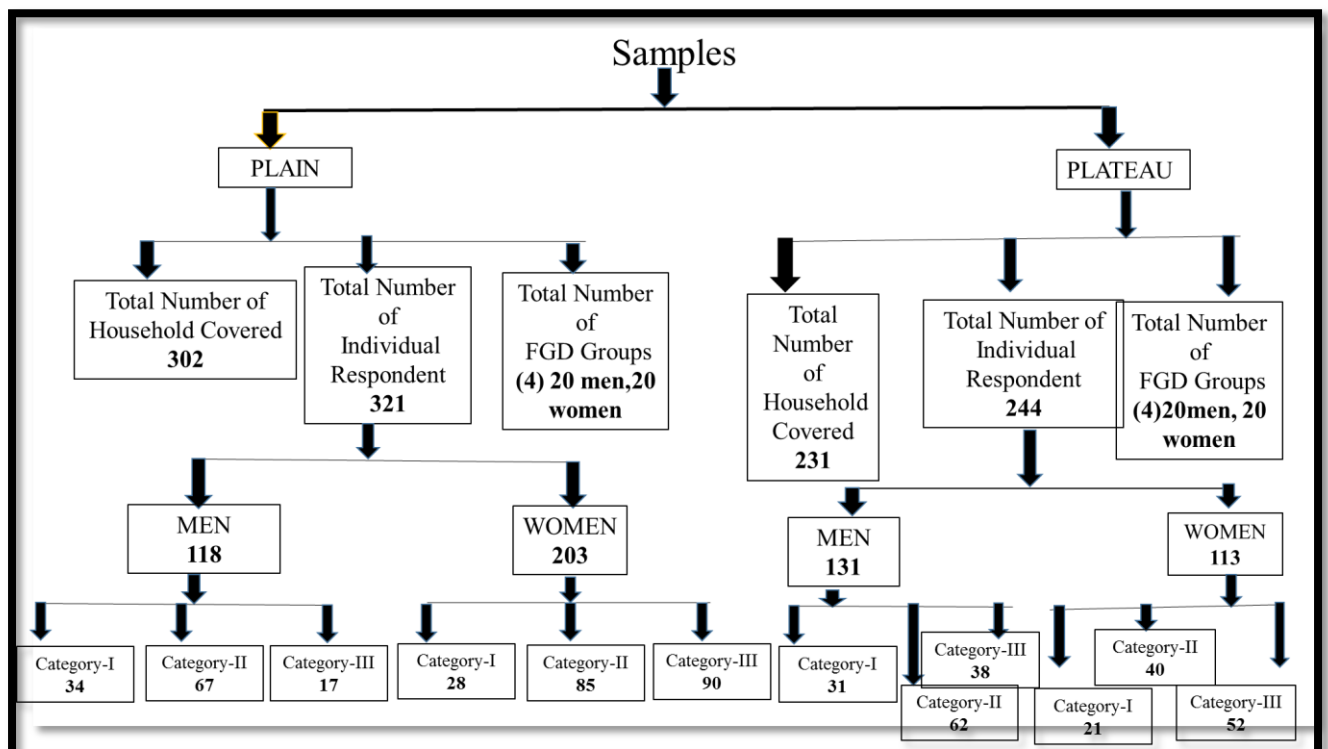


(ii) Sampling Procedure

A *quick census* of these four villages is done to identify the MGNREGA households. Among the identified households, three categories of samples are drawn, a) samples who have worked under MGNREGS for 15 -30 days in 2014-15 coupled with other works b) samples who have worked under MGNREGS more than 30 days in 2014-15 coupled with other works and c) Samples who have worked under MGNREGS only in 2014-15. The respondents are selected on the basis of *purposive sampling technique*. The first, second and third category were covered fully as the population size was small. The *third category* of samples is taken as the *control group of the survey*. This category includes those who did not work anywhere other than MGNREGS in year 2014-15.

In total, 565 respondents have been interviewed from 533 households. Following chart shows the distribution of samples across categories and locations.

Fig. 4. Distribution of Samples across Categories and Location



(iii) Methods of Collection of Primary Data

This study is based on both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods include the primary survey of the households and individuals identified by quick census. Qualitative survey includes participant observation, Focussed Group Discussion (FGD) and Case studies. Details of these methods are discussed as under:

(a) Quantitative methods:

A survey based on structured questionnaire (for both household and individual level) was conducted. Respondents were drawn from three categories mentioned above. The surveyed year is 2014-15. This is done to explore the basic information such as:

- i. People's awareness about the scheme.
- ii. Access to the sources of information pertaining to availability of work.
- iii. Constraints encountered by women, if any, while negotiating the public spaces for work;
- iv. Change in household gender dynamics
- v. Change in community gender dynamics.
- vi. Identifying intersectionality of women MGNREGA workers and the effect of intersectionality in participation and benefit.
- vii. Causes of non-participation in other works (for third category of the sample).

Table: 1.7. Background Information of the Surveyed Households: Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Sample Category			TOTAL
	Category-I	Category-II	Category-III	
Family Size				
1	10	23	2	35
2	16	28	16	60
3	23	53	35	111
4	22	71	43	136
5	29	46	43	118
6	8	15	16	39
7	1	5	1	7
8	2	4	2	8
9	1	2	3	6
10	2	2	3	7
11	0	1	0	1
12	0	1	0	1

13	0	1	1	2
14	0	2	0	2
Total	114	254	165	533
Occupational Category of Household Members				
Cultivation	43	94	54	191
Fishing	11	35	27	73
Forest gatherer/natural produce collector	3	11	7	21
Livestock/Other agricultural enterprise	9	28	13	50
Casual wage employment (agricultural)	32	63	37	132
Casual wage employment (non-agricultural)	4	13	15	26
Salaried Employment	8	1	3	12
Own non-agricultural enterprise/services	0	1	1	2
Pension	3	2	7	17
Other	1	6	1	9
Total	114	254	165	533
Age Structure of Household Members				
0-6 Years	36	76	57	169
7-18 Years	80	195	130	405
18-40 Years	188	408	285	881
40-60 Years	100	247	164	511
60-80 Years	29	65	52	146
More than 80 Years	11	20	27	58
Total	444	1011	715	2161
Education Structure of Household Members				
Not Literate	85	141	122	348
Literate only	94	396	214	704
Completed 4 years of education	75	156	125	356
Completed 5-8 years of education	79	137	107	323
Completed 8-10 years of education	68	88	70	226
Completed 10-12 years of education	29	69	55	153
Graduated	10	18	21	49
Technical Education	4	6	1	11
Total	444	1011	715	2170

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table: 1.8. Background Information of the Surveyed Households: Household Characteristics

Household Characteristics	Sample Category			TOTAL
	Category-I	Category-II	Category-III	
Number of Rooms				
1	52	114	72	238
2	47	109	82	238
3	9	24	7	40
4	3	7	4	14
5	1	0	0	1
6	1	0	0	1
12	1	0	0	1
Total	114	254	165	533
Wall-Type				
Kuchcha	65	151	96	312
Semi-Pakka	41	89	61	191
Pakka	8	14	8	30
Total	114	254	165	533
Plinth-Type				
No plinth	44	99	70	213
Kuchcha	46	97	63	206
Concrete	24	58	32	114
Total	114	254	165	533
Roof-Type				
Kuchcha	90	218	150	458
Pucca	20	35	10	65
Others	2	1	5	8
Semi-pucca	2	0	0	2
Total	114	254	165	533
Household Amenities: Kitchen				
Having Separate Kitchen	67	169	101	337
Not Having Separate kitchen	47	85	64	196
Total	114	254	165	533
Household Amenities: Toilet				
Having Toilet	30	78	64	172
Not having Toilet	84	176	101	361
Total	114	254	165	533
Household Amenities:Electricity				
Having Electricity	63	194	117	374
Not Having Electricity	51	60	48	159
Total	114	254	165	533

Household Characteristics	Sample Category			TOTAL
	Category-I	Category-II	Category-III	
Household Amenities: Media Exposure				
Having Radio	11	48	36	95
Not Having Radio	103	206	129	438
Total	114	254	165	533
Household Amenities: Media Exposure				
Having Television	25	78	38	141
Not Having Television	89	176	127	392
Total	114	254	165	533
Household Amenities: Cell Phone Possession				
Having Cell Phone	69	187	106	362
Not Having Cell Phone	45	67	59	171
Total	114	254	165	533
Land Ownership of Household				
land owned	44	84	42	170
Land possessed but not owned	10	20	17	47
land owned and possessed both	0	4	1	5
no land owned or possessed	60	146	105	311
Total	114	254	165	533

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

(b) Qualitative Methods

Gendered marginality is a complex social process which is imposed by dominant social discourses; and embedded in space, time and culture. It is difficult to identify the changes in marginality pattern through a face-to-face questionnaire survey. Therefore, ethnographic research techniques have also been adopted to study marginality type and role of state interventions. The qualitative part of the research employs three sub-methods, these are:

The Method of Participant Observation

This method was adopted to understand experiences of people's lives in terms of MGNREGA which was difficult to catch through other methods only such as questionnaire survey, FGD or case studies. It was accomplished by simply 'hanging-around' in the selected places, offices and deciphering sense of ideas that are embedded in people's minds about this

scheme. The places were selected carefully to incorporate the geographical spread and also the dimension of gendered marginalities. Photographs are used for documentation of the observed pattern.

The Method of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Except participant observations, eight Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 10 persons in a group belonging to similar socio-economic backgrounds. Thus 80 respondents were taken for Focussed Group Discussions (FGD) from all four locations. From each location, two groups (one with 10 men and another with 10 women) were interviewed to get more detailed information. This method was directed to address the following issues,

- a. Perceptions of the women respondents about MGNREGS
- b. How women's mobility and spatial access are affected after their engagement with the public spaces through MGNREGS.
- c. Views of the respondents about the impact of their entry into the public spheres & community level decision making.

To protect the identity of the respondents, all names are changed and plain villages are referred as 'B' village and 'C' village and plateau villages are referred as 'A' village and 'D' village.

Case Study Method

Ten case studies are conducted after prolonged structured questionnaire survey, participant observation and focussed group discussions. The informants were chosen carefully to get answers about some questions which occurred at the time of survey or sometimes to do cross verification of some facts. The informants belong to different age group, gender and having different work status across the locations. This part is found to be useful to fill up some gaps which was not addressed adequately in rest part of the study.⁶

⁶See annexure Table no 1.4.

Table: 1.9. Schematic Representation of the Methodologies Used

Theme	Methods Used
Nature of the gender marginalization in the study area.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Calculations of rank of different states using official data of MGNREGA 2. Structured Questionnaire Survey.
Gendered pattern of developmental initiatives in the study area.	Statistical representation of the data from <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MGNREGA website 2. Data obtained through structured questionnaire.
Women's response to state intervention and its effect on gendered space.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Structured Questionnaire Survey 2. Case Studies with key informants 3. Focussed Group Discussions. 4. Participant Observation.

(iv) Method of Analysis

(a) Analysis of Secondary Data

Gram Panchayat level secondary data, available from the website of MGNREGA is analysed with the help of statistical techniques like average, standard deviation, line graph, bar graph, composite score etc. to form a base for primary analysis.

Calculating Averages

Two sets of time frame 2006-2007 and 2011-2012 has been selected primarily to do State level analysis for the selection of state. Gram Panchayat level analysis is done on the basis of MGNREGA performance in three consecutive years, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. On one hand, four general indicators have been selected to assess the performance of MGNREGS across Panchayats and averages has been calculated. On the other hand, four indicators for women participation in MGNREGS has been selected and same method of averaging has been done. These two sets of average value are compared for plain and plateau to draw the conclusion whether there exists any difference in the implementation of MGNREGA in two diverse physiographic setting.

(b) Analysis of Primary Data

Data collected from fieldwork are analysed using the Statistical Techniques, like:

Comparison of Mean Scores

The difference between the mean scores relating different perceptions, distance of the worksites, changes in life pattern etc. are tested for determining the significance levels using the formula

$$\frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{(SD_1^2/n_1) + (SD_2^2/n_2)}}$$

Where,

\bar{X}_1 = mean of first group

\bar{X}_2 = mean of second group

SD_1 = standard deviation of first group

SD_2 = standard deviation of second group

n_1 = number of observations in the first group

n_2 = number of observations in the second group

Calculation of Correlation Co-efficient

A series of Pearson's correlation coefficient has been calculated to assess the strength of relationship between two continuous variables like number of MGNREGS workdays and incidence of decision making by women, attending public meeting and incidence of speaking by women, number of educational year attained and participation in MGNREGS etc. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient is calculated using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where, n=Sample Size.

Analysis of FGD Responses

A careful analysis of FGD responses has been done to obtain specific answer about some queries which was not possible through numeric such as assessment of changes like gaining self -identity, impact of being recognized as a worker etc.

Use of Statistical Diagrams

Statistical diagrams like bar graph, line graph, rudder diagram etc. are drawn mostly on the basis of primary data for the sake of analysis.

(v) Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into seven chapters. The name of the chapters and their orientation are as follows:

Chapter I: Introduction: Introduction and overview of the research design of the thesis.

Chapter II: Literature Review: Review of the issues related with topic of the thesis through survey of available literature.

Chapter III: An Analysis of Physiographic Controls on MGNREGA based on the dynamics of MGNREGS implementation in West Bengal with a focus on plain and plateau.

Chapter IV: Transformative Change of Women's Livelihood through MGNREGA: to examine the impact of MGNREGA and gap in MGNREGA implementation and its realization by beneficiaries, especially women through the analysis of qualitative data.

Chapter V: Impact of MGNREGS on Household and Community Gender Dynamics: to find out the changes in household and other gender dynamics brought through by MGNREGS.

Chapter VI: Intersectionality of Women Workers of MGNREGS: Participation and Benefit: to observe the intersectionality between social attributes in accrual of MGNREGS participation and benefits.

Chapter VII: Conclusion

Chapter-2

Literature Review

An attempt has been made in this chapter to identify issues related with various aspects of MGNREGA and finding a gap in existing research related with it. The discussion is divided into several sections such as MGNREGS and Right to Work, MGNREGS and its impact on women's livelihood, women's issues in MGNREGS etc. Since the overall concern is related with gender, issues of women got utmost importance in this discussion.

MGNREGS and Right to Work

MGNREGA has got the attention of the researchers from the very beginning for its uniqueness of offering work as a legal right. It is the second Indian right -based social safety net having the largest coverage till date. M.G.NREGA follows Right Based Approach (RBA) and puts strategic effort to improve the livelihood situation of rural people. It focuses on work participation and empowerment of the poor and tries to legitimize the struggle of poor people to secure a sustainable livelihood. The scheme has internalized the concepts of equity, non-discrimination, participation, accountability and transparency at an international human rights standard.

As Kirkemann and Martin (2007:9) put it:

“A rights-based approach to development is a framework that integrates the norms, principles, standards and goals of the international human rights system into the plans and processes of development. It is characterized by methods and activities that link the human rights system and its inherent notion of power and struggle with development”.

Scholars like Dutta, Chakraborti, Dholakia, Shah, Biswas and Patel (2009) have identified three basic components of a right based approach, these are (i) the *legal basis* (ii) the *normative* framework and (iii) the process of realizing the goal. Legal basis and a normative framework together are assumed as a key to ensure the right to work while the third one became an indispensable one to form an efficient frame on the pillar of right based approach. The process of realizing the goal became significant after the vast coverage of MGNREGS with the pace of time.

The right based component of this scheme is significant for gender-based researches as it equally ensures the right to work to women. Dey *et al.* (2006) have observed that the uniqueness of MGNREGS lies in its ability to provide legal work guarantee to the job seekers and in empowering them with enhanced bargaining capacity regarding wages. Supporting this view, Dreze in 2007 has mentioned NREGA as new option for rural labourers to struggle for their economic and social rights. Shah (2008) suggested that, the number of available workdays should be determined by the need of the region. According to him, “right to work is to be exercised by people in need. . . this could be for more or less than 100 days.” Ambasta *et al.* (2008:49) mentioned NREGA as the ‘most powerful initiatives ever undertaken’ for transformation of rural livelihoods in India. They further wrote (2008:41)

“The NREGA holds out the prospect of transforming livelihoods of the rural poor and heralding a revolution in rural governance in India.”

Similar observations are recorded in a report on NREGA and rural livelihoods by Pradan (2008:4). It has mentioned MGNREGA as an important tool for livelihood security.

The report comments:

“Enacted after a successful struggle for a comprehensive employment guarantee law, this legislation is a partial victory towards a full-fledged right to employment. The essential feature of this legislation which separates it from any other public service provisioning scheme is its enactment through the Parliament of India. Coupled with the Right to Information Act, this legislation has been bringing about a silent revolution in rural areas of the country”.

Keeping parity with this positive trend of discussion about right based component of MGNREGS, Social activist Aruna Roy (quoted in UNDP 2009) wrote NREGA exemplifies the features of a “*mature democracy, which provides the poor with the right to demand, the right to know and the right to dignity. Not the right to beg*”.

MGNREGA is praised by various researchers at different points of time. Sharma (2010) has identified a triadic structure to the MGNREGA design, processes to deliver rights by authority, process of placing demand by citizens and process of ensuring those rights. He in 2011 further added that MGNREGA is a perfect example of making departure from supply-based policies

to right based policies. Pankaj (2012:273) commented that MGNREGA is having a “*substantial potential for future*” as it establishes the idea of rights and entitlements as part of democratic citizenship.

Dheeraja, Madhuri and Daimari (2013) in their study “Factors facilitating participation of women in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS” commented that the right based elements are having a positive impact on women, it will help to rise their confidence, competence and social recognition. These scholars had mentioned MGNREGS as a strong tool of women empowerment.

There is another line of debate regarding the right based component of MGNREGA. The work of Azhagaiah (2014) confirms that the right based component of NREGA is obviously a whole new concept which may solve the rural unemployment problems to some extent. But he denied to see the scheme as a permanent and long term solution to rural unemployment.

While a series of researches have been done to discuss the impact of the newly introduced right based components, Roy (2013) attempted to study the difference between right-based employment guarantee schemes from social safety nets. According to him, while the safety nets have no provision to provide work as and when demanded, the right based schemes are much more effective to provide social services and thus reduces the vulnerability instantly.

The work of Agarwal (2015) is one of those rare literatures which has observed the role of MGNREGS in women’s economic and social empowerment, According to her, though MGNREGS was not envisaged as a women’s empowerment programme still it has brought significant contribution in women empowerment. Ranjan (2016) concluded exactly as Sharma (2010, 2011). According to him the demand driven programme is designed on the basis of exercising right which is unique in Indian safety nets ever introduced. The component of legal right which is based on demand instead of supply needs extensive awareness for its success. Ehmke, 2016, in a paper titled “The Right to Employment and Social Protection in Rural Settings: The example of the Indian MGNREGA” commented MGNREGA considers the need of work and income as two pillars of right for poor people while the primary duty of the administration is to deliver the rights. To realize their entitlement to employment, the utmost necessity is to place demand by citizens to local officials.

MGNREGS and Its Impact on Women's Livelihood

Bringing more women in the labour force is the cherished goal of the effective governance. Women's work is not only seen as means of employment generation, rather it is related with social status, ability to deal with public sphere, their freedom of expressions and more active role in decision making. The work of Kabeer 1999, Presser and Sen 2000, Narayan 2002 and Agarwal 1997 advocates that "*women themselves attach considerable value to their role as economic actors as opposed to unpaid family labour and cash income often increases their voice, agency and control over household resources*". With a provision of one-third women beneficiaries in MGNREGS, the scheme has undoubtedly opened up a new window of employment generation for rural women. Literatures related with women and MGNREGA mostly refers MGNREGA as a powerful tool for empowerment of rural women as it directly effects livelihood security of rural women through democratic governance and social protections. Kar (2013) summarizes three dimensions of MGNREGA and women's empowerment:

- (i) Effects on income-consumption (rising income and ability to choose)
- (ii) Intra-household effects (enhanced decision making through paid works), and
- (iii) Community effects (enhanced participation of women in local governance and public speaking).

Thomas (2010) argued that "NREGA is unique in the sense that, it gives primary importance to women participation and empowerment as well as a corruption less implementation of the wage employment programme; through social auditing by *Gram sabhas*." Chandrashekar and Ghosh (2009) noted another view for increasing women participation in MGNREGA. According to them the sharp rise in the number of women is resulted for the joining of household bounded women in MGNREGS. Ashappa in 2011 concluded that MGNREGS is of great help for rural women as they can start independent income generating activities through it. The impact of MGNREGA on the livelihood of the workers are depicted by the work of Nair, Sreedharan and Anoopkumar (2009:27) is as follows:

"The NREGA earnings were spent on everything from food items to the payment of old debts. Significantly, the workers were also able to spend some amount on the education and health of their children. Some repairs and maintenance on their homes was also financed. Many workers came across banking experiences only through NREGA, and many of the women

workers, in particular, expressed that having some savings in the bank was a matter of great confidence to them, which enhanced their dignity.”

The positive impact of MGNREGA on women is pointed out by various scholars such as Pellissery and Jalan (2011), Poonia (2012), Kareemulla „Ramasundaram” Kumar and Rao(2013), Carswell and De Neve (2014). On the basis of the study conducted in Andhra Pradesh, Pellissery and Jalan (2011) concluded about positive relationship between MGNREGS participation by women and the choices available to them. Poonia (2012) in his paper “Critical Study of MGNREGA: Impact and Women's Participation” referred MGNREGA as a potential stimulator of women’s position in labour market.

Sharma in 2011 argued MGNREGA sets an example how positively women’s earning enhances the opportunities for their children, it determines the quantitative as well as qualitative differences of opportunities within a household.

It is argued by various scholars that despite based on intra-household allocation of work, MGNREGS has resulted significant changes in women’s lives in terms of their employment, earning, saving and more importantly, identity generation. A bunch of research works has been done to analyze the impact of this scheme on women in household as well as outside domain. ILO India Report (2013:5) mentioned:

“MGNREGA encourages the participation of disadvantaged women addressing prevalent gender-based discrimination against women in employment while keeping in mind women’s care economy roles by requiring the establishment of childcare facilities at worksites to facilitate their inclusion and mitigating the likelihood of children dropping out of school for household and care work; views employment and income generation as a right and not an ancillary outcome of the overall development process, thereby placing direct obligations and accountability on the public system; and encourages convergence of other existing public social protection schemes for optimal impact.”

Research findings of Kumar and Kumar (2013) state that MGNREGS has resulted lesser number of unemployed days for rural people as well as for rural women. It has resulted a positive growth of women labour force in last five years. Carswell and De Neve (2014:5) in their research work related with rural women and MGNREGS in Tamilnadu have concluded that the scheme has attracted rural women because it has attained freedom from caste-based subordination, gender equality and more importantly, equal wages for men and women. The opportunity to work in a relatively lesser distance has boost up the women participation in MGNREGS. According to them:

“The gendered impact of MGNREGA is partly due to the universal, right-based and women friendly nature of the policy, and partly to the specific ways in which the policy is implemented in Tamil Nadu, where it has received significant cross-party political support.”

Furthermore, Rani and Pokhriyal’s (2016) study on caste-specific change of socio-economic status of women supports the findings of Nair, Sreedharan and Anoopkumar (2009) which conclude that women of general category have benefitted more from MGNREGS than SC and ST women. They highlighted the higher degree of awareness as the cause. Kaul and Shrivastava (2014) argue that the focus of the efforts to strengthen women’s participation in the economy has always remained on ensuring equal remuneration for women, creation of livelihood opportunities, ensuring conducive working conditions, and promoting entrepreneurship development. Regardless of these efforts, development of women’s livelihoods is marked by sharp gender-based inequities in the country. Tankha (2014: 6) noted:

“An effective strategy observed to ensure cohesive livelihood collectives with common livelihood interests that impart women a strong sense of their economic identity, would be to organise women around their collective economic identities.”

On her study on MGNREGA in Orissa, Minati (2014) suggests women have benefitted individually than as a community through MGNREGS participation. The positivity of MGNREGS on women’s lives has been pointed out by the work of the scholars like Hirway (2005), Desai, Vashishtha, and Joshi (2015), KrN (2016), Ehmke (2016), Sabanna (2016). In a study of a village in Gujarat, Hirway (2005) has shown that apart from the multiplier effects on household production, income and employment and the village economy; the work performed under the MGNREGS would also enable children to attend school regularly. Desai, Vashishtha, and Joshi in 2015 put forth the reason of equal wages for men and women as the major accelerating factor of women participation in MGNREGS.

Ananta (2016) puts forth the positive impact of MGNREGS on women’s lives. According to him, participation in MGNREGS has resulted women’s active part in decision making and spending according to their own will. Thus it boosted up self-confidence in women. Adding to this observation, Sabanna (2016) commented that it has reduced the vulnerability of rural women to a great extent and undoubtedly empowered them.

Ehmke (2016:3) observed:

“MGNREGA benefits are universal and inclusive: they take into account the special needs of historically and economically disadvantaged groups such as indigenous and outcaste groups and women. Hence, equality of access and non-discrimination are part of the scheme, as is the adequacy and predictability of benefits.”

Report of H.P. State Institute of Rural Development (2017:209) identified MGNREGA as a key performer to meet the economic and social needs of the poor people. They pointed out how this scheme has resulted better economic and living conditions of the poor stabilizing their livelihood opportunities. This report states:

“One of the most distinguishing features of MG NREGA is its approach towards empowering citizen including women citizen to play an active role in the implementation of the scheme, through gram sabha, social audit, participatory planning and other activities. Women’s empowerment was among the intentions of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MG NREGA) among its main objectives. Provisions like work within a radius of five kilometres from the house, absence of contractors, and flexibility in terms of choosing period and months of employment not only helped women exclusively, but also, nevertheless have been conducive for rural women.”

Dev (2011), Das and Singh(2013),Li and Sekhri (2013), Afridi, Mukhopadhyay and Sahoo (2016) have tried to find out impact of MGNREGA on children’s education and concluded in a positive note. Afridi, Mukhopadhyay, and Sahoo (2016) showed how mother’s participation in labour market has resulted in improvement of educational attainment in rural villages. For all these positive impacts, Dasgupta & Sudarshan, (2013) concluded that MGNREGA is important for providing better opportunity and wages to women. The scholars have advocated that:

“NREGA brings together many similarly situated women in the workplace, it provides an opportunity for organization and women’s voice.” Karak and Ray (2015) has referred MGNREGS as *“Women’s Programme”* as they found that a large number of sample households of their survey sends only female members to do MGNREGS work.

Women’s Issues in MGNREGS

Despite bringing lot of changes in the lives of rural women, the scheme has been critically examined by a group of scholars and several suggestive measures are also emerged to minimize the women’s issues. Women’s participation in any income generating activity is

subjected to a number of complex socio-economic factors. MGNREGS is also not an exception. UNDP Report on Female Work and Labour Force Participation in India (2019) admits the fact that very few numbers of Indian public policies are capable of tackling social and cultural issues that adversely affect women's participation in labour force. Policies that make an alternative for household and care responsibilities for women at work are very few in India. The report has mentioned the absence of a holistic approach to provide public work and reduce domestic work stress for women at the same time as a major loophole of Indian policy makers. Identifying absence of childcare in the workspace, the report has mentioned it as a "strong deterrent for young mothers" to participate in public works and training. Studies conducted by Dasgupta and Goldar (2005), Massod and Ahmad (2009) present a negative relationship between the number of children and women's labour force participation in India. The work of a number of researchers and organization like Kimmel (1998), Daly and Lewis (2000), Nicodemo and Waldmann (2009), Esquivel (2016) and ILO(2016) has concluded about day-to-day difficulties of married women to work without any prevalent private and public support system. Khera and Nayak (2009: 56) commented that MGNREGA framework lacks community level monitoring of women. In their research paper titled "Women Workers and Perceptions of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act they observed:

"Ensuring the establishment of crèches for women workers, abolition of contractors, effective implementation of transparency mechanisms and the establishment of a schedule of rates more favourable to women will go a long way in removing the short-term barriers to women's participation in MGNREGA".

MGNREGS worksites are said to be associated with crèche facility where at least five children are there whose mothers are working at the same time. In this context, the report of the FORCES (2018:55) mentioned:

"NREGA has indeed been able to bring forward the concerns of rural poverty, and especially those of rural women. Due to the prevalence of patriarchy in the rural areas, women are bound to the household chores and child care. Time and again block level officials have mentioned that women prefer to not come to work, which shows that even the implementers are not sensitive regarding certain traditional perspectives on women's work and responsibilities. This has also been reflected in the lack of participation of eligible women despite possession of NREGA job cards".

While a majority of literatures had worked on the impact of MGNREGA on women, Dasgupta and Sudarshan (2013) worked on the factors that are affecting women's participation in MGNREGA. They concluded that the interface between institutional framework of programme implementation and intersectionality of women as individual or

communities plays a significant role in women participation in MGNREGA. In their paper titled “Issues in labour market inequality and women’s participation in India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme” (2011:6) they concluded:

“Levels of women’s participation would be influenced by the design of the programme and the efficiency of its implementation.by intra-household allocations of care and provisioning responsibilities, and by the local economy that determines what other opportunities there might be”.

Literatures related with MGNREGS and women work burden are comparatively less in number, and they have come after a certain period of MGNREGA implementation. Increase in coverage areas, awareness level of women and regular social audits have resulted bringing up some relevant issues. There are limited number of literatures which suggests that apart from empowering village women, MGNREGS is posing double or triple work burden on women due to complex patriarchal set up of rural region. The study of Dasgupta and Sudarshan (2013) observes that the balancing household work like fodder and water collection, cooking etc. with NREGA work burden rural women and makes it difficult for them to participate.

Substituting children in household work when mother works on MGNREGA fields is a disturbing outcome which is mentioned in the works of Bhatta (2006), ISST (2007), Narayanan and Das (2008) and Ravi and Engler (2012). These literatures suggest that the burden of care responsibilities most often goes on elder girl child in her mother’s absence. Similarly, payment through bank can ensure some amount of control of women on their earning, but dependency regarding bank operation reduces the freedom to spend. Gynaneswar (2016) outlines a number of issues hindering women’s participation in the programme and restricting their potential for empowerment. These include social attitudes towards women’s work outside home, low facility childcare, and low level of awareness regarding the programme. Report of ILO (2017:26) has mentioned the representation of women in MGNREGS work fields is essentially a household decision as it is a household guarantee system by law. The comment of this report regarding MGNREGA participation and education of the children maintains:

“Our analysis shows, when we take the intensity of work into account, the picture is less rosy – the longer the time spent by the woman in MGNREGA work, the less likely that the older girl will spend longer hours at school. One could argue that the burden of care work moves from the woman to the older girl child in the household when the woman spends longer time at work. Ideally, we would need to trace these families over a longer period, not just over the

two years for which we have data, to assess if girls continued to go to school, and whether the options for the next generation were better than those available to the women working under MGNREGA.(ILO) We examine the relationship between women's MGNREGA work and the older girls' time spent in school, controlling for whether women have control over household decisions, and find that there is significant evidence, though weak, that the likelihood of the oldest girl spending more hours in school is greater for households in which the women worked in MGNREGA relative to all others. This relationship is stronger when the woman working in MGNREGA has control over household decisions as well."

The factors of labour force participation for Indian rural women are equally applicable for women MGNREGS workers too. A series of researchers in last four decades like Boserup (1970) Pampel and Tanaka(1986), Schultz (1990) Goldin (1994) Mammen and Paxson(2000), Tansel (2001) and Fatima and Sultana (2009) have stated the factors leading to women's labour force participation as diverse and the factors such as education, employment, women's fertility and economic growth etc. are subjected to complex socio-cultural normative which are regional in character. Sanghi, Srija, and Shrinivas (2015) have pointed out that the decline in rural female labour force participation is a result of complex mixing of several factors such as education, income, availability of non-farm jobs and local wage conditions which determines the gender gap in wages too. They suggested dedicated efforts in skilling, reskilling and improvement of overall education outcomes for women to improve the situation. Sarkar et. al (2017) and Chatterjee et. al (2018) argued that the age of marriage, husband's education and income are the major contributors of women's participation in labour force.

Issues Emerged from the Survey of Literature

The preceding section highlights certain issues that need to be explored. The right based component of MGNREGS has been widely studied by Indian academia but exercising right by rural women and its constraints are not been exclusively mentioned. Although there is some periodic research which has mentioned MGNREGA too as women's right, but the discussions are fewer in numbers.

MGNREGS has got attention from researchers from the beginning and the domain of analysis is mostly concerned with the employment generating aspect of the scheme at the initial phase. The analysis regarding women participation and its impact on women have arrived in a much later phase. However, there is dearth of literatures which successfully link the MGNREGS created rural assets and women's livelihood. Creation of sustainable livelihood through newly

generated/regenerated rural assets is a major goal of MGNREGS although the target of sustainability and how far the scheme has able to attain it is almost absent in the contemporary discussions. Finally, given the increasing debate on the control of socio-economic factors on women's labour force participation, there is remarkable dearth of literatures which have successfully pointed out the physical diversity with socio-cultural normative and women's participation in MGNREGS. The critical question that needs to be asked is whether this scheme has improved the livelihood of village women irrespective of intersectionality of physical and social attributes or not.

Above discussion tries to provide an insight of the findings and issues reflected through the works of the various researchers and academicians relating gender and MGNREGA. The focus of discussion is to find out the impact of MGNREGS on women's lives, the obstacle faced by women to get employment under MGNREGS and the issues related with their work. The complex relationship between gender and governance is often unrelated in theoretical and empirical researches. The pre-requisite of understanding the role of governance in women's lives is essentially linked with the detailed understanding of complex socio-cultural norms that controls women in every setting. India has a long history of employment generating programmes. In India, state initiatives are of common occurrence to strengthen the rural economy. Some of them focuses to ensure the right and identity of poor people. The major loophole of these initiatives is related with assumption of equal accessibility of rights and opportunities for all. Thus, these often ignores the gender differences in accessibility of rights and opportunities.

Chapter-3

An Analysis of Physiographic Control on MGNREGA

Introduction

MGNREGS, the first ever rural safety net of India, has treasured employment for rural household as a constitutional right. Besides ensuring participation of rural women, this scheme is expected to provide livelihood opportunities through multiplier effect. Though the design and the implementation procedure are homogeneous in all Indian states, it does not result homogeneous success to all regions. A series of literature (Kumar et. al (2008) , Ambasta et al. (2008) , Karak and Ray (2009) Bassi and Kumar (2010) , Pankaj and Bhattacharya's work on 2017) suggest that lack of regional contextualization within the framework of the scheme has resulted in diversified responses. This chapter is based on the assumption that the physiography has a good control over participation and accrual of benefits from MGNREGS. To analyze whether physiography exerts control over MGNREGS implementation and benefits, two different locations have been chosen to see whether MGNREGS implementation, participation and benefits are different from each other. For this, two sets of data have been utilized, first section of this chapter deals with the secondary Gram Panchayat level data available from MGNREGS website and second section deals with the primary data obtained from the field survey. An attempt has been made in the concluding section to see whether primary data confirms the facts secondary data exhibits.

Section-I

This section tries to analyze whether well performing units of MGNREGA perform well in terms of MGNREGS implementation and benefits for women. For this, two types of indicators are selected. One is general indicators which take into consideration the general performance of MGNREGA in Panchayats of the selected blocks. Another set of indicators are related with women workers of MGNREGS. In this study, four general indicators are selected. These are:

(i) Number of persons demanded MGNREGS work out of total registered persons: It is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of persons demanded work}}{\text{Total number of persons registered for MGNREGS work}} \times 100$$

Total number of persons registered for MGNREGS work

(ii) Number of persons received MGNREGS work out of total job demanding persons. It is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of persons received work}}{\text{Total number of person demand for MGNREGS work}} \times 100$$

Total number of person demand for MGNREGS work

(iii) Households completed 100 days of employment out of total job receiving households. It is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of households got 100 days of MGNREGS work}}{\text{Total number of Households received MGNREGS work}} \times 100$$

Total number of Households received MGNREGS work

(iv) Person days generated per job demanding persons

$$\frac{\text{Total number of persondays generated by MGNREGS}}{\text{Total number of persons demanded MGNREGS work}} \times 100$$

Total number of persons demanded MGNREGS work

Another set of indicators are taken to compare the general performance of Gram panchayats in implanting MGNREGS and the performance of MGNREGS in providing work to women. These indicators are crucial for the study as it reflects whether women are subjected to marginalization in terms of getting MGNREGS employment. The indicators are:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of women skilled worker worked for MGNREGS}}{\text{Total number of skilled workers worked for MGNREGS}} \times 100$$

(ii) Share of women unskilled workers to total unskilled workers: It is expressed as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of women unskilled workers worked for MGNREGS}}{\text{Total number of unskilled workers worked for MGNREGS}} \times 100$$

(iii) Share of active women workers to total registered women workers: It is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of active MGNREGS women workers}}{\text{Total number of registered women workers in MGNREGS}} \times 100$$

(iv) Share of active women workers having bank account on their own name to total active women workers: It is expressed as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of active women workers having bank accounts}}{\text{Total number of active women workers in MGNREGS}} \times 100$$

In these two sets of indicators to avoid the influence of external factors on the performance of MGNREGS, the secondary data of consecutive three years are taken into consideration. Data

of three financial years (2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17) are taken from the official website of MGNREGA and their averages of different indicators are calculated. This study refers to Gram Panchayat (G.P.) level analysis of the official data. The indicators of general performance (henceforth referred as G.I.) and performance of women (henceforth referred as W.I.) are calculated and a comparison between the indicators has been done. Table 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 provide the three year's average value of the indicators taken. A brief summary of these Tables is presented in Table 3.5. It is required to be mentioned that in the case of women related indicators, duplication of data is found for three consecutive years in most of the blocks which is a major limitation of this analysis. This trend has continued for two financial years after 2016-17.

Table: 3.1. Calculation of Average of General Indicators in the Plateau

Sl. No.	Panchayats	Average Share of Job Demanding HH to Total Registered HH (%) ⁷	Average Person received work/Person demanded work ⁸	Average HH Completed 100 days of Employment out of Total Job Receiving HH (%) ⁹	Average Persondays generated/Demand ¹⁰
1	GOGLA	34.43	94.56	1.31	24.26
2	GOURBAZAR	49.69	92.94	2.35	27.33
3	ICHHAPUR	33.35	96.07	3.10	19.70
4	JEMUA	14.59	96.61	6.73	26.71
5	LAUDOHA	30.54	87.47	0.36	28.90
6	PRATAPPUR	35.21	89.37	0.88	24.00
7	AMBIKANAGAR	28.74	93.51	8.49	23.10
8	BARIKUL	38.92	93.49	4.83	18.68
9	HALUDKANALI	29.22	90.10	3.25	15.83
10	PUDDI	43.27	94.50	8.51	26.05
11	RAJAKATA	33.66	90.18	3.04	16.88
12	RANIBANDH	28.44	91.06	3.96	16.15

⁷ See annexure Table no.3.1 (a) -3.1(f)

⁸ See annexure Table no. 3.1 (a) -3.1(f)

⁹ See annexure Table no. 3.1 (a) -3.1(f)

¹⁰ See annexure Table no. 3.1 (a) -3.1(f)

13	RAUTORA	31.65	93.40	1.38	14.75
14	RUDRA	44.01	92.50	6.29	19.47
	Average	33.98	92.55	3.89	21.56

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. Calculation of Average of General Indicators in the Plain

Sl.No.	Panchayats	Average Share of Job Demanding Person to Total Registered Person (%) ¹¹	Average Person received work/Person demanded work ¹²	Average HH Completed 100 days of Employment out of Total Job Receiving HH (%) ¹³	Average Number of persondays generated / Per Person Demand ¹⁴
1	AMARUN-I	64.77	35.24	0.32	7.02
2	AMARUN-II	71.80	85.43	2.89	17.60
3	BALGONA	65.56	83.00	0.44	17.82
4	BAMUNARA	65.32	76.34	0.17	15.01
5	BARABELUN-I	76.85	76.28	2.25	13.84
6	BARABELUN-II	56.85	75.84	0.00	17.79
7	BHATAR	75.45	70.54	0.70	12.37
8	BONPAS	67.84	86.83	3.22	25.41
9	ERUAR	73.06	86.98	0.43	20.43
10	MAHACHANDA	64.92	84.02	0.53	17.98
11	MAHATA	77.88	84.85	0.03	23.62
12	NITYANANDAPUR	80.31	87.86	0.18	17.05
13	SAHEBGANJ-I	72.88	84.21	0.01	19.02
14	SAHEBGANJ-II	78.27	87.02	0.83	21.24
15	CHINGANI	37.98	37.98	2.13	15.38
16	CHURAMONIPUR	36.43	36.43	2.00	16.63
17	KALYANI	39.94	39.94	4.02	19.92

¹¹ See annexure Table no. 3.2 (a) -3.2.(f)

¹² See annexure Table no. 3.2 (a) -3.2.(f)

¹³ See annexure Table no. 3.2 (a) -3.2.(f)

¹⁴ See annexure Table no. 3.2 (a) -3.2.(f)

18	KANTABARI	41.57	41.57	7.05	24.46
19	LODNA	16.94	16.94	7.25	20.39
20	MAJDIHA	35.73	35.73	3.37	19.00
21	MEDINIPUR	26.25	26.25	2.61	13.19
22	NAKAJURI	45.54	45.54	6.79	19.81
23	NIKUNJAPUR	15.78	15.78	2.30	19.41
24	ONDA-I	25.50	25.50	0.61	16.29
25	ONDA-II	19.74	19.74	8.92	24.02
26	PUNISOLE	21.44	21.44	7.65	28.68
27	RAMSAGAR	40.04	40.04	4.17	18.48
28	RATANPUR	42.46	42.46	10.78	23.77
29	SANTOR	26.17	26.17	6.93	21.59
	Average	50.46	54.34	3.06	18.87

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.3. Calculation of Average of Indicators Related with Women in the Plateau

Sl. No.	Panchayats	Average Share of women skilled worker to total skilled worker	Average Share of Women Semi-skilled Workers to Total Semi-skilled Workers (%)	Average Share of Active Women Workers to Total Registered Women Workers (%)	Average Share of Women Worker Having Single Bank Account to Total Women Account Holder (In %)
1	GOGLA	0	6.25	64.40	79.62
2	GOURBAZAR	12.5	5.75	68.78	43.32
3	ICHHAPUR	7.01	6.56	58.95	50.52
4	JEMUA	0	6.67	55.67	85.71
5	LAUDOHA	11.34	16.13	63.62	64.33
6	PRATAPPUR	11.92	6.62	58.52	61.03
7	AMBIKANAGAR	3.49	16.59	71.24	98.33
8	BARIKUL	12.55	14.73	72.94	95.02
9	HALUDKANALI	16.57	13.19	61.77	95.54

10	PUDDI	3.95	5.41	82.63	97.89
11	RAJAKATA	16.30	9.82	57.89	69.11
12	RANIBANDH	12.50	4.62	64.62	92.00
13	RAUTORA	12.94	20.10	66.03	97.68
14	RUDRA	16.10	13.28	75.45	85.77
	Average	9.80	10.41	65.89	79.71

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.4. Calculation of Average of Indicators Related with Women in the Plain

Sl.No.	Panchayats	Average Share of women skilled worker to total skilled worker	Average Share of Women Semi-skilled Workers to Total Semi skilled Workers (%)	Average Share of Active Women Workers to Total Registered Women Workers (%)	Average Share of Women Worker Having Single Bank Account to Total Women Account Holder (In %)
1	CHINGANI	4.35	13.70	70.33	90.87
2	CHURAMONIPUR	15.96	27.88	72.85	93.04
3	KALYANI	6.25	21.60	60.25	96.96
4	KANTABARI	13.16	17.69	73.04	92.51
5	LODNA	8.62	15.60	58.50	78.58
6	MAJDIHA	6.33	25.00	78.25	94.39
7	MEDINIPUR	14.71	28.64	48.99	79.69
8	NAKAJURI	20.59	17.19	73.68	76.85
9	NIKUNJAPUR	4.17	10.53	52.64	77.51
10	ONDA-I	12.50	18.68	56.05	82.61
11	ONDA-II	35.42	22.95	77.41	92.61
12	PUNISOLE	6.78	5.10	58.77	95.68
13	RAMSAGAR	18.38	21.33	63.36	94.73
14	RATANPUR	8.37	14.65	59.25	82.97
15	SANTOR	16.67	3.64	53.09	97.78

16	AMARUN-I	5.56	16.90	25.82	43.01
17	AMARUN-II	14.29	15.23	30.97	40.58
18	BALGONA	7.77	7.89	27.69	7.52
19	BAMUNARA	3.51	17.75	30.01	8.53
20	BARABELUN-I	24.07	11.11	40.89	25.50
21	BARABELUN-II	14.29	2	37.61	33.88
22	BHATAR	11.01	16.92	36.31	8.67
23	BONPAS	8.15	12.06	54.52	47.13
24	ERUAR	2.54	23.17	41.03	2.54
25	MAHACHANDA	35.00	4.82	51.38	73.57
26	MAHATA	20.00	7.40	58.88	11.83
27	NITYANANDAPUR	15.55	6.91	39.94	14.31
28	SAHEBGANJ-I	28.23	10	68.45	18.78
29	SAHEBGANJ-II	4.17	10.08	65.93	9.92
	Average	13.32	14.70	54.27	57.67

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.5. Comparison between the Plain and the Plateau on the basis of selected General Indicators and Indicators Related with Women

General Indicators Location	Average Share of Job Demanding Person to Total Registered Person (%)	Average Person received work/Person demanded work	Average HH Completed 100 days of Employment out of Total Job Receiving HH (%)	Average Number of persondays generated / Per Person Demand
Plain	50.46	54.34	3.06	18.97
Plateau	33.98	92.55	3.89	21.56
Indicators Related with Women Location	Average Share of women skilled worker to total skilled worker	Average Share of Women Semi-skilled Workers to Total Semi-skilled Workers (%)	Average Share of Active Women Workers to Total Registered Women Workers (%)	Average Share of Women Worker Having Single Bank Account to Total Women Account Holder (In %)
Plain	9.80	10.41	65.89	79.71
Plateau	13.32	14.70	54.27	57.67

Data Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table 3.5 shows status of MGNREGA implementation in terms of general indicators and indicators related with women which are different in the plain and the plateau. This finding supports the assumption of this thesis i.e., MGNREGA implementation differs as per physiographic characteristics of the region although the Table 3.5 provides some contradictory characteristics of MGNREGA such as:

- a) MGNREGA Work demand is high in plain than in plateau, but plateau provides fewer regular work opportunities to its inhabitants, so MGNREGA work demand was expected to be higher in plateau than in plain.
- b) The incidence of job receiving per person and average person days per person is higher in plateau. This result contradicts the idea that MGNREGA is a demand driven scheme which guarantees the employment to the job-seeker. With lesser demand, the person days and incidence of job receiving were expected to be lesser in plateau than plain, but it did not happen.

This Table reveals two similarities also.

- a) Both of the places have failed to provide promised hundred days of employment to the work demanding households.
- b) In both places, 33 per cent reservation for women as direct beneficiary (skilled+ semi-skilled) have not been achieved.

The gap between the women related indicators in the plain and the plateau is comparatively less than that of general indicators. The comparison between the average values of these two indicators provides a clue that these two indicators are related and MGNREGA has been differently implemented in plain and plateau.

Section-II

The analysis of section I provides a clue that though positive participation of women is related with the status of MGNREGS implementation, but the relationship between two is not clear through the analysis of secondary data. Therefore, it is important to see how different factors impose control over the gendered attributes of MGNREGS in two different physical settings. Theoretically the scope of MGNREGA is homogeneous for all locations irrespective of topographical characteristics. In this study, the plain and the plateau locations are taken as sample locations to understand the extent of implementation in two different physical locations as well as its gendered impact. Mandiha village in Bankura and Basatpur village in Bardhaman district represent plain land while Haludkanali Village and Gopendanga village represent plateau land of Bankura and Bardhaman. Village Haludkanali is spread over 382.38 hectares Out of this, irrigated area comprised of 25.2 hectares and unirrigated area comprised of 82 hectares. The village is situated on a rough and sloppy terrain dominated by Red soil group. This village is the part of the rugged undulating plateau exhibiting more surface run-off, less rain and rugged topography. Another village taken from the Bankura district is Mandiha. This village is situated in the plain land exhibiting less surface run-off, more agricultural practices and more irrigation. This village is spread over 311.62 hectares. Out of this, irrigated area comprised of 89.29 hectares and unirrigated area comprised of 121.3 hectares. Second district selected for field work after the process of filtering is Bardhaman (Now East and West Bardhaman). A village from plateau land from West

Bardhaman and a village from plain land from East Bardhaman are selected to assess the physiographical differences of MGNREGA implementation.

The village Gopendanga is spread over 485.6 hectares. Out of this, irrigated area comprised of 84.75 hectares and unirrigated area comprised of 93.29 hectares. The village is situated on a rough and slopy terrain dominated by Red soil group and abundance of quartz minerals. This village is the part of the Chota Nagpur plateau having undulating surface, dry weather, more surface run-off and rugged topography. Another village taken from the Bardhaman district is Basatpur. This village is situated in the riverine plain land exhibiting less surface run-off, presence of clayey soil, intense agricultural practices with multiple cropping and more rain. This village is spread over 492.65. Out of this, irrigated area comprised of 121.39 hectares and unirrigated area comprised of 93.2hectares.

This chapter is divided into two broad headings; control of physiography over MGNREGS implementation and participation and control of physiography over accrual of MGNREGS benefits. These are discussed as under:

(A) Control of Physiography over MGNREGS Implementation and Participation

Inspite of the homogeneous scope of MGNREGS implementation, existing socio-cultural context together with topographical difference play an important role in determining the degree of differentiation. In this study, difference of implementation has been assessed through some indicators. These are:

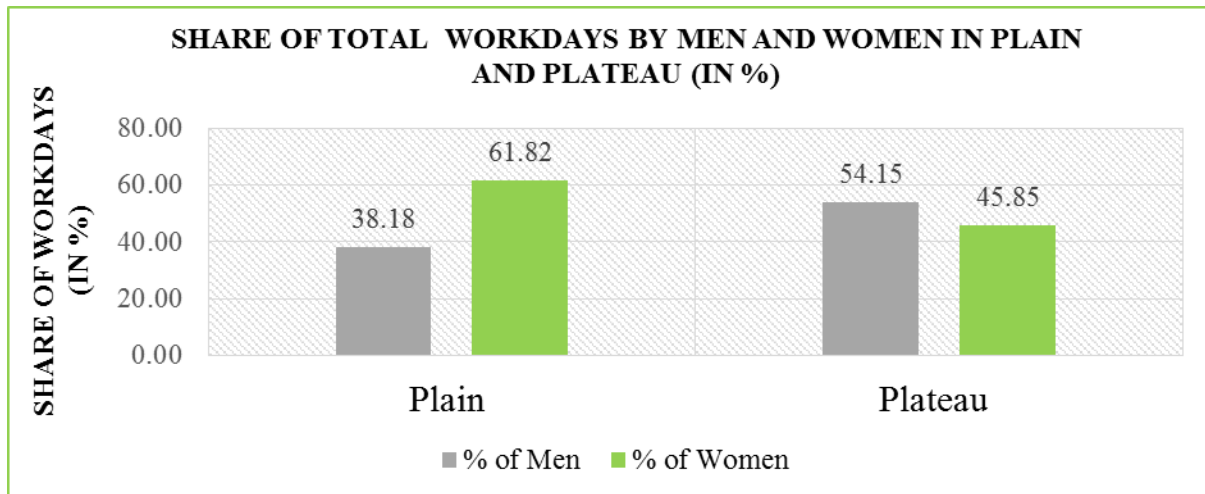
(i) Physiography-Gender- Participation Link

One of the major indicators of MGNREGS implementation is the number of MGNREGS workdays. Distribution of MGNREGS workdays across men and women is a good measure to capture the gendered differences in implementation across locations.

Primary survey shows that out of total 18589 MGNREGS workdays generated in study area, 10310 workdays are covered by women (55.46%) in all four locations. A break up of data based on physiographic indicators shows the share of women to total workdays is 61.82 % in plain and 45.85 % in plateau. A bar graph has been drawn on the basis of the data obtained from the field survey. This graph generates three important observations; first:men/women difference of MGNREGS workdays availed is less in plateau than the plain. Second, the

overall performance of plateau is poorer than the plain and lastly there is marked difference between women’s share of employment between the plateau and the plain. It is much higher in plain accounting for minimizing men’s workdays below 50 per cent. All these observations indicate that there prevails a) across gender b) across location and c) intra-gender variations in terms of MGNREGS participation.

Graph. 1. The Distribution of MGNREGS Workdays across Gender and Location



Mean workdays in plain: 35
 Mean workdays in plateau: 30
 40% of workers have availed 21-40 MGNREGS workdays in both of the locations .

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The most significant observation related with this bar graph is the existence of intra men and women variation. This variation is observed at geographical basis to reach the assumption of differential participation of women from different locations. For this, total number of workdays availed are classified into five groups and number of respondents are calculated. Table 11 presents the gender specific representation of MGNREGS workdays in the plain and the plateau.

Table.3.6 Representation of MGNREGS Workdays across Locations

No. of MGNREGS workdays availed	PLAIN		PLATEAU	
	Share of women MGNREGS workers to total women MGNREGS workers (%)	Share of male MGNREGS workers to total male MGNREGS workers (%)	Share of women MGNREGS workers to total women MGNREGS workers (%)	Share of male MGNREGS workers to total male MGNREGS workers (%)
15-20*	33.03	31.67	37.58	29.95
21-40	49.32	42.08	45.22	47.21
41-60	14.48	16.67	14.01	19.80
61-80	2.26	7.5	1.91	1.52
81-100	0.91	2.08	1.27	1.52
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

* The samples are taken on the basis of at least 15 days of MGNREGS work in 2014-15.

Above Table suggests that highest number of workers are concentrated in category 21-40 days and locations which is lower than half of the promised employment days. A significant share of respondents is concentrated in 15-20 days category for both locations across gender. Above 40 days employment is inversely related with number of respondents, i.e. number of respondents' shows decline with increasing number of MGNREGS workdays. The incident of unmet demand is denoted as an "indicator of rural distress" by World Bank (2013).

Analysis of secondary data and field observations indicate the following reasons for this situation.

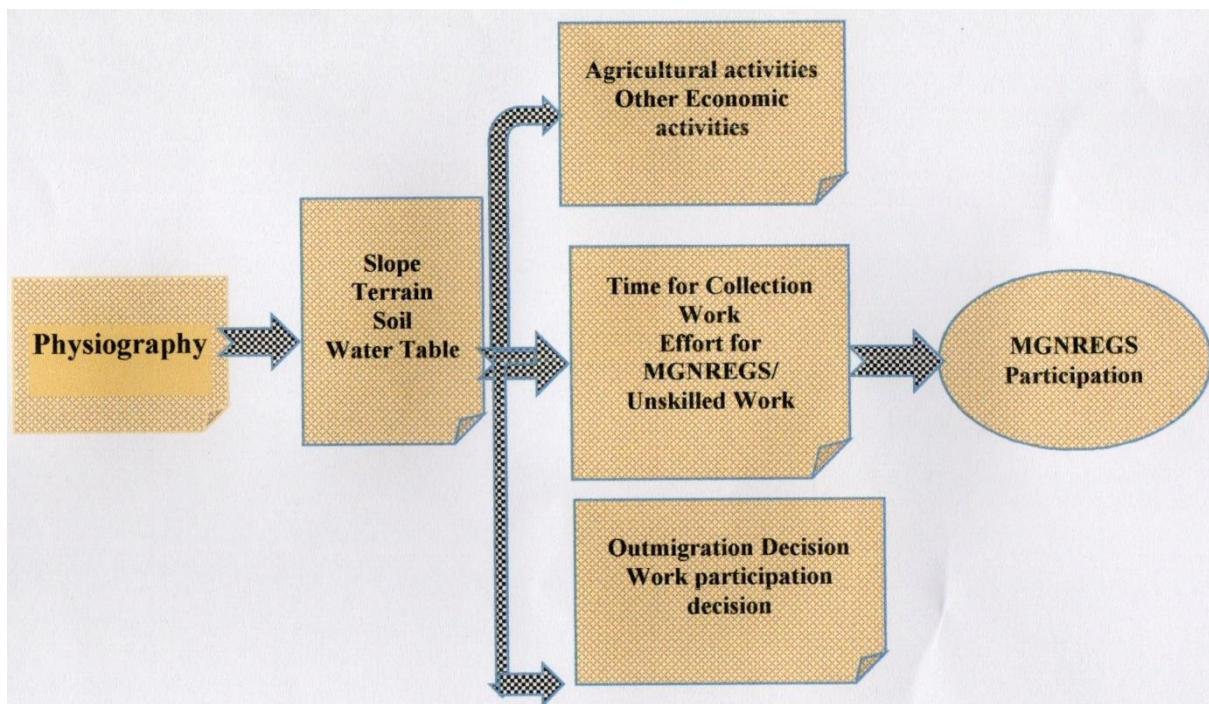
- a. Analysis of Gram Panchayat level secondary data shows that a full of hundred days employment is offered to a limited number of households in both locations.
- b. Institutional authorities have failed to provide work in agriculturally lean season. Being a part of the plain land, Basatpur and Mandiha exhibit intense agricultural practices. Village dwellers are usually busy to work in their own fields or work as agricultural labourer in the neighbouring farms. Field study suggests that simultaneous offering of MGNREGS job at the time of cultivation restricts work participation.
- c. MGNREGS provide 100 days of wage employment to every rural household. This household specific approach has resulted fewer numbers of workdays per workers in a

household that has more number of residents. Household survey reveals that the average number of residents per household is 5 in plain and 6 in plateau.

d. The low performance of MGNREGS in ground level can be attributed with delayed payment of wage, insufficient fund allocation and corruption at institutional level.

Above discussion shows that there is marked difference in women participation in MGNREGS across locations. Field observation, FGD and literary evidences suggest that the elements of physiography like nature of terrain, slope and nature of soil etc. are having indirect control over nature of agricultural activities which in turn determines the availability of job opportunities and gender specific availability of workers for MGNREGS work. Beside this, the struggle for livelihood and the level of effort for collection works are different in accordance with physiography. In plateau, women are supposed to do more rigorous work to support their livelihood whereas in plain, the level of struggle is comparatively less. All these factors enhance women participation in MGNREGS in the plain than in the plateau. Following diagram illustrates the conceptual framework that is derived from above discussion.

Fig: 5. Conceptual Framework of physiography-Gender-MGNREGS Link



(ii) Physiography-Distance-Work opportunity Link

MGNREGS gives the opportunity to work within 5km radius of the village on a considerable wage rate. The workers are entitled to get extra allowance (10% of wage) for working in a

worksite located more than 5 km of radius. The provision to work within or in the proximity of the village is having a potential attraction for rural labourers for whom working outside is time seeking and costly. This factor is believed to have a positive impact on gendered participation in MGNREGS. Focussed Group Discussion suggests that many villagers have opted MGNREGS work over other casual work to avoid the cost of transport and the hassles of migration. This factor is stronger for village women who have mobility restrictions. The intersection of social norms, caste, education and household relationship have a complex bearing on mobility, especially in rural areas. The pre-condition of selecting MGNREGS over other jobs or as means of income for first time, the effective implementation of MGNREGS is required. For the places having minimal effective functioning, workers tend to choose migration for other casual works irrespective of stress and cost factor.

This section tries to analyse how distance factor operates for women in two different physiographic locations. Women are expected to bear the household responsibility together with outside work. Opting MGNREGS work helps lactating mothers, mothers with young children or women having the responsibility of elderly care to manage their unpaid care work with paid work with minimum alterations of their daily responsibilities.

Field data shows that women are not supported for their care giving responsibilities while at work. Care as of domestic responsibility often goes to women without any help. As such, opting MGNREGS work help rural women managing care and earning together as it involves less time for travel. To understand the situation, an analysis of the distance of the regular worksites and distance of the MGNREGS worksites have been done. Out of 316 women surveyed, 174 women have worked in other works together with MGNREGS and 142 women in the plain and the plateau worked for MGNREGS only. The reason for including women who are not in other jobs is to see the share of women involved in housebound work. Without including them, it is not possible to realize the full picture of women's participation in work in accordance with physiographic characteristics. Following Table shows that the highest number of women MGNREGS worker are those who are involved in domestic work only (52.71% in the plain and 30.97% in the plateau). The share is high in the plain than in the plateau. The livelihood support, as observed (common property resources, high water table and availability of fodder and home-grown vegetables), is more in the plain. For this reason, women in the plain have opted to be more house-bound than the women in plateau. Highest number of women have worked at a distance of 1-2 km from their house in both locations. Women who have reported working at a distance more than 5 km belongs to the category of

seasonal migrants. They usually are landless and migrate 40-150 kms away in agricultural season in both of the locations.

Table.3.7. Distance of Regular Worksites of Women in Plain and Plateau

Distance of regular Worksites	Plain	Plateau
	Share of Women to total Women (Category I & II)	Share of Women to total Women (Category I & II)
0-1 km	1.97	9.73
1-2 km	11.33	17.70
2-3 km	8.87	6.19
3-4 km	4.93	4.42
4-5 km	4.43	2.65
>5 km	5.42	4.42
Engaged in Home based work other than household work	5.42	23.89
No fixed worksite distance	4.93	0.00
Not Employed	52.71	30.97
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table indicates that women do prefer to work within lesser distances in both locations. Though the number of respondents worked at a distance of 0-1 km from household is very negligible in plain. This is because of the high density of population in villages in the plain of West Bengal. This density is often expressed through clustered pattern of village settlements. Because of this, agricultural farms are generally located at outer side of the village with the result that very few respondents have reported their worksites at a distance less than 1 km.

Plateau exhibits lesser number of women in higher distance because of the discomfort and time seeking travelling over rough terrain and slopy land. According to a woman interviewee in Haludkanali village located in the plateau:

“It is extremely troublesome to fetch water in summer season, the ponds remain dry, so are the wells. I have to wait 2-3 hours to get two buckets of water. It takes so much of time that often my elderdaughter starts cooking in the morning and I complete it after returning.”

The factor of time is crucial for women because most of them perform time bound activities like cooking breakfast and lunch for husband and other members of the family, sending children to school and collecting water for domestic use etc. MGNREGS has resulted lesser

time for collection activities. Higher depth of water table and rugged terrain are two contributing factors to women's struggle to meet their livelihood demand in plateau. So the reduced distance of workplace is certainly a positive factor for women residing in the plateau region. This situation has resulted in involvement of nearly one fourth women respondents into home-based work in the plateau (23.89%). Martinez and Paterna (2009) concluded that the reflection of gender ideology is seen in social discourse which takes the differences of men and women's work as a result of personal choices and working in home-based job may be a free choice of women. The share of women engaged in home-based work is more than four times in plateau (the plateau 23.89% and the plain 5.42 %). Household activities in plateau includes working for dairy, poultry, making of cow-dung cakes, maintaining small kitchen garden and selling off the products with the help of the male members of the family.

In Focussed group discussions, women respondents in plateau told that they used to work in small scale work like making utensils from Sal leaf, cracking the nuts measured by weight and supply it to nearby shops, makes beedi and cow dung cakes which are not much remunerative, but have steady demand in local market and it saves their time and energy to walk through a rough terrain specially in summer. FGD suggests that work opportunities are relatively few in plateau as compared to plain. On the other hand, women in plain seemed less interested in those less remunerative work as their men counterparts are mostly working. FGD with women in the plain indicates for stricter control on women's mobility, especially in the case of those working in an unknown environment. Moreover, lesser depth of water table, more job opportunities, plain terrain, and more livelihood supports have refrained women to opt for home-based work in the plain. Women in the plain have reported lesser control on their mobility to work in MGNREGS as the worksites are nearer, known and wage is comparatively high. Women in plateau have reported their satisfaction to get better wages in nearer worksites and lesser span of time. It is needed to be mentioned that though official work hour for MGNREGS work is 8 hours but it ranges 4 to 5 hours in plateau and lighter works like plantation, digging in shallow depth etc. are assigned to women because of sloppy and rugged terrain.

Table.3.8. Distance of MGNREGS Worksites for Women in the Plain and the Plateau

Distance of MGNREGS Worksite	Plain	Plateau
	Share of Women to Total Women worked in MGNREGS (%)	Share of Women to Total Women worked in MGNREGS (%)
0-1 km	31.03	33.63
1-2 km	52.22	63.72
2-3 km	9.85	0.88
3-4 km	2.46	1.77
4-5 km	2.46	0.00
>5 km	1.97	0.00
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table 3.8 depicts the average distance of MGNREGS worksites for women in the study area. ThisTable shows a sharp contrast with regular worksite distance more than 5 km for women. No women have worked at a distance of more than 5 km for MGNREGS in the plateau. FGD discussion reveals that fewer job opportunities in the village have resulted outmigration of women from plateau. The wage rate in agriculturally rich areas is higher than MGNREGS and often includes some incentives like food and shelter. Working for unskilled manual work on a rough terrain in a distant worksite on daily basis is often troublesome for women in plateau, so they opt to out-migrate. Other factor is the payment of travel allowance. Some of women respondents in plateau reportedly worked within a distance of 40 km and preferred it than localized wage-based work to avoid the trouble of travel; it is another discouraging factor for women to opt for MGNREGS work when worksites are distant in plateau.

A comment which came from one member of FGD conducted in Haludkanali village is worth mentioning:

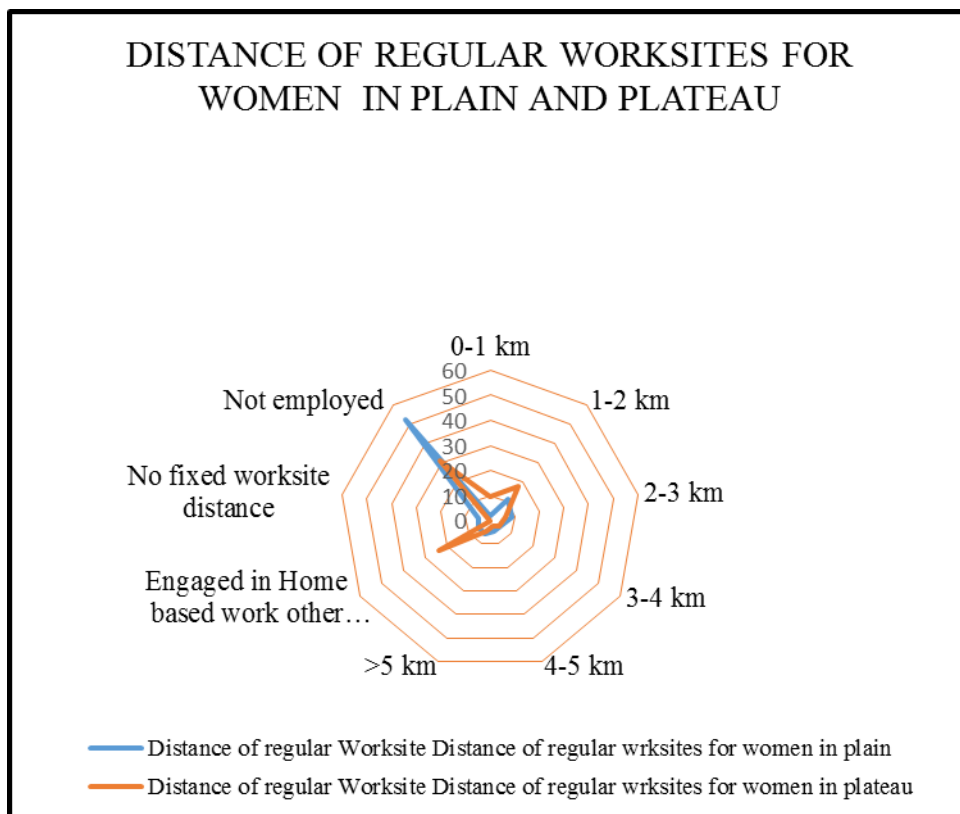
“If I consider the wage, it is good for hundred days of work. But timings are very fixed and no food is given. Last time I walked for about one hour to reach the worksite from my home. It was mid-April and walking at the time of returning was not easy. I felt very hungry after

walking so long, but no facility was there. It is very tiring to finish all the household works on time (before 7 a.m) and walk long distances over such a terrain. NREGA works should be home-based.”

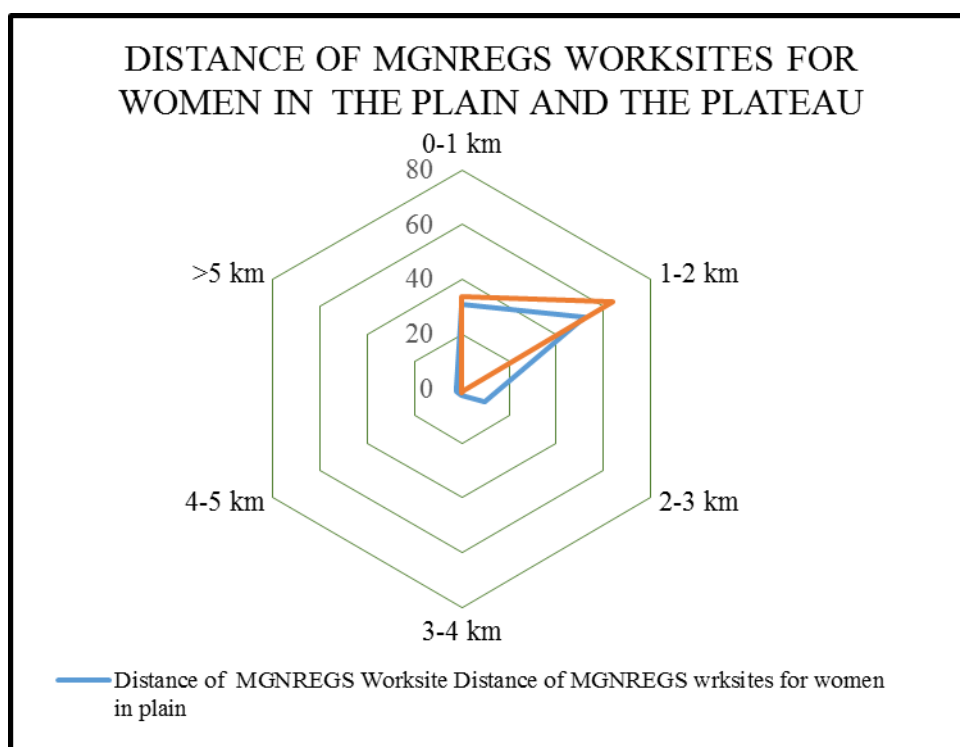
An observation of field area and interview with the officials shows that fewer worksites were located in a radius of 0-1 km. Above Table shows that most of the women have worked at a distance of 1-2 km from the village. Though it was found that because of the presence of small water bodies and local residual mounds, the straight distance which is shown in the official record has not always been availed.

The above discussion suggests the existence of the link between physiography-economic activities and participation decision by women. Women’s work participation decision is often a reflection of physiography –work opportunity relationships and it controls intra-household decision and selection of women for MGNREGS job.

Graph: 2. Distance of Regular Worksites for Women in the Plain and the Plateau



Graph: 3. Distance of MGNREGS Worksites for Women in Plain and Plateau



Source: Field Survey, 2015.

(iii) Physiography-Awareness-Gender Link

Awareness is one of the factors in determining the MGNREGS participation as the success of any demand driven programme depends on the degree of awareness of targeted group. Appropriate selection of productive assets and full realization of the scheme are possible through a completely aware village community. Centre for Women's Development Studies (2018) in its report has mentioned that the awareness regarding reservation of job for women and child care services needs to be highlighted. The report has further mentioned that the awareness and provisions are two fundamentals of women's work decision in MGNREGS. The National Institute for Smart Government's report (2013-14) indicated that the awareness of rural women about their entitlements strengthens their ability to demand their entitlements. A survey has been done to know about the awareness of respondents about different aspects of MGNREGS. Total five indicators were chosen, among which the question related with total number of workdays available in MGNREGS which has got 100% right answer in both locations. That is because MGNREGS has been replaced by the name "eksho diner kaj" (hundred days work in West Bengal, so the awareness is high. So the other indicators are shown in the Table which has got having varying responses from the villagers.

In plain, the mean awareness of women is lower than men except the distance-gender category. In plateau, the situation is reverse. Following Table reveals the awareness pattern of men and women in selected locations.

Table: 3.9. Awareness about MGNREGS by Men and Women

Attributes of awareness about MGNREGS	Gender	The Plain		The Plateau	
		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Awareness about wage Rate	Men	1.19	0.40	1.51	0.50
	Women	1.06	0.24	1.65	0.47
Awareness about unemployment allowance	Men	1.42	0.49	1.96	0.19
	Women	1.32	0.46	1.96	0.18
Awareness about officially declared gap in demand and receiving	Men	1.30	0.46	1.76	0.42
	Women	1.26	0.44	1.89	0.30
Awareness about preference of women to work at a lesser distance	Men	1.93	0.25	1.82	0.38
	Women	1.98	0.13	1.66	0.47

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

(B) Control of Physiography over Accrual of MGNREGS benefits by Women

In a developing economy, women are mostly seen as engaged in less remunerative work or in unpaid care work.

The major benefits of MGNREGS are:

(i) Benefit of Work and Earning at a Lesser Distance

MGNREGS has undoubtedly explored a new area of job opportunity to rural unemployed people and a large section of Indian rural society has got employment through it. A part of questionnaire was dedicated to get the response related with contribution of MGNREGA in household earning in the plain and the plateau. The figures obtained are represented by following Table.

Table: 3.10. Contribution of MGNREGA in Household Income

Location	Number of Sample Households	Average MGNREGA workday per Household	Yearly Income of Sample Households from Regular Sources (Rupees)	Yearly Income Sample Households from MGNREGA (Rupees)	Total Income of the Households (Rupees)	Contribution of MGNREGA in Household's Yearly Income
			(a)	(b)	(a+b)	
Plain	302	48.93	11152044	2498496	13650540	18.30%
Plateau	231	46.10	740908	1799850	9040758	19.90%

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It was found in primary survey that the majority of respondents have received officially notified MGNREGA wage (rupees 169/ for year 2014-15). Some Women respondents had reported about some misleading figures in their bank account which may be a result of their irregular money withdrawal habit or money withdrawal by other members of the family in the case of joint accounts. MGNREGA has contributed 18.30% of regular household income in plain and 19.90% in plateau. Though there is not much significant difference, some facts worth mentioning are:

(a) Though average workdays were higher in plain, the contribution of MGNREGA to regular household income is less. This is because of the higher amount of regular income which is more or less consistent in plain. Plateau is having lesser average MGNREGA workdays with higher contribution of MGNREGA in household income. Fewer work opportunity and inconsistent regular income are the prime contributing factors in plateau.

(b) Average household income is higher in the plain than in the plateau. It is 36.927 rupees per household in plain and 31, 345 rupees per household in plateau.

Contribution of MGNREGA in income of the household is a significant indicator of MGNREGA related benefits though it does not reflect the intra-household income distribution among men and women.

MGNREGS shows that many rural women have got the benefit of working for the first time through this scheme. Women are often subjected to control over their movement or work because of the prevailing complex societal pattern. Getting an opportunity to work within village or nearby with known co-workers together with an attractive wage rate have certainly

contributed positively to participate in work. This study has taken a total of 197 samples who did not work anywhere in 2014-15 (category-III samples). Most of the women are those who have not worked earlier even for once. Following Table shows the share of men and women category III samples in plain and plateau.

Table: 3.11. Location and Gender wise Share of Samples Who have worked only for MGNREGS (Category-III Samples)

Respondents	The Plain		The Plateau	
	N	% to total	N	% to total
Men	17	14.53	38	42.22
Women	90	85.47	52	57.78
Total	107	100.00	90	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

This Table shows the share of women constitutes majority of category-III in both of the locations. Though plateau exhibits a considerably high share of men, women are still more in this category. Lack of casual job opportunities together with limited agricultural practices in rugged topography of plateau is has compelled more men to remain jobless for the entire year. Contrary to this situation, women of plateau have participated more than the women in plain to make the livelihood easier. In plain, opportunities of work are more and struggle for livelihood is seemed to be less, so women are subjected to more restrictions. Women in plateau are seen to work on various cottage industries like bidi binding, making plate and glasses from plant leaves and other works to get some income. Migration with family is not an unfamiliar event in plateau whereas it is less seen in plain.

To understand how physiography controls the category of workers, it is necessary to see the pattern of responses of category III workers for their reason of non-participation in work for an entire year.

Table. 3.12. Reason for Non -Participation in Any Work by Samples Who Worked for MGNREGS Only (Category III Samples) in Plain and Plateau

Reason for Working Only in MGNREGS for Women	The Plain (in %)		The Plateau (in %)	
	M	F	M	F
no other work was available Anywhere	94.11	14.44	84.21	46.15
It was restricted to go outside beforehand	0	22.22	0	28.85
I was permitted to work within the village only	5.89	57.77	5.26	17.31
Having very small children (Less than 2 years)	0	1.12	0	1.92
No definite reason stated	0	4.45	10.53	5.77
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table indicates that the primary reason for non-participation in work other than MGNREGS is lack of work opportunities, and this is true across locations. But other reasons and their share of samples across men and women provide a clue towards asymmetric social control on women in two locations. More than half of the women in plain are permitted to work within the village only whereas this share is below 20 per cent in the plateau. It is indicated that a significant number of women have got the opportunity to work because of the distance and territory factor of MGNREGS. The village-based nature of work has certainly rendered a benefit to the women of plain. This is further supported by the first category which shows a major share of both women and men in all locations have not worked for an entire year because of the absence of job opportunity. But this response is significantly low in the case of women of the plain. Because it is clear from their response that their families are selective for their workplace, and searching a job anywhere (especially outside the village) is unimaginable for most of them. There is a contradiction of responses by women who said they were restricted to go outside beforehand; this share is high in plateau than plain. FGD in both locations reveal that the reasons are mostly economic than social. Lesser wage for

women, time to travel through rugged topography and high travel cost are three discouraging factors of women's work participation in plateau.

The above two Table indicates that the benefit of village-based work is more beneficial for women than men. For men, MGNREGS has provided the work opportunity, but the special provision of village-based work or working at a lesser distance is not applicable for them in any of locations. For women, the benefits are of different character, such as;

(i) Women in the plain have got the opportunity to work through MGNREGS as they are subjected to more social control on their mobility and while got the benefit of earning.

(ii) Women in plateau are subjected to lesser social control, but still a considerable part of them have got the above mentioned benefits. They are mostly benefitted by opportunity to work at a lesser distance and higher wage that MGNREGS has offered for the first time.

(ii) Benefits of Enhanced Livelihood Opportunities

Above analysis of Category III sample shows that MGNREGS has brought some significant changes regarding labour force participation and earning for economically weaker section of the society, especially women. Complex character of overlapping responses with a high possibility of inaccuracy makes it difficult to generate data about wage spending, an effort has been taken to trace the pattern of wage spending for category III samples under major head of spending only. As work is not a regular option for category -III samples, so it was assumed that they will provide a clear response related with their spending of MGNREGS wage than other category samples. Another major facilitating factor was payment through bank and survey was conducted immediately after the end of financial year 2015. Generally due wages are paid in Feb- March and before April. This analysis is done to understand how MGNREGS has impacted their livelihood through earning.

Table. 3.13. Average Spending of MGNREGS Wage by Samples Who Have Worked Only in MGNREGS (Category-III Samples)

Category of spending of MGNREGS Wage	Plain		Plateau	
	% to total Men	% to total women	% to total Men	% to total women
To bear regular family expenses	52.9	28.1	28.9	40.4
To purchase required things that are not regular	0	39.3	0	0
Savings for future	5.9	2.2	0	1.9
Expense for cultivation	5.9	0	0	0
Personal expenses	11.8	3.4	0	0
Educational expenses	11.8	2.2	0	0
Repairing of house	5.9	1.1	0	0
Medical expenses	5.9	0	0	0
Repay of loan amount	0	1.1	71.1	3.8
Savings for daughter's marriage	0	1.1	0	0
Can't spend it as per my own wish	0	21.3	0	53.8
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above table shows men has paid for regular expenses of household in plain and the situation is reverse in plateau where women have paid the regular household expenses more than men. Majority of men's spending has been spent to repay the loan amount in plateau as the incidence of indebtedness is more because of i) limited work opportunities and less amount of earning ii) more frequent number of jobless days iii) irregular earning and gap in loan repayments iv) lack of other livelihood opportunities such as working in fruit orchards, collection grounds or kitchen and vegetable gardening. MGNREGS has helped to repay the loan for a considerable number of male samples who have worked only for MGNREGS in plateau. Contrary to this, vary less number of women samples who have worked for MGNREGS in entire surveyed year in plateau have reported the incidence of loan repayment on their own. The burden of indebtedness on household and lesser amount of household income has resulted the majority of women either to spend their income as per the wish of the head of the family or to bear the regular family expenses. Women in plain has got more benefit of independent spending of wages and majority of them bought some items that are required for the household as per their own wish. MGNREGS wages have helped the men of plain to bear their own or children's educational expenses, it is zero in plateau. FGD suggests

women in plateau who are subjected to lesser mobility control, are controlled more in the case of their earning and reverse situation is found in plateau. Women have reported to spend their income to buy T.V, Radio, internet pack, mobile phone, fan, cycle etc. in plain. Because of the higher consistency of income of men income of women is not considered essential here. While in plateau, higher level of indebtedness, lesser work opportunity to men, kitchen garden with one or two seasonal vegetables only etc. are responsible for lesser livelihood options and compels to count women's income essential and thus the control of men over women's income is established.

Above analysis shows that there is strong physiographical control over attainment of livelihood opportunities by MGNREGS. Physiography controls are as follows:

a) The number of available work opportunities to the villagers determines their nature of response to a demand driven scheme. Villagers with stable opportunities for work does not count MGNREGS as an option even if they are less paid. Regularity of income is a determining factor to participate in MGNREGS. Category I and category II MGNREGS workers have worked mostly for secondary source of income. Category III samples, who have worked only for MGNREGS, are those who have not got any work opportunity in surveyed year or have restricted mobility for societal reasons. Physiography determines the role of women as work recipient, women are primary recipient of MGNREGS work in plain and secondary recipient in plateau depending on the physiography controlled available regular work opportunities.

b) Physiography determines the category of spending. For example it has been observed that in places with limited source of livelihood opportunities major head of spending (for both men and women) is concentrated on attaining immediate practical needs than material needs. This is why in plain, some people spends their wage in repairing of house; but in plateau, it is zero. Buying things other than food items is largely seen as an affair in plain but in plateau, most of the wage is exhausted repaying loans or buying regular items for household.

c) Physiographical characteristics imposes control on women at various levels. Plain is subjected to stricter control on women's mobility but lesser control on their earning. Whereas in plateau, the social control on women's mobility is less but control on spending is more. This happens because of the financial condition of households in plateau is lower than plain. Although in plateau women are allowed to work and earn even outside the villages, but it has

been observed that the same situation imposes control on women's earning to fulfill the household needs.

d) The impact of physiography over men's wage spending is not seen in any of the locations. Their participation is mostly dependent on economic factors than social and cultural factors. The economic factors may be seen as a reflection of physiographic characteristics. Still the impact is low as men are free to out-migrate and spend their income independently in all four locations.

(iii) Benefits from MGNREGS Created Assets:

MGNREGS work has created many rural assets in the surveyed locations which includes roads, ponds, plantation grounds, micro-irrigation features, levelled land, Fruit orchards and some scattered assets in convergence with other rural development schemes such as toilets, bund over local water channel etc. The effect of these assets on the livelihood of the villagers has been tried to capture in structured questionnaire survey. To understand the impact in detail, many questions related to the assets were discussed in FGD. Observation of field areas and participant observation has provided some clues as well. Following Table shows the location specific responses of men and women respondents in structured questionnaire survey. Here the only one option of most useful asset was given to each respondent.

Table: 3.14. Benefits from MGNREGS Created Assets across Locations

Most useful Asset identified by Respondents	Plain		Plateau	
	% to Total Men	% to Total women	% to Total Men	% to Total women
Pond	44.9	44.3	7.6	6.6
Road	8.5	7.4	20.8	18
Micro-irrigation	10.1	10	25.2	27.9
Plantation	16.6	18.2	17.2	11.1
Levelled Land	10.2	10.9	10.2	30.3
Others	2.6	9.2	8.2	5.1
Did not state any preference	7.1	0	10.8	11
Total	100	100	100	110

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The impact of MGNREGS created assets on rural livelihood is complex to explain with help of quantitative data only. A detailed discussion about these assets and their impact with eight focussed group reveals some important understanding which are as follows:

"We got small share
from vegetable garden
in village, but it
helps."

Mala Bouri
FGD Respondent,
'B' village, Plain

"There are lots of dried pond built under NREGA in this village ...water level is so deep here that they became useless "

Shashanka Mandal ,
FGD Respondent,
'A' Village, Plateau

Many roads are created here in village through NREGA. Now the village is well-communicated even in rainy season."

Swapan Mahato
FGD Respondent,
'D' village, Plateau.

"It was not possible for us to maintain a vegetable garden earlier as all the vegetables used to be dried due to lack of water. Now we are having a pond close-by, I and my son keep watering plants in our free time. This year we have earned a good profit from pumpkin cultivation."

Archana Lohar
,
FGD Respondent,
'C' Village,
Plain

Fig: 6. Role of Rural common Property Resources (CPR) in Villager's Lives

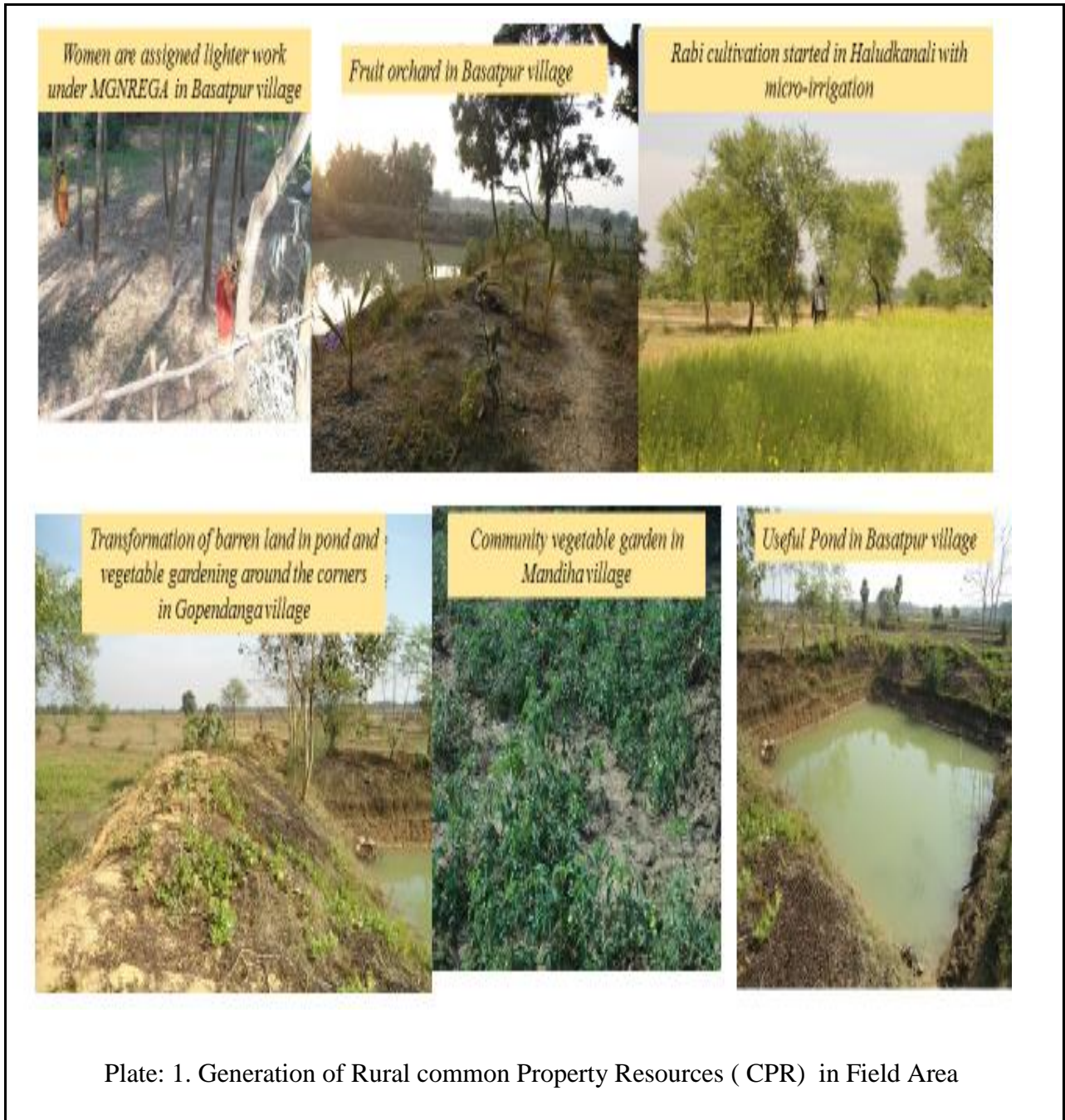


Plate: 1. Generation of Rural common Property Resources (CPR) in Field Area

Field observation and field survey suggests that:

- (i) The responses related to categorical asset benefits generates more or less the same response across men and women in a particular location. For example, ponds are referred as most beneficial assets by both in plain while micro-irrigation work is preferred in plateau by all.
- (ii) Physiographical setting (slope, water level, and forest cover) is the prime determinants of response related with asset benefits for both men and women.
- (iii) Most of the CPRs generated by MGNREGS are in everyday use, rather in a temporary manner.

Above discussion highlights there are some benefits in the lives of women that was incorporated through MGNREGA in the field areas. In this context, narrations of three women of three different locations worth mentioning. These narrations are a part of FGD discussion that was conducted in their villages. All three women had worked only for MGNREGA in surveyed year. These narrations highlights the role of MGNREGS on respondent's lives in different context.

Fig: 7. Perceptions about MGNREGA by Women Who

"In last year, I HAVE worked only for MGNREGA. I had got some work options in June-July. That work was offered by a local contractor. But I did not go for it as the job was for nearly 9-10 hours a day. I can't spend that much of time outside as I have to look after my inlaws who are aged and sick. So I did not go. I went
Have Worked in MGNREGS only

"Last year I got to work only in MGNREGA, and most of the women in this village did so. Young women are generally not allowed to work outside village and though restrictions are less on elder women, they can't work hard or travel frequently. I did this work with my sister-in-law who is a widow and having four kids. Her youngest baby is only eight months old and she has lost her husband. Now nobody is there to restrict her to work outside, but how would she go? We worked for road

"I desperately looked for some work throughout the year but I did not get anything except hundred days work. I and my husband generally move together if we get casual work at the time of monsoon. Last year my husband went, but I did not, as I was not given an offer by any contractor or broker. I stayed here and did pond excavation for one month. The work was for 8.00 a.m.

Entire Analysis of primary and secondary data provides some important clue about physiography-gender-MGNREGS participation link. Section I provides an insight that overall successful implementation of MGNREGS is positively related with enhanced women

participation in the scheme. Analysis of primary data suggests that there is a strong link between physiography-women participation in MGNREGS and physiography- accrual of benefits to women. Section II tries to establish the link with the help of primary data. The major conclusions of this chapter are as follows:

i) Different elements of physiography e.g. slope, ruggedness, height imposes great control over gendered attributes of MGNREGS implementation. These attributes are awareness, number of MGNREGS workdays, choosing worksite locations and seasonal pattern of work demand etc.

iii) Nature of topography controls the number of available workdays for both men and women. Plateau in general is having lower numbers of average workdays than plain (mean workdays for plateau is 30 and plain is 35). In both of the locations, promised workdays are not fulfilled. Women are the secondary recipient of MGNREGS job in plateau because of less availability of other employment due to the physiographical limitation, Women are the primary recipient of MGNREGS job in plain because village men are having more options to work. Plain land with ample opportunities for intense agricultural practices, offers primary employment to men and thus makes women as the primary recipient of MGNREGS work. Requirement of more effort and hard labour over a rugged terrain is mostly the discouraging factor for women in plateau. Contrary to this, women receive same wage for same category of work in plain which requires much lesser effort and labour which is an encouraging factor for them.

iv) Although women do prefer to work in a lesser distance, physiographical factors play a key role in opting home-based work by women in plateau. Physiographical characteristics are directly related with the distance of worksites (both regular and MGNREGS) for men and women. Rough and sloppy terrain of plateau land and water table at a greater depth hinder the women to participate in a regular worksite located more than 5 km of distance. Livelihood is tougher for the women in plateau than that of the women in plain and livelihood opportunities are limited too with the result that the participation in work at a considerable distance is less. Men and women gap for participating in regular work at a considerable distance is much higher in the plateau than that of the plain.

Women do prefer to work in MGNREGS when they get it near their residence in plateau. The factor of outmigration is a key determinant of MGNREGS participation in plateau. This factor is essentially controlled by topographic characteristics. Women in plateau prefers to

out-migrate to get a better wage and to avoid regular time and energy cost that is required to walk long distance over a rugged terrain. This factor is absent in plain.

v) Physiography is having a direct control over the prevailing economic activity of the region. Flat land, water table at a lesser depth and presence of fertile alluvium has helped in the growth of agriculture in plain. Though the dominant practice is monoculture in both of the locations, plain land exhibits more intensity and the practice of isolated Rabi cropping. The demand pattern for MGNREGS work is largely controlled by seasonal activities which are greatly controlled by the elements of physiography.

vi) Women in both locations has got the benefit from MGNREGS. But the nature of benefit is different as per physiographic characteristics. In plain, more women have got the benefit of first time work through MGNREGS. Strict social control on women's mobility in plain is a major discouraging factor for women to work at a greater distance. The opportunity to work within village has boosted women's participation in plain. Contrary to this, women in plateau are subjected to more physiographic control than social control. Besides this, MGNREGS created assets have undoubtedly provided enhanced livelihood opportunities for women. However, as it has been pointed out, the choice of asset preference is related with existing topographical characteristics of the region concerned.

Chapter-4

Transformative Changes of Women's Livelihoods through MGNREGA

Introduction:

The role of paid employment on women's lives has remained as the focus of discussion for many economists, policy makers and researchers. Paid employment is still the privilege of the few in India. Literatures do support the fact that the amount of women's control over household resources and exercising power in making household decisions are directly related with the status of women's employment. Many studies have approved the critical role of paid work for women's empowerment (Boserup, 1970; Folbre 1986; Sen, 1990; Agarwal, 1997; Kabeer, 2008; Dufflo, 2012; ILO, 2012; World Bank, 2012; ILO, 2016;).

At the same time, literary evidences suggest that the scope of women employment outside home is very limited (Bourmpoula, Kapsos and Silberman, 2016; Mehrotra, 2008). In this context, MGNREGS has the enormous possibility to bring home-bounded women into the labour force for which Wray (2007) referred MGNREGA as "employment of last resort". Out of all rural safety net programmes introduced in India since independence, MGNREGS is different in its sense and spirit. Since inception, this landmark scheme has been assessed by researchers and policy makers from time to time as a series of work have been done to understand the impact of this scheme on women livelihood. Most dominant trend of analysis often looks upon the employment generating aspects even when the gender questions are raised. On fourteen years of its inception, the need of the hour is to understand and analyse the narratives of the women regarding various aspects of the scheme.

This chapter tries to analyse the extent of transformative gender equalities that MGNREGS has achieved. It explores the ground level differences in responses between implementing authorities and beneficiaries covering different aspects like procedure, employment, asset building and its usefulness, changes in household and other gender dynamics on the basis of qualitative methods. The objective of this chapter is to see whether the narratives of the rural women are confirming the narratives of the policy makers. This chapter identifies the gaps in conflicting areas and comment on their gendered occurrences.

MGNREGS is the landmark safety net of rural India which was primarily not envisioned as a women's welfare scheme. But the speciality is content of MGNREGS which provides some

unique scopes to rural women to work. A major focus of the scheme is to bring the women workforce confined in the domestic territory in the labour force of the country. Studies conducted in Government level to assess the performance of the scheme regarding women employment often conclude in a positive note. Besides employment, there have been enormous questions regarding women in MGNREGS which have been left untouched. For example, asset building and livelihood related questions often remained secondary in the performance analysis of MGNREGS. One of the major fallacies in Indian policy making system is viewing women as a homogeneous mass, while literary evidences support the fact that they are largely heterogeneous. Hougbo , Turmamatova and Nandi (2012) observes:

“Rural women are a very heterogeneous group, differing by age, wealth, social status, marital status and system, education, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, livelihood and location”.

Similar conclusion is drawn by Sarin (2015). She said rural women are heterogeneous, thus the intersectionality of different classes, castes, occupational groups and differing interest invariably influence the priorities of women. A report of International Organization for Migration (2009) concluded:

“Rural women are not a homogeneous group. Their circumstances, and in turn their capacity to migrate, plan and control their journey as well as its outcomes, vary according to their income, social networks, education, and local gender dynamics.”

Bishnoi et.al. (2014) perceive gender as a highly complex and sensitive social construct, which is affected by inherited customs and rights and therefore it needs gender specialists, social scientists, researchers, communication specialists and knowledge brokers to work closely together in order to develop a gender-responsive strategic approach for policy-makers. According to her, perceiving target group as a homogeneous is one of the major limitations of Indian developmental initiatives. Women are not an exception.

To understand the gap between scheme implementation and its realization by women, a field survey has been done in 4 selected villages. To reiterate, four villages from three districts has been taken from two different physiographic location, two are from plain and another two are from plateau. The purpose of this selection is to identify the livelihood differences and differential responses related with MGNREGS implementation. Focussed group discussions

with eight groups have been conducted with 80 respondents (40 men and 40 women) in all four locations to understand whether the narratives of the villagers are confirming the narratives of the officials and to identify the basic difference of perceiving MGNREGS across gender. These differences in narratives have helped to find out the gaps in implementation and realization.

Gap in Realization of Asset Benefits and Livelihood Opportunities

One of the major goals of MGNREGS is to improve livelihood opportunities for rural population by creating or regenerating rural assets through the means of employment generation. Building and recharging the rural CPRs¹⁵ are included under the specified work list for MGNREGS in every state. These CPRs include local pond and other waterbodies, earthen embankments, plantation ground, rural roads and levelled lands etc. Among these, creation and recharging of new waterbodies are the most preferred choices of MGNREGS worklist. All four surveyed villages have experienced water harvesting work in surveyed year (2014-15). However, the responses related with the use of CPRs and livelihood opportunities are different across physiographic locations, working status, gender and the status of the respondents(worker/official). It will be seen that the responses are contradictory in many cases and highest contradiction exists between the narration of villagers and Panchayat Officials regarding assets creation, their utilization and maintenance.

Haludkanali is a village of Ranibundh block in Bankura and represents plateau land dominated by the practice of mono-cropping. This village exhibited extensive newly built roads marked with MGNREGA boards. In an interview Panchayat Pradhan of this village narrated:

“In most of the meetings of gram Sabha, villagers have showed a clear preference for building of roads under MGNREGS, as the transport network of this village is poor and villagers suffer especially in rainy months”.

Contrary to this statement, one women respondent aged 23 in Haludkanali said;

“I attend meeting in Panchayat, but not on a regular basis. Sometimes I attend. But it does not really matter whether villagers are participating in the meeting or not. The upcoming shelf of work is always pre-decided by Panchayat officials. We don't have much to say be it road or pond. We just attend the meeting to get to know when the work will actually start.”

¹⁵ CPR: Common Property Resources

She further added:

“We people suffer from hunger and poverty, so we don’t bother what is to be built by hundred days of work. We don’t bother what is going to be done. Since we just want to work and so we do not question.”

Confirming her statement, a FGD respondent (aged 35, Male) of the same village said that the focus of discussion in Panchayat meeting are timing, wage and the process of wage retrieval, there is no option to select the assets to be built. Similar response has been received from the respondents of ‘D’ village. The villagers of the eroded plateau have confirmed that there is no scope to select or choose an asset to be built under MGNREGS. These responses are conflicting with the responses of Panchayat officials. One MGNREGS coordinator in ‘D’ village has admitted that there is almost zero role of villagers in selecting the appropriate asset. He has pointed out the budget limitation, pressure from contractors and local political parties as the main reason. The response of a contractor in the ongoing worksite in D village reflects the reluctance of the authority to involve villagers in choosing assets. He told:

“The villagers are least interested in choosing assets and why to ask everyone about it? There are lot more issues to discuss in the meeting. All they need is work and wage and they are getting it.”

When the situation was found to be discouraging in the plateau, more or less coordination between authority and villagers regarding the selection of assets is seen in the plain. ‘C’ village representing plainland has got more or less uniform statement from villagers and officials, but villagers confirming their active role in choosing CPR are all men. No women FGD respondent in ‘C’ village said that they had played an active role in the same. One FGD respondent (Age 61, Male) in ‘C’ village said;

“This village is one of the best performing village in the district, here we work together to decide what work will be taken for MGNREGS.”

While asked about the explanation of the term “we”, he quickly replied *“that means men of the village.”*

The statements of the village women are different. A woman respondent aged 29 of 'C' village referred the selection of the asset as "entirely men's job" while Asha Kanjilal (age 43) of the same village said;

"It is not expected to stand up and speak about anything in a meetingmen are there to choose".

The responses got from villagers in Mandiha village of Bankura district confirm the statement of the village officials and this is true across both men and women. There is a positive role of villagers in choosing MGNREGS asset in this village but these villagers are essentially men. FGD has revealed though women of the village feel the need for some urgent resources such as toilets in all houses, they do not feel it appropriate to express this need in front of men in a public meeting. Similar situation is observed in the plain. Bani Lohar (age 34) of 'C' village has reported that village women do prefer fruit gardening as it helps to get nutritious summer fruits to their children. (This village is having 3 successful fruit gardens of coconut, mango and jackfruit initiated and maintained under MGNREGS). Still the work of fruit plantation has stopped as men do not feel the need for the same. No one spoke to carry on the work and so it stopped.

Interviews with village officials have not rendered any positive conclusion why the successful work like fruit orchard has been stopped. But one key informant of the case study conducted in this village said:

"Though villagers are quite active in making MGNREGS related decisions, but ultimate shelf of work depends on the willingness of local political parties and contractors. The works in which maintenance and duplication can be done are preferred than works that are having limited scope of duplication and maintenance like plantation. As such this work has stopped."

The categorical responses related to selection of appropriate MGNREGS CPR for better livelihood differ greatly across location and men and women -and the status of the respondent. Narrations are found to be different for men and women participants, village officials and local contractors. The major outcome of FGD related with role of respondents in choosing the asset are as follows:

- (i) Official narration regarding CPR selection is very much different from the narration of villagers in the plateau. It has been observed that implementation and participation are not at all coordinated in both of the plateau villages.

- (ii) Though there is similarity between the responses of officials and villagers in terms of selection of MGNREGS created CPRs in plain, the participation is essentially men-centric. There is no evidence of inclusive selection in both of the plain villages.
- (iii) It has been observed that the need to place the women's opinion is not been realized by authority, even by women. In official level, there is no recognition of women's voices regarding asset selection.
- (iv) Women are the suppressed segment in terms of opinion irrespective of topography, implementation status, caste and age in all four locations.
- (v) Socio-political background plays a significant role in providing choice of selection to all, especially women.

Apart from the participation in CPR selection, selection of appropriate asset in accordance with existing topographical condition is the foremost step for livelihood generation on a long-term basis. User manual of MGNREGA includes two "strategies for improving livelihood scenario in their villages. These include: (a) Value addition in traditional / existing livelihood activities (example, azolla tanks to enhance nutritional value in animal feed); and (b) Initiating new activities in harmony with local natural resources." In this context the argument of Malangmeih, Bhattacharyya and Mitra (2014) is worth mentioning. They said:

"MGNREGA fosters conditions for inclusive growth ranging from basic wage security and recharging rural economy to a transformative empowerment process of democracy. Providing employment to the rural poor enhances their livelihood security by increasing their earnings as well as the expenditure and thereby improves their standard of living."

The requirement and utilization of assets are largely dependent on topographic as well as socio-cultural setting. There is a widespread recognition of waterbodies as the most useful rural asset. All four locations exhibited extensive water harvesting work under MGNREGS. This is clear from the statement of the Panchayat Pradhan of all four villages.

"Creation and regeneration of waterbodies are the most significant works for rural economy and so we prioritize it" (Panchayat Pradhan, Basatpur Village).

"90% of population is dependent on agriculture here, so we utilize money for the construction of water harvesting features"

(Panchayat Pradhan, Mandiha Village)

“This region is agriculturally poor and crops are mostly rain dependent, but this village falls in the dry category in terms of water resource, so we prefer to dig ponds”

(Panchaayt Pradhan , Haludkanali Village).

“Villagers collect drinking water from pipeline, but there is a steady demand for water to harvest crops in winter season. We have got the way to fulfil the water demand by MGNREGS”

(Panchaayt Pradhan, Gopendanga village).

Statement of some of the interviewees who are associated with the work confirms the above statements. A MGNREGA Supervisor in ‘D’ village (Plateau) said:

“Ponds and roads both are useful here, but ponds help so much for cultivation”

This statement is not in confirmation with the statement of Jharna Badyakar of the same village, who says ponds are helpful only for some families who live close-by and they use pond water for vegetable gardening. Except that, most of the FGD respondents of ‘D’ village said that MGNREGS created ponds are mostly used for bathing cattle and serves as recreation centres for village men in morning and in evening. Jharna denied the idea of using ponds as a recreation centre for women. According to her:

“We (Women) don’t have time to gather regularly in a certain place and chit chat... we have to do a lot of household workSometimes we do with neighbours but it’s always in our households”.

A FGD male respondent of ‘A’ village in the plateau admitted that pressure from the Government to maintain at least one third of women beneficiaries to total has resulted creation of useless rural assets. Supporting his view, A Contractor in the same village has said:

“Here in plateau, you can’t do much water harvesting work and women are not supposed to work after a certain depth. Furthermore, we have to keep the distance of worksite in mind. So we have to opt for those works which are not necessary like land levelling or creation of plantation grounds. Plantation often dries up due to deep water table and scanty rainfall and levelled land are of no use as village playgrounds are fixed. Still we do it to fill up the minimum number of women workers in master roll only.”

Radharani Soren (age-39) of Haludkanali village said that Panchayat officials select water harvesting features and re-excavates the ponds on their own interest. According to her, the real amount of work is not at par with the amount of work shown and villagers do not bother as they want work and money. Agriculture is not a priority for majority who are landless.

The views of Radharani are supported by Shyamal Mandal (age 45, Male) of same village. He agrees with the fact that re-excavation of the same pond happen repeatedly and still these ponds are not beneficial for farming. While asked about its use in domestic purposes, the interviewee reluctantly said “these are women’s work and they always manage.”

Though village officials have argued that water harvesting features are the most useful one, waterbodies that were constructed or regenerated under MGNREGS are not in much use in both plain and plateau villages of Bankura district. In both of the villages, the waterbodies were observed in partially dry condition in survey months. Deep water level, less rainfall and practice of monoculture have turned the water harvesting features partially useful. Excavation of ponds with average depth is one of the major faults observed in plateau of Bankura. Sadhan Sharma, Contractor, Haludkanali explained it as a result of the rough terrain and presence of rocky masses. According to him, it is difficult to excavate a pond having a depth more than average because the amount of work at the end of the day remains negligible and the timeline of work cannot be met.

Basatpur is one of the well performing village of Bhatar block in East Bardhaman district in terms of MGNREGA implementation. With 5 newly constructed and 7 regenerated waterbodies in the village, the village shows significant effort on rain water harvesting. Two big underground rain water storage has been found that too were built utilizing MGNREGS money. Panchayat officials counted men farmers as the direct beneficiary of these water harvesting features and mentioned these features “*very useful for farming*”. But FGD responses sometimes contradicted the official statement. One male respondent of Basatpur said:

“The ponds are not for much use in agriculture. Here we cultivate both in rainy and rabi season. We generally use underground water extracted through shallow pump. These ponds are not much deep and often dry in summer or in winter. Only some people whose houses are near to pond, uses water for small scale agriculture like vegetable gardening.”

Supporting his statement, Alpana Lohar (Female, age 39) of same village reported;

“It was not possible for us to maintain a vegetable garden earlier as all the vegetables used to be dried due to lack of water. Now we are having a pond close-by, I with my son keep watering plants in our free time. This year we have earned a good profit from pumpkin cultivation.”

Interviewees in Mandiha village in the plain are found not very hopeful about role of water harvesting features in their lives. Some of the FGD respondents in Mandiha said waterbodies are not of much use for agriculture, but they have definitely added some comfort to women’s work. FGD responses of men’s group have stated collection work and other domestic work are essentially women’s work. As such, most of the men interviewees seemed ignorant about the positive role of MGNREGS created waterbodies in their lives. One interviewee of men’s group has expressed his concern over utilizing government money for all those secondary comforts referring the comfort of women. Bilas Mandalin Mandiha village told ponds should primarily be used for agriculture. According to him;

“Domestic work does not earn money but agriculture does, so village Panchayat should think of it and construct water harvesting feature utilizing money in a proper way.”

Above discussion reveals some significant observations in terms of livelihood improvement through MGNREGS. These are:

(i) While there is an official thrust on water harvesting features for the betterment of agriculture in all four locations, the use of these waterbodies for agriculture is very less. Average depth, dryness of the waterbodies in summer, use of alternative sources of water, cropping pattern and distance of waterbodies from agricultural field have a great control over utilization.

(ii) Improvement of livelihood opportunities is greatly dependant on physiographic location. Physiography exerts a great control over the usefulness of the assets. In plateau region, it is difficult to ensure water availability round the year together with scope of women’s employment. Women are not supposed to work after a certain depth. Lactating mothers and aged women are generally excluded from excavation work. This in turn ceases their livelihood opportunity in terms of earning. Utilization of the resources is dependent on its quality which is never addressed by officials in any of the locations.

(iii) The most significant contribution of MGNREGS created waterbodies is their contribution in vegetable gardening and generating some marketable surplus, in some cases. But there is no official confirmation of this fact. Official narration often thrusts on betterment of agriculture carried outside household, be it commercial or subsistence. Perceiving agriculture as a men's job, women's livelihood development through vegetable gardening is ignored,

(iv) Ponds and roads have definitely added some comfort in women's collection and domestic responsibilities. But both identification and quantification of these comforts has no importance to authority as well as to the men of the villages. Deep patriarchal mind-set is observed in all four locations which makes the distinction between men's and women's views very clear; resources that are making women's life comfortable are branded '*not so useful*' by men and authority of the villages.

Gap in Realizing Movement of Rural Women from Private to Public Spheres

There is suggestive evidence that the indirect benefit of women empowerment as one of the aims of MGNREGS is to bring the women from private sphere of work to public sphere of work. Eswaran and Malhotra (2011) concluded that an increase in women's income may increase the weight of her preferences within household and may increase her bargaining power. They have pointed out the two sides of it; it may improve her wellbeing or may increase intra-household conflict due to decrease in men's autonomy. Different aspects of the scheme like opening of bank account, registration for MGNREGS, attending public meeting and speaking in public are four significant indicators that were chosen to talk about in focussed group discussions to get some idea about women's movement from private to public sphere of work in study area.

Most of the women FGD respondents in all four locations have reported *opening of bank account* to get the MGNREGS wage only. Prior to joining in the scheme, they did not have any bank account. Though control over savings by women is exercised in a lesser extent in surveyed villages, but opening of bank account to get wage has definitely marked a new step towards moving in a public sphere. Opening of bank account for women bears significant importance with possibilities of self-identity, control over savings, and possibility of inclusion in household decision making processes and possibility of less restriction on women while doing interaction with strangers. Nair, Sreedharan and

Anoopkumar (2009) argued that *“Many workers came across banking experiences only through NREGA, and many of the women workers, in particular, expressed that having some savings in the bank was a matter of great confidence to them, which enhanced their dignity”*. Similar conclusions are drawn by Dheeraja, Madhuri and Daimari (2013). According to them *“opening of individual post office/ bank accounts by women workers is one of the gender-sensitive initiatives taken up in MGNREGS and its effect has been reflected in the number of respondents who have received wages either by themselves or along with husband/other members in the family.”*

Opening of bank account to get MGNREGA wage is seen in all four villages. The mode of operation (joint /single), decision regarding money withdrawal are some complex aspects which were addressed in FGD and in case studies. In an interview, Panchayat Pradhan of Gopendanga village told:

“We have to ensure payments through bank and we always maintain it.”

Kalpana Roy (Female, 37) from the same village has reported;

“I did not even think about opening a bank account in my nameThere was no need. We are so poor that nothing is there for us to saveBut I have opened it after it was mandatory to get wage through bank. Now I am having little, but own savings.”

In a response to the question ‘do you think bank accounts should be single to get MGNREGS wage’, One male FGD respondent in Gopendanga village said that the primary focus is getting wage, it does not really matter whether the account is joint or single. Contrary to his view Asima Dey (Female, 51) of same village said it is good to deposit money in a single account because it enhances savings for women. Her opinion is supported by another woman respondent of the same group. According to her, opening a bank account in her own name has resulted some control on savings too. Now she is saving money for her only son’s education. Santosh Ghosh (Male, 39), the respondent of men’s FGD group of the same village has expressed his preference over the single account of women. He said

“If women are having their own account, then they can save more and easily spend money for household need. It should not be joint.”

While plateau village of Bardhaman shows some glimpses of progressive ideas about women’s own bank account, plateau of Bankura shows some different result. Village officials

in Haludkanali village has admitted that most of the accounts operated by women respondents are joint account, and Panchayat Pradhan said;

“Having account in single name creates many problem....women do not understand their amount of wage and they often are quite unsure about the amount of savings already keptSo they always create trouble in panchayat that they have got the lesser money than expected....having a joint account minimizes the problem to some extent.”

This comment is strongly opposed by respondents of women FGD group of this village. According to a woman respondent, women workers always get lesser money in piecemeal rate and sometimes the amount of wage is found to be lesser for the number of days they have worked. *“It is easy to cheat women; even the family member cheat in the case of joint accounts.”*

Bhaskari Mandal, sister of previous respondent (Female, 49) supported her sister's statement and added;

“Opening of bank account in a single name is discouraged by all men, even bank officials.”

In Basatpur (plain), Most of the accounts are joint account with husband, brother or son. In response to the question asked why it is so, most of the women respondents clearly stated that bank is distant and they are not allowed to go there alone. So they find it convenient to have joint account than single. The accounts are mostly operated by men.

In Mandiha, villagers – both men and women do prefer joint account because of operational delay. The only bank that serves the village is nearly 5 km away. Less number of staff in bank often takes time for banking. Mangala Roy of Mandiha commented *“cash is much better than getting paid through bankit needs so much time to go to bank and withdraw money”*.

Supporting her view, a male respondent of same village said:

“Getting wage through bank is useless...it is time consuming and troublesome I have to go with my wife Bandana to withdraw money from bank and that day no other work is possible”.

Contrary to this, Minu Dey of the same village does not find the bank payment difficult. To her, work and getting wage is the prime focus. Panchayat Pradhan of Mandiha village accepted the fact that bank payment is little bit troublesome for villagers. He said;

“I know the bank is having some staff issue, it is located far away and it is difficult to get money without spending much time.....but MGNREGA guidelines does not allow Panchayat to pay through cashI think payment through bank ensures better transparency.”

A detailed discussion on bank account opening to get MGNREGS wage and the nature of those account reveals:

(i) A majority of women MGNREGS worker have opened the bank account for the first time to get MGNREGS payment only.

(ii) Though MGNREGS has rendered a significant impact in institutionalizing income and expenditure for village women, but the accounts are mostly joint accounts in three locations out of four. Opening of joint account is preferred at the official level to avoid problems related with less educated or uneducated women workers who are not independent in terms of its operation. Thus, the idea of empowerment conflicts with the official implementation.

(iii) Apart from direct influence by the authority, distance of the bank, service, time of wage payment and outmigration by males etc. are significant factors in terms of bank payment.

(iv) Women in plain are subjected to strict control on their mobility which intervenes with the opening of bank account in their own name.

Registration and having a job card are prerequisites for MGNREGS participation. This scheme follows household specific approach for registration. That means a single household will be entitled to a single job card and name of the potential workers will be mentioned in that card. Observing almost 60 job cards in all four locations, it has been found that women names are always written at the end of jobcard in all four locations. Only female headed households are exception. An interview with one of the Panchayat Officials in Haludkanali village reveals that women are seen as the secondary recipient of employment even at the official level and preference for registration of household goes to men at first.

“Women are not encouraged for registration as they are mostly uneducated and cannot do all the formalities in a proper waythey take time for everything and even arrive late at worksites”

(PanchayatOfficial, Haludkanali village)

Another official in the same location added;

“Here most of the males out-migrate in agricultural season, so we encourage them to come and register their households in agriculturally lean season.”

The same pattern of responses was received in Mandiha village, which is essentially a plain and exhibits few number of male outmigration. Registration is a men’s job there too. Negating the importance of women to register their household, a Contractor in this location said;

“It does not matter who is registering, matter is who is getting the work...and women do work in this village”,

FGD responses of women in Mandiha clearly reflects the preference of men for registration work. A woman respondent in Mandiha has reported;

“Our names are there in job card as the time and duration of hundred days work is uncertain. Sometimes it coincides with agricultural season when most of the adult males are busy in cultivation...in that case we don’t want to miss the wages as well as we want to retain our job cards active”.

Husband of the previous respondent stated that the primary work of the women is to look after the household and children. Registration and working in MGNREGS is the responsibility of men. In case women are registering themselves on their own and working, they are doing so because there is no other alternative.

Sanjoy Roy of the same village (Male, 47) aggressively said *“is it a matter of concern, who is registering? Whosoever done this, the ultimate matter is who has got to work”.*

The narration of a woman resident of Mandiha village reflects the patriarchal mind set up of village officials. According to her, even if she ever wanted to register her household in the Panchayat, officials clearly asked about the reason of her brother’s absence.

The scene is little bit different in plain and plateau of East and West Bardhaman district. Because of much higher awareness level of villagers; men and women both include themselves in registration. Though the share is unequal, both men and women respondents said registration depends on who is available in the household at that time. One interviewee in Gopendanga agreed that if both men and women are available, men always take the lead role.

Though social restrictions seem to be stricter in plain than plateau, MGNREGS has played a significant role in involving the village women in different operational processes in Basatpur. As this village is high performing one and assets seemed to generate considerable livelihood benefits, women have shown greater involvement.

Above discussion shows:

(i) Registration for MGNREGS is portrayed as men's work in official as well as household level. The pre-requisite of women participation in MGNREGS is their awareness and their presence in public sphere of work. Official denial is evident in the responses and no steps are mentioned to bring women to register their household in most of the locations.

(ii) The involvement of officials to generate awareness is the key to bring more women in the process of registration. This is evident in the case of Basatpur village, where the level of MGNREGS implementation is much higher than the other three locations.

(iii) Though most of the men respondents have denied the fact that registering households holds some significance for women, but from the discussion it becomes clear that the prevalent patriarchal mind-set believes that official work is essentially men's work and forcefully excludes women from this.

Attending public meeting and speaking in public is another significant indicator of measurement of women's inclusion in developmental processes. FGD reveals that most of the women respondents have visited Panchayat for the first time for MGNREGS only. Because of the mandatory inclusion of village women in the meeting, official effort to bring the village women in public meeting is seen in all four locations. Though attending a meeting does not necessarily mean speaking in public, it may be seen as a positive step towards inclusive development. There are, however, contradictory narratives relating to public speaking by women in MGNREGS related meetings.

“My officials encourage village women to attend the meeting, we have put quite a good effort to do so. But speaking in public is entirely personal. If women do not feel urge to speak, they won't speak and here nothing could be done”

(Panchayat Pradhan, Basatpur Village)

This narration is opposed by a woman key informant who have attended almost 10 meetings at the time of survey in the same village. She said:

“We village women generally don’t say anything in a meeting. If one says something, every head turns towards her and she feels very uncomfortable.....young women are not permitted by their families to say something ... no one ever want to be labelled as beshi-chalak ¹⁶”,

In interpretation of the term “*beshi-chalak*” and why it is derogatory, one female respondent in Basatpur village said:

“The scene is entirely different in villages than in the town. Here woman who is able to talk in the presence of men, is able to move freely and woman who expresses her opinion fearlessly is branded in some offensive manner. Because all these are forbidden for women of the village.”

Similar responses are heard from the respondents of Mandiha village. Here women go and attend meeting and their attendance is encouraged by different Panchayat initiatives. But they do not participate actively in a meeting.

According to Abhishek Das, MGNREGA Coordinator, Mandiha village:

“We take all possible initiatives to bring women in public meeting. It was almost zero in the beginning. Now it is increasing day by day. But how can we ensure their contribution in meeting? You can’t name a woman in public and request her to speak....it is a matter of shame in this rural setting.”

He further added;

“The role of effective participation is well understood and we are working on this...soon we will try to arrange some meetings exclusively with village women.”

The narratives of women in Mandiha state that they are encouraged to attend the meeting only. No one expects any contribution in terms of suggestion or opinion from them. Observation of one village meeting in Mandiha exposes the marginalization of women to a great extent. Clustered sitting of women in back rows, their sitting posture with head turned down, use of long veil and absolute silence in entire meeting revealed the fact that although

¹⁶Bengali word means extra-smart, out of norms used in a derogatory manner.

MGNREGA has ensured their official participation, but it has failed to provide the marginalized women a voice to speak out.

In the plateau villages of Gopendanga and Haludkanali, women are found less participating in village meeting although in an interview, MGNREGA Coordinator of Gopendanga village said;

“Women and men both are active in this village and they regularly participates in the meeting.”

Comment of a woman FGD respondent in Gopendanga worth mentioning. She said:

“Yes, we do participate in the meeting, but we do not have much to say because the work has already been decided in Panchayat level”.

An insight into FGD responses shows rough terrain, out-migrated males and consequent household work burden and lack of Panchayat initiatives are responsible for that. Gopendanga’s Shefali Roy’s reply to the question ‘why don’t she attend meetings’ provides an insight of the same. She said;

“My husband works in a small factory in Raniganj, so I have to prepare food in early morning. Then I send my children to school and manage other household work. Panchayat meetings are often held in afternoon. After all these, I feel very tired to walk nearly 3.5 km in scorching sun.....so I don’t go.”

One FGD respondent of tribal community in Haludkanali village reported about attending meeting regularly with very less contribution in it. She mentioned that most of the time she is unable to follow the discussion. Swapan Mridha of the same village said that it is not expected that women will speak publicly, rather they share their views in the household and one male member of the family represents their thought in a meeting.

Above comments generates following observations:

(i) Attendance of women in MGNREGS meeting is mandatory as per MGNREGA provisions. So official efforts are seen in four surveyed villages to bring women in meeting and to gather the evidences in the form of register, photographs and videos. The gap between attendance and effective participation of women is not attempted to be minimized at all and no institutional effort is seen in this context.

(ii)The incidence of public speaking by women is subjected to existing local customs, traditions and male domination. There is no evidence of positive involvement of authority to break these stereotypes for inclusive development.

(iii)Responses from the villagers confirm the official claim of bringing women in the public meeting (for the first time) through MGNREGS in all four locations.

Gap in realizing Change in Gender Roles within Household

It is important to see whether MGNREGS has brought any significant change in women's lives. Since these responses are personal and cannot be interpreted with the help of quantitative data only, so FGD plays a crucial role to understand this. Indicators used in qualitative survey are household decisions, change in household responsibilities after MGNREGS, exchange of child care responsibility while working under MGNREGS and control over savings etc. Bishnoi et al. (2014) argued that the assumption which relates women's empowerment with their autonomy in intra household decision is misleading. With the help of the data collected in Nepal, they suggest that the *“strongest female innovators are those who have secured the support of their extended family, working within and not necessarily against the established social norms”*, Chapman and Mishra (2019) observed the process of decision making is crucial to identify transformative gender equalities.

“One characteristic of women's economic empowerment is their increased presence in decision-making bodies, both numerically and also in terms of the quality of their contributions. This requires investment in capacity development to build women's confidence and negotiation skills so they are able and willing to engage in and contribute to discussions in male-dominated forums”

Since the number of available workdays is limited to hundred per household in a financial year, it is interesting to see how these workdays are distributed within a household across men and women. For this, some questions were designed in the main survey questionnaire. The answer to the question about how these workdays were distributed among members, the major response was joint decision within the households. This response was further probed in focussed group discussion for better understanding. A significant portion of male FGD respondents have reported their joint decision-making process which meant decision taken in consultation with other male members of the family, be it father, brother or sometimes brother-in-law. A blur line of positivity refers age as a factor of inclusion of women in household decision making. For example, enormous positivity was reflected in the voice of

Bhabatarini Ganguly in 'C' village, who at the age of 56 worked for the first time and confidently said *"it was my decision and nobody denied it"*.

Things are not so positive in plainland of Mandiha village. For some respondents, decision making is not a big part of achievement. They want to continue the tradition of decision making by men even if they are earning. A woman FGD respondent in Mandiha said;

"I don't think decisions are important ...they are always taken by my father...he is the head of the family. So never ever I thought to take independent decisions, even if after earning."

Pritibala Roy (Female, age 25) Mandiha Village said:

"I have no role in decision making, be it expenditure, children's education or savings. I never tried to decide, either".

Baby Ghosh Gopendanga Village reported:

"The scene of decision making has been changed after opening of bank account to get MGNREGA wage; now my husband asks me before bank withdrawal. We had jointly decided about a new room from our savings.. . though daily decisions are mostly taken by my husband ."

Chandana Ghosh in D village worked for only 20 days in 2014-15. It was for the first time in her life. Still she thinks it was not significant as it was nothing permanent. No positive response was received in Haludkanali village regarding changes in household decision making.

Observations from the case studies suggest that women in plain are subjected to triple burden of work if they engage themselves in MGNREGS work in agricultural season. They have to prepare for the household part of the cultivation, work at worksites and have to manage the household responsibilities at the same time.

"These days are tough for me" said Pratima Shikder, Female, C Village.

A Member of the Panchayat Samiti of C village thinks hundred days of work is good for women as they can work within village. According to him taking care of children and household are two primary responsibilities of women so it is not possible for them to travel outside and work.

Some of the provisions of MGNREGS like crèche facilities in the worksites are supposed to bring women into workforce, particularly the group of lactating mothers who are confined in home bound activities. Basatpur (plain) and Haludkanali (plateau) exhibited crèche on worksites. Other two location did not have a crèche at least once since inception. Absence of crèche is supported by the alteration of work timing in Gopendanga (Plateau). The work at Gopendanga begins at 10 am and ends at 2 pm with a break. It restarts at 4 pm and ends nearly 7 p.m. This alteration has resulted raising work burden on women. They are supposed to do all household chores in the morning, serving lunch and cleaning utensils in the break while working under MGNREGS.

Physiography does not have a direct control over having or not having crèche facilities. This is entirely decided by village officials who are not sensitive to women's burden of work.

No surveyed villages have shown sharing household work burden by men exclusively after MGNREGS implementation. There is some obvious sharing of work when women are working, but because of insignificant numbers (of men) this cannot be concluded as the result of MGNREGS implementation. Women who are working for the first time for the MGNREGS are seen to rely on their elder children with substituted responsibilities or burden themselves with timely management of household chores.

It is primarily concluded from the response of village officials and respondents (both men and women) that care responsibilities are seen as women's responsibility even after successful implementation of MGNREGS. The alteration of work timing puts more responsibility on women and burden them with additional work. The concluding points can be as follows:

(i) There is a mismatch in the narratives of villagers, especially women with the narrations of Panchayat Officials and other officials regarding MGNREGS implementation and its impact on their livelihood.

(ii) Though official narrations confirm the inclusion of villagers in determining MGNREGS assets, villages situated in the plain have better inclusion of villagers in choosing MGNREGS assets than villages situated in the plateau. The steps preceding MGNREGS implementation are more isolated in plateau than in plain. Still, this inclusion does not necessarily reflect the inclusion of village women all over the plain, rather women are having very insignificant role in choosing MGNREGS assets.

(iii) A gap prevails in the asset need of the villagers with the asset selected to build in all four locations which is not recognised by officials but reflected through the responses. There is differential pattern of practical needs emerging across gender. The choice of men and women are invariably different for MGNREGS created CPRs as per practical gender needs. These gendered differences are not addressed at all in the implementation process.

(iv) Official narration confirms the idea that physiography imposes a great control on the nature of rural assets. Prevailing economic activities of the villages are at par with the topographic differences and the need of a particular asset is essentially determined by it.

(vi) A majority of women has opened bank account for the first time to get MGNREGS wages only. But in three locations out of total four, preference is seen towards joint accounts. This is because of various reasons starting from rough terrain, outmigration of males, distance of the bank, and societal control over women's earning and spending. These factors are practical and reflected in the narration of officials. Joint account is encouraged in most locations through the officials.

(vii) Topography has not rendered much control on women's role in household registration. Rather the major controlling factor is the level of awareness and the intensity of MGNREGS implementation. The best performing village is having higher number of women in MGNREGS registration. This outcome is essentially a reflection of the success of MGNREGS to minimize the effect of strict societal control over women in plain.

(viii) Topography along with climatic factors, remoteness of villages and patriarchal control (both in household and official level) over women have played a great role on women's attendance in public meeting and the incidence of public speaking. Though MGNREGS has rendered a significant effort to bring women in public meeting, it has failed to add public speaking experiences to women due to the lack of capability of addressing women's issues in a specified manner.

(viii) Neither official narration nor respondent's narration in focused group discussion is confirming an exchange of gender roles through MGNREGS implementation.

(ix) A strong link between socio-political control and women's deprivation is seen in every aspect of MGNREGS implementation, participation and benefits. Although men are also subjected to some sort of deprivation due to the socio-political control, this has significantly made the women marginalized in a development process.

Chapter-5

Effect of MGNREGS on Household and Other Gender Dynamics

Introduction

Intra-household gender dynamics is an area of intellectual discussion since long in social science research and it poses several questions when combined with women's work. The traditional role of women as identified by society and by themselves is care-giving. Rural women are seen as primary care givers to the family to take care of husbands, children and elderly members together with managing household chores on a daily basis. The gendered identity thus generated the power dynamics and gender roles within the households. The intra-household gender roles are the reflection of the perception of the household members including men. The expectation of society from a man or a woman in general is associated with the ways household members carry gender roles and interact in the society. Economic outcomes of a society are shaped by gender identity to a great extent. Akerlof and Kranton (1999:14) associate the psychological and sociological identity to economic behaviour. According to them:

“Stereotypical characteristics of men are competitive, acquisitive, autonomous, independent, confrontational, concerned about private goods. Parallel stereotypes of women are cooperative, nurturing, caring, connecting, and group oriented, concerned about public goods.”

Women are generally found to perform their household roles even if they are economically contributing. This chapter tries to bring to focus whether MGNREGS has contributed a change in intra-household as well as other gender dynamics in rural India. The conceptual framework of this chapter is based on the hypothesis that MGNREGS has brought a positive change in intra-household and other gender dynamics.

As already discussed, MGNREGS was implemented initially to mitigate the gap of job demand and supply in the rural sector. This scheme was meant for regeneration of rural resource base through demand-based employment generation. Gender aspects were limited at the beginning. It included the provision for one third of women beneficiaries to the total beneficiaries and provision of crèche for those worksites in which mothers having at least

five children below six years of age are working. Nowadays MGNREGS has emerged as a tool for employment generation together with the creation of sustainable livelihood opportunities especially for women. The studies have documented that MGNREGS activities, apart from providing income and employment, provided multiple environmental services such as increased ground water recharge, increased ground water percolation, enhanced water storage in tanks, increase soil fertility, reclamation of degraded lands and carbon sequestration (Raveendranath and Tiwari, 2009).

The study of the gendered impact of MGNREGS on household and its gender-related impact is complex. In a rural setting, stereotypes are the major determining factors of gender dynamics which restrict the opportunities of the members of disadvantaged women groups to a great extent. Some stereotypes are dynamic and some are static in nature so it is important to see the nature and types of actual change in stereotypical contents through policies. Social role theory¹⁷ states that the gender dynamics in a household is maintained by pre-determined role of each sex where it is expected to fulfil the typical roles within a family or household. Therefore, gender stereotypes signify the role-bound activities which are significant for understanding gender dynamics in a particular setting.

The studies regarding gender dynamics indicate that the change in gender stereotypes is possible by changing the gender role within and outside the household. This can happen through the equal distribution of resources across men and women. Accordingly, *“the extent to which households and individuals can or are willing to respond to the signals triggered by economic development depends on their preferences and the ways new markets and institutional forces change incentives and constraints. Because preferences, incentives, and constraints affect women and men differently, the impact of economic development on employment segregation needs to be assessed empirically”* (World Bank: 2012: 210). Eagly and Steffen (1984, 1986) showed these attributes are more agentic (e.g. competitive and individualistic) and less communal (e.g. kind as well as nurturing) than those identified with the domestic role. Gender stereotypes can be studied through the nature and distribution of gendered space in any setting, be it urban or rural. Gendered space is not an absolute space

¹⁷Social Role Theory propounded by A.H.Eagly and Steffen, V.J.(1986) states that gender stereotypes are the outcomes of gendered division of labour. The earning role of men and caregiver role of women are responsible in determining their role in society. They further argued that the development of skills are essentially related with gender stereotypes. According to them, gender stereotypes determines the social role, distribution of power, social expectation from men and women and formal , institutional role is needed to eradicate that stereotypes.

because social and cultural institutions dominate over it and fix the gender roles. Gendered nature of public and private spaces is a matter of concern to social scientists and women's participation in labour force is seen as a prime factor to modify the nature of gendered space. Public workforce programs in India have traditionally offered a unique opportunity for women to earn cash income in a context where too often the ability of women to work outside the home is severely constrained by social norms. Existing studies suggests that women often participate tremendously in these programs to the extent that some of them were referred to as women's programs.

Though MGNREGA was not envisioned as a strong tool of transforming women's lives, but the scope of MGNREGA in changing gender dynamics in rural areas need attention, because a) it is the first ever safety net which is meant for at least one third of the women beneficiaries b) this programme opts for the creation of crèche in the worksites to provide support to the women workers. c) This scheme attempts to generate sustainable resources which may alter the gender stereotypical behaviour, and d) MGNREGS created Common Property Resources (CPRs) which are more useful for women as it eases their livelihood struggle. Because of the presence of all these women friendly provisions, MGNREGS has resulted mass participation of rural women in the worksites since beginning. Still, Dreze and Oldiges (2007) argued that MGNREGA is not 'uniformly exclusive' for women. The same observation is reflected in the work of Dutta et.al. (2014).

The changes in the role distributions corresponding to men and women are taken up in this chapter through responses of the respondents to the questionnaire survey, case studies and FGD. At first the estimation of present affinities has been done and then their past behaviour has been assessed depending on the available indicators. In most of the cases, the new role has initiated new behavioural pattern and separate kind of redistribution of household responsibilities. To understand the changes of gender stereotypes through MGNREGS in a rural setting, the personality, cognitive and physical attributes (Cejka and Eagly, 1999) of respondents are measured. The main indications used here are:

- A) Change in gendered attributes of the households which includes change in decision making process and change in the pattern of sharing a common space within the households, and
- B) Change in community attributes such as participation in village meeting and work.

To address these questions at the primary level, two methodologies are adopted which are as follows:

- a) Framing the relevant questions in a particular section of the questionnaire and
- b) Observation and FGD of the respondents.

The FGD was intended to a) understand the overall impact of MGNREGS on village women including employment, CPRs and participation b) to get diversified responses related to changing household and community gender dynamics and c) to find out intersectionality of FGD respondents.

(A)Change in Household Gender Dynamics

Dominant dynamics of rural households are often homogeneous in a rural setting. As mentioned earlier, the role of men as earner and women as care giver are the distinguished form of gendered roles usually played within a rural household. These gendered roles determine the other dynamics as well. Distribution of power, space and responsibility are the essential outcomes of established gendered roles within a household. Field study and FGD have identified some changes in household gender dynamics through MGNREGS in surveyed area. Some of them are:

(i) Changing Pattern of individual sharing of common space within the Household

The role of external agents to transform or create new pattern of gendered spaces within a household is a complex matter to argue with. Intra-household gendered spaces are widely controlled by tenacious social norms. The role of social norms in shaping women's identity and expectations is depicted in the work of Shami (1996). Government intervention plays a critical role in transforming gendered power dynamics of the rural households. This section assumes that there is a change in micro-level gender relations at the household and community after the implementation of the MGNREGS. According to the United Nations (2016) women's capacity to influence decision making, whether in public or private institutions is intimately linked with gender equality and empowerment. Having a voice and participating in the processes and decisions that determine their lives are the essential aspects of women's freedom. Since the inception of the feminist studies, literatures have supported the idea of women empowerment as an integral to women's share of common spaces, though the measurement of both is complex and perpetual. In this section emphasis is given on how power relations are manifested through space and how spaces and places are experienced

differently by different people after MGNREGS. This is because class, ethnicity and gender are some of the social relations which are deeply implicated in the way we inhabit and experience space and place (Massey, 1994). Gender relations are thus constructed in and through space and place and, similarly, space and place construct gender (Lindeborg, 2017).

For this, an exploration of differing senses of places over gendered spaces has been done. FGD responses indicate that for most of the women respondents, participation in MGNREGS has resulted in alteration of gendered spaces.

A small portion of the respondents have (15 Percent) reported the increased incident of land sharing among men and women. This is applicable only for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Category Population of the village on whose land minor irrigation services are carried out under MGNREGS work. Because of the introduction of micro irrigation facilities, the land adjacent to household are now used for farming (mostly on subsistence basis) and sometimes for poultry. This has resulted in the transformation of household kitchen garden which was previously exclusively handled by women of the household to a profitable one and more sharing of space by men for managing it. Other changes are as follows:

(i) Out of total 40 male FGD respondents in plain and plateau, 13 respondents (32.5 per cent) opined that the MGNREGS has changed their pattern of household work sharing and space sharing especially in terms of kitchen. Cooking, which was considered as entirely women's job earlier, is now being replaced by men especially on MGNREGS working days. This is no doubt a remarkable achievement of MGNREGS which has initiated the transformation of concept of cooking from a women's job to a work of shared responsibilities.

FGD has revealed that only 3 respondents out of 13 male respondents (23.07%) continue the responsibility of cooking, even when the women of their house are not working. Others just do it on a temporary basis while their women are at work. All 3 respondents have started cooking after the inception of MGNREGS in their village and continued it on a daily basis.

(ii) Change in Household Decision Making Process

Analysing women's role in decision making processes is critical to understand the status of women in a setting, be it rural or urban. Decisions may be economic, social or personal. There are a number of constraints for rural women to participate in formal and informal

decision-making processes. Day-to-day domestic responsibilities are often time seeking which limit the active involvement of women in household decision making processes. Discretionary and stereotypical attitudes towards women, lack of education, income and security concerns are other limiting factors. Women involvement in public and private decision-making processes is crucial for changing gender role within a society. Agarwal (1997:25) commented: “A woman’s extra-household bargaining power with legal authorities, society, and the market impacts her intra-household bargaining power.”

The changes brought out by MGNREGS in household decision making processes mark the initiation of women’s inclusion in household decisions and thus provide an indication of reducing women’s marginalization within the households. Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 show the comparison between the process of daily household decision making and decision making regarding different aspects related with MGNREGS.

Table: 5.1. Decision Making Process Regarding Daily Household Activities

Process of Daily Household Decision Making	Share of Male to Total (%)	Share of Women to Total (%)
Discussion among family members	65.46	57.59
Discussion among adult male members	20.5	24.6
Decided by self as respondent is the only member of the household	3.61	0.43
Decision is taken jointly by husband-wife only	4.02	3.2
Family Head takes decision	2.81	9.8
No definite answer	3.61	4.43
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table: 5.2. Decision Making Process Regarding Different Aspects of MGNREGS

Process of Household Decision Making regarding MGNREGS	% of Male to Total	% of Women to Total
Discussion among family members	47.8	24.1
Discussion among adult male members	24.5	9.5
Decided by self as respondent is the only member of the household	9.2	3.8

Decision is taken jointly by husband-wife only	12.4	55.1
Family Head takes decision	6.0	7.6
No definite answer	0.0	0.0
Total	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2014-15.

The comparison between daily household decision making and decision making regarding different aspects of MGNREGS is significant. The household decision making process in Indian rural scenario is highly traditional and are mostly free from the influence of any external agents. By the word ‘traditional’ it means the decision makers are selected on the basis of their influence in household and gender roles that are distinct to a household. Generally, decisions are made in parity with existing gendered practices.

Contrary to this situation, MGNREGS is a new intervention by government which theoretically involves women in its every aspect; participation, selection of assets and in social audits. Women’s participation in work, consequent earning and their role in public meetings are expected to initiate some changes in household decision making process too. Women are expected to be active expelling the shale of passive household members within their households. MGNREGS is expected to play a positive role as an external agent of modification of decision-making process through its income generating capacities.

Above two Tables clearly reflect the difference between decision making processes regarding household matters and MGNREGS related matters. While a large section of women has reported discussion among family members as a major decision -making process for household activities, majority of women clearly stated that MGNREGS related matters are determined by discussion among husband and wife within their households. Significantly, FGD supports the fact that this joint decision (regarding MGNREGS) is free from the influence of other members of the family. This observation acknowledges the gradual emergence of rural women as a decision maker in terms of work. This is significant because FGD and case studies though discussion among family members theoretically include women of the household whereas practically the voices of the women are not heard in most of the time. Therefore, the difference of 51.9 percent for women taking “joint decision by husband

and wife only” in Table 5.2 and 5.3 can surely be attributed with the success of MGNREGS in women’s involvement in decision making process.

Table 6.5 in chapter 6 indicates how women’s decision making has significant link with caste for MGNREGS related matters. Participation in MGNREGS related meeting has significant bearing for men to make decisions, whereas it is insignificant for women because of their passive roles in the meetings. To understand the household decision making process, focused group discussion has covered the questions which survey questionnaire could not and the result is astonishing. Focused Group Discussions conducted with 40 women reveal that the decision taken through discussion often includes the other male member of the family and the roles played by women are mostly passive in the case of daily household decisions like purchasing daily goods, savings, sending children to school and payment of school fees etc. Some women respondents told that in their case, opting to earn and moving to the public sphere for work need family approvals, more precisely approvals by the heads of the family.

(iii) Change in Gendered Pattern of Work

44.9 percent of total women MGNREGS workers in the sample have worked for MGNREGS for entire surveyed year. Most of the women MGNREGS workers has got the opportunity to work for the first time in their life; thus they provide a platform to study changing pattern of their household work through the intervention of MGNREGS. As this category of respondents are subjected to very limited external factors that may change their household work pattern other than MGNREGS, so an intensive study has been done for the assessment of sample who have worked only for MGNREGS in the surveyed year (category-III samples) together with samples who have worked for their regular job apart from MGNREGS in the same year (category I and II). A comparison has been done among the categories.

A part of the questionnaire was dedicated to understand whether MGNREGS has brought any changes in pattern of household responsibilities. Similarly, a lot of discussion has been done in focused group to understand the issues more deeply. The responses are presented in Tables 5.3 and 5.4.

Table: 5.3. Pattern of Sharing Household Work Burden while doing MGNREGS work for Women

Response	Number of Women	Percentage share of women to total women respondents
Regularly get help from husband while working	59	18.7
Does not get help while working	219	69.3
No male members to help	1	0.3
Son/other male member helps	12	3.8
Not applicable	25	7.9
Total	316	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014-15.

Table: 5. 4. Share of Cooking Responsibility by Men While Women are at MGNREGS Work

Response		Number of men
Yes	Count	5
	% within Category	12.5
No	Count	35
	% within Category	
Total	Count	87.5
	% within Category	100%

Source: Focussed Group Discussion, 2015.

Table 5.4 shows that only 22.5 percent (18.7 percent+3.8 percent) of women respondents got help from husbands, sons or other male members of the family out of a total of 316 women respondents. The major responsibilities shared by men are collecting water, cleaning house, caring for domestic animals and a very less share in cooking. No response was received about men sharing child care responsibilities from any of the location. It is found in the study that the most important determinant of husband's participation in household activities is the

structure of the family. 75 percent respondents of the plain and 82 percent respondents of the plateau who had reported that they shared household burden with their husbands belong to nuclear families. FGD among respondents reflects that share of household work burden by men while doing MGNREGS work happens only for 12.5% of respondents. Household work is often shared by other women or girl child of the family. In most of the time women worked for MGNREGS compromise their sleep and rest time. Sengupta & Sachdeva (2017) concluded that this increased work burden has “*depleting consequences*” for both the mental and physical wellbeing of rural women.

The reason of unshared work burden of women as realized in the field survey / FGD/case studies are as follows-

a) *Nearness of worksites*: Though nearer worksites are proved to be a boon for women workers, especially the women who have worked only for MGNREGS (category-III) , it was found in the study that the distance factor has a significant bearing over women’s household work burden.. MGNREGS worksites are generally located within the village, so men in the household do not count it ‘difficult’ to manage household chores with MGNREGS work for women. In all four locations, the working women adjust the time for household chores compromising their sleep and rest time (like cooking the major part of the meal at night, fetching water in the afternoon or doing the watering work to the kitchen garden in early morning).

b) *Seasonality of MGNREGS Work*: MGNREGS works are ‘seasonal’ and ‘unsure’ so the working women cannot put the responsibilities in a regular frame on a shared basis.

c) *Impact of traditional gender role*: The field areas as perceived in the study and observation mostly follow the traditional gender norms. It does not count whether women are working or earning, the care responsibilities always go to women as per the existing practices.

A cross category analysis has been done to understand whether MGNREGS has brought any real change in household work burden for women of all categories. For this, category I and category II are clubbed together. This joint sample category represents those who have worked in other fields except MGNREGS and category III includes those who have worked only for MGNREGS.

Out of total 59 women who have got some help from men while doing MGNREGS work, 17 (28.81%) belongs to category I and II. Rest 42 women (71.19%) respondents belongs to the category III samples. These figures support the FGD finding of more help to category III samples. As most of the women of category III are first time worker, so the household responsibilities show a better share than those who have working experience. FGD and case studies show that the women of category I and II are having better time management strategies than category III. Still, the large section of women from all categories did not receive any help from any male members. It can, therefore, be said that the changes brought about by MGNREGS is negligible than expected. In this context, the observations of Schieder and Gould (2016) are worth mentioning. Their work on “women’s work and gender pay gap” says the paid work of women is shaped by a number of economic factors as well as social norms. These includes availability of decent jobs, domestic responsibility and the support structures that are available to them while working. As has been mentioned earlier, it is found both in field survey and FGD that sharing work related with care of infant and aged is very less in all four location. Sharing of work is mainly done in the cases of cooking, bathing of animals, collection and cleaning. Care work of working women is generally substituted by other women/girl-child/ neighbours of the family.

(B)Change in Community Attributes

Community attributes of this study relate to the role of women performed in the community spaces, these attributes together generate a complex network of gender dynamics. Beside domestic/private space, the understanding of changes brought by MGNREGS in relation to public space is also crucial for this study. The distinction between the public and private spheres has long been based on an uncritical assumption of dual and separate worlds of men and women (Nelson, 1974) cited in Shami (1996). In this section, an attempt has been made to analyze the regular and changed pattern of community attributes after MGNREGS participation. Community attributes selected in this chapter are:

- (i) Participation in village meeting (MGNREGS related and other).
- (ii) Access to public spaces like bank, panchayat office etc.
- (iii) Role played by an individual to preserve MGNREGS created assets.

It is assumed that MGNREGS has rendered a positive impact in changing community attributes of women for their inclusion in planning level of MGNREGS, enhancement of

income, institutionalized wage payment etc. The changes as detected by focused group discussion, respondent survey and participant observation are discussed below.

i) Change in Pattern of Participation in Village Meetings and MGNREGS Meetings

Different types of village meetings are organized in village to raise awareness among villagers related with health, employment and education such as meetings relating to pulse-polio, vaccination, Anganwadi education, old age pension, widow pension, building toilets and home for rural poor etc. which are organized from time to time by village authorities. Maintaining a regular date of Gram Sabha meeting regarding the issues of MGNREGA is mandatory for raising awareness. Attendance of women in these meetings are encouraged by authority which paves the way for village women to participate in the meeting. The quantitative data has been generated from the panchayat attendance register and FGD responses. As a part of observation, one MGNREGA meeting has been covered in each location except one location. The characteristics of these meetings are:

1. They are open to all community members.
2. These meetings are called by the Panchayat.
3. These meetings were publicly announced.
4. These meetings were held in the village Panchayat office.
5. These meetings were attended by significant number of women.
6. No outside organizations were involved.

Tables 5.5 and 5.6 shows the participation pattern in village meetings and MGNREGS related meetings across men and women.

Table: 5.5. Responses Related to Attending MGNREGS Related Meeting in the Last Three Years

Response	Gender	N	Percentage
Yes	Men	99	39.8
	Women	115	36.4
No	Men	143	57.4
	Women	197	62.3
No Definite Answer	Men	7	2.8
	Women	4	1.3

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table: 5.6. Responses Related to Attending Other Village Meetings in the Last Three Years

Response	Gender	N	Percentage
Yes	Men	154	61.8
	Women	96	30.4
No	Men	95	38.2
	Women	220	69.6
No Definite Answer	Men	0	0.00
	Women	0	0.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Participation of women in MGNREGS related meetings is more than their participation in village meetings. Interviews with village officials and FDGD with women respondents indicate that consistent official effort to bring more number of women in MGNREGS meeting is the primary reason behind this situation. For MGNREGS, it is mandatory to include women in the meeting, while for other meetings, it is not. For this reason, other village meetings are usually dominated by participation of men. Men are found to be present in other village meetings as a representative of their household or communities and seem more interested in joining other village meetings than MGNREGS meetings. The meeting space which was essentially dominated by men earlier, had undergone drastic changes in last few years because of the intervention of MGNREGA. Though the scheme has not achieved active participation of women in most of the cases, but the changing nature of public space through the inclusion of women is a most significant achievement of MGNREGS in the field areas.

ii) Change in Pattern of Incidence of Public Speaking

Speaking in public is an important indicator of gendered empowerment. The strong impediments of incidence of public speaking by women are domestic responsibilities, social traditions and poor levels of education and understanding of the functions of meeting. In reality when women ensure their physical presence, they generally lack the experience of speaking in public. Dyer (2018:2) commented that *“in reality even when women are present at meeting, they are still consistently less likely than men to substantially participate.”*

Agarwal (2010) observed that women are more likely to speak up at the meeting when they constitute a third or more of meeting attenders. What she called the “*Critical mass*” (Agarwal 2010:108 cited in Dyer, 2018).

Three public meetings related to MGNREGS have been covered in three locations to understand the association between the presence of women and the incidence of public speaking. Observation of public meetings and focused group discussion reveals following facts:

1. Most of the women speak on the issues related with their personal interests (such as timing of work, duration of work and nearness of work sites) rather than community interests like (need of the assets, preservation and maintenance etc. . if they choose to speak at all.
2. Two-third of the women FGD respondents who spoke in the meeting did not speak about wages, process of payments, reason for the delay of payment as they consider these issues as against their womanly virtues. They find it shameful to talk about money openly in a public forum.
3. Intra-household conflict, fear of social recognition and fear of being labelled “*extra-smart*” or “*clever*”, are the reported causes for remaining silent in the public meetings.

Following Table shows the response of the FGD respondents regarding their share of speech in a public meeting of MGNREGS in village panchayats.

Table: 5.7. The Incidence of Meeting Attendance and Speaking in Public

Attribute of Public space sharing	Gender	N	Percent
Attended meeting only	Men	19	47.5%
	Women	34	85.0%
Attended and contributed in meeting	Men	21	52.5
	Women	6	15.0

Source: Focused Group Discussion, 2015

Apart from focused group discussions and observations of public meeting, questionnaire survey has also been done to understand the pattern of attending public meeting and speaking in public.

Focused Group discussions and meeting observations provide a clue that MGNREGS has not been succeeded to transform women's role in a public space like village meetings, though it has definitely initiated the process. Women's marginalization in public places is a common and deep-rooted problem in Indian rural society which cannot be eradicated easily. However, ensuring the attendance of women is a significant step towards attaining the voice of the women in planning level. One village official in Mandiha village said:

"In early years, no women came to the meeting even after repeated announcements. All NREGA meetings were done without women. That situation was highly undesired as we were failing to provide the data with adequate number of women in village meetings. Then we started arranging women- only meeting and continued for another two years. These meetings were of no use as women did not know anything about this scheme at that time. We gradually moved to common meetings 2011 onwards.....now women do come and sometimes expresses their opinion. We can't force them to talk, can we?"

Kamala Mondal (female, 34) of same village said:

"When hundred days work has started we thought that we women will get hundred days to work ...we were least informed about job card, procedure, wage and payment methods. At that time I went to attend a meeting with elderly women of our village and we did not understand anything that was discussed in the meeting . . . the discussion was so technical; about job card, registration etc. Now most of the women in the village are well-informed about the facilities of MGNREGAthose women who attend meetings they used to circulate information among us and its helpful."

Narratives that were received in FGD reveal two important findings:

a) Women's inclusion in MGNREGA meeting has a long history of internal struggle with exciting social norms, lesser attainment of education of women respondents and strategies of the authority to reduce women's marginalization from public space.

b) Women's source of information about any developmental initiatives like MGNREGA is often indirect till date. For MGNREGA, a major source of information is the women who have attended the meeting. This finding indicates about a distinct intersectional category of women apart from caste and education; women who are allowed to public space and women whose movement in public sphere are controlled by households/ society. Therefore, an intersectional approach is needed to study women's access to public sphere as is provided in chapter-6.

(iii)Change in the Level of Access to other Public Places

The word “other public places” denotes Bank and Panchayat office in this study. These two places are selected on the basis of their necessity and inclusion in respondents’ lives as these two places are intrinsically related with MGNREGS. Opening of bank account for transferring wage money is no doubt a remarkable step made by MGNREGA. Having a bank account in respondents name especially in the name of a women has resulted in many desirable outcomes such as a) invoking the idea of identify and self-pride, b) more control of women over their earnings, c) improved saving habit, and most importantly d) it enhances the chance of movement to public sphere for village women.

Table: 5.8. Time of Opening Bank Accounts

Time of Opening Bank Account		Sex		Total
		Men	Women	
Before	N	101	115	216
	%	40.57	36.40	38.23
After	N	148	201	349
	%	59.43	63.60	61.77
Total	N	249	316	565
	%	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table shows that opening of bank account only to get MGNREGS wage is more in the case of women than men though the difference is not huge. Opening of bank account is crucial for control over earning, enhancement of savings, creation of self-identity and control over household resources. Besides these, the most significant aspect of opening of bank account is bringing the house-bounded rural women to a public place like bank. This movement from private to public sphere is a significant step for eradicating gendered marginalization in a rural setting. Only 36.4% of women have reported of having bank accounts prior to MGNREGS. Focus Group discussions suggest that the saving of money and handling of household income were considered as ‘men’s job’ earlier. The causes as depicted in the qualitative survey are:

- a) Men were considered primary bread-earners of the family.
- b) Men tends not to disclose their real income to their partners and thus impose self-control all household expenses and savings.
- c) Location of bank, which are more than 3 Km for all locations had discouraged women to go and make transactions without any earning.

FGD Respondents reported that they generally go in clusters to get the payments from the banks. Some of them told that they bear a sense of pride and excitement at the time of wage withdrawal. Exposure to bank activities has resulted raising awareness among some women about other financial schemes such as small savings, loans and pension schemes of the banks, which became helpful for them. Some women in both locations have reported having newly-opened recurring deposit accounts for the marriage of their girl child after they know about the scheme and it may help them to live a debt free life in future.

Apart from the above mentioned pros of opening a bank account to get MGNREGS wage, cons of it includes difficulty of uneducated/ less educated women to handle their own account. In that case they used to get help from male members of their family. Opening of a single account for women has been discouraged in some locations from the concerned officials. Social customs and restrictions have played a critical role for some women who do not have the control over savings because their men counterparts operate the account.

Though there are some impediments in exercising women's exclusive control over savings, opening of bank accounts through MGNREGS has certain positive impacts in reducing their marginalization process. With established full/partial control on their earning and savings, the rural women have emerged as more powerful members of their household as well as in society. The control over savings and women's participation in small deposit plans certainly have an impact on their level of marginalization. Not only has their sphere of existence altered because of the opening of bank account, but also it has changed their positions within the household too. Thus, it can be said that wage component of MGNREGS has helped to eradicate gendered marginalization to a certain extent.

Apart from bank, panchayat office is a centre of information in rural areas. It is assumed that regularity of visit to Panchayat has significant bearing on rural women's lives. Visiting panchayat indicates women's access to information and their ability to exercise power over many household and other decision-making processes. Following Table shows reasons for visiting and not visiting panchayat office by women respondents of structured questionnaire survey.

Table: 5.9. Reasons for Visiting Panchayat by Women

Reason of Visiting Panchayat	N	Percentage to Total
For MGNREGS work and wage related queries	64	69.6
To know about other schemes	6	6.5
For meeting of SHGs	12	13.0
To attend MGNREGS meeting	10	10.9
Total	92	100.00

Table: 5.10. Reason for Not Visiting Panchayat by Women

Reason of Not Visiting Panchayat	N	Percentage to Total
I don't feel the need	30	16.5
Overburdened with household work, no time to attend	86	47.3
Not permitted by family	19	10.4
Other Male members of the family attend	47	25.8
Total	182	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2015.¹⁸

Out of 225 respondents who keep visiting Panchayat office regularly, only 92 are women which accounts for 29.11 percent of total women respondents.

Table 5.9 shows the reason why women of the village visit Panchayat office in which MGNREGS is the significant reason. Contrary to this Table, Table 5.10 shows the reasons why women do not visit Panchayat office in the study area. Highest share of women had sought domestic responsibility as a burdening factor for which they could not visit Panchayat even once in a year. One fourth of women respondents have reported substitution of their

¹⁸ * 42 women in total (13.29%) did not give any definite answer regarding Panchayat visit.

presence by other male member of the family. Household restrictions and no urge to keep visiting Panchayat office are other factors. Case studies /FGD/participant observation /observation of public places suggest that the reasons are embedded in deep social customs such as:

a) Extreme burden of domestic responsibilities on women due to lack of sharing of domestic work by men. The stereotypical gender role within a household imposes extreme burden on women and determines their access to public sphere.

b) Substitution of women by men in Panchayat indicates the marginalized position of women within and outside the household. FGD suggests that fear of facing a new place and lesser confidence to manage a new role as participants or contributors for women is a prime discouraging factor.

c) Lack of awareness about the necessity of moving from private to public is deep rooted with the issue of education. In most cases poorly educated women do not feel any need to moving out from private to public spheres on their own.

Above analysis suggests that MGNREGS has contributed somehow positively in bringing women from private to public spaces through bank account opening, meetings and other scheme related activities. Still these benefits are not equally available to all segments of rural women.

The analysis done above shows the change brought by MGNREGS in household gender dynamics are significant in some fields and in some fields they are negligible. The complex rural setting is the major impediment for a massive change through government intervention. The study reveals that some women feel a sense of empowerment with their new roles. Some women reported that MGNREGS has improved their coping abilities and their capabilities, especially in terms of work balance.

Changes in attitude toward household work had occurred, though not on a massive scale. Some changes in gender roles are also seen in terms of household and other decision-making processes. One of the consequences of participating MGNREGS work is that most of the

women are finding it difficult to balance both paid work and their unpaid care work. This is exacerbated in situations where alternative services are either not available or accessible. Recognising women's burden and redistributing it to the state or to other members of the family/community can be the first step to address this situation. In this regard, according to Sengupta and Sachdeva (2017) *“Gender relations need to become an integral part of all poverty reduction strategies. This needs to be reflected in institutional goals, design, incentives and criteria of success that are monitored and evaluated.”*

So far women's access to public sphere is concerned, women have moved from private to public to some extent through MGNREGS. Participation in work, getting wages through bank and attending village meetings are some of the successes of the scheme to bring rural women from private to public spaces. Through this enhanced access, rural women have got some identity which has modified intra-household gender dynamics to a certain extent which is not negligible.

Chapter-6

Intersectionality in Women Workers of MGNREGS:

Participation and Benefits

Introduction

The concept of intersectionality is popular in feminist research to understand the position of women in society. Davis (2008) Reyes and Mulinai (2005) called intersectionality an analytical approach to explore ‘gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality and social class as complex, intertwined, and mutually supplementary categories of oppression and social structures.

The practice of bringing intersectionality to understand the social reality is usually not presented by mainstream research in Indian academia. Banerjee and Ghosh (2018: 4) argued that *“the term intersectionality has only recently been imported into Indian academia but the notion of multiple identities co-constructing marginalities has been consistently discernible on the socio-economic and political canvas of India”*. However, more attention has now been paid to the question of caste and gender intersectionality (Rao 2005; Adcock 2013; Viswanath 2014).

The collaboration between the relational social positions shapes the social life of a human being. Intersectionality can be taken as an alternative approach rather than normative one. Brah and Phoenix (2004) presented intersectionality as a result of the intersection of multiple axes of economic, political, psychic, cultural differentiation in a historically specified context. Srinivas (1977: cited in Kannabiran (2009: 35) commented *“A rich set of literature suggests that cultural norms and social stratification systems rely on gender as a primary vehicle through which social boundaries are maintained.”* Haan (2011) assumes that though debates on Indian poverty highlights the inequalities between social groups, they did not pay sufficient attention to the nature of exclusion which has resulted in opposite effect of intended effect, and eventually reinforced the incorporation of social identities into political framework. Stewart and McDermott (2004) strongly argued about the heterogeneity of social phenomena which is supported by the work of Dill and Zambrana (2009). They noted that the concept of intersectionality lies on the idea of social stratification. According to Berg et al. (2012) the reality of experience by different social groups are different. The

intersectionality theory has evolved greatly and became a multidimensional and open ended concept over time (Yuval-Davis 2006; Choo and Ferree 2010).

The debate on intersectionality is ongoing and getting attention in newer fields. With increasing participation of women in labour force, it is being necessary to see the crosscutting of intersectionality with gendered identity. MGNREGS, being a widespread developmental programme, offers ample scope of analysis and provides a base to understand how household power relations controls the work decision of various segments of rural women. It is interesting to see how a homogeneous developmental initiative is accessed differently by different section of women. In other words, intersectional character determines the extent of women participation and their accrual of benefits from MGNREHGS.

The concept of intersectionality is used in this chapter to see the extent to which women participation and benefits from MGNREGS overlaps with different economic as well as social attributes like class, caste and gender. This chapter is divided into two broad sections; (A)The intersection of caste and gender in MGNREGS Participation and (B) The intersection of caste,gender and household power relations in MGNREGS Participation.

(A) The intersection of Caste and Gender in MGNREGS Participation

Understanding the intersectionality of caste and gender is essential to realize the MGNREGS participation related questions in the study area. In rural India, the construction of livelihoods is embedded in prevailing paradigms of caste and gender. The intersection of caste and gender accelerates or decelerates available work options in many cases. Gendered practices in different livelihood pattern are generally ununiformed and are the products of stratification structures. Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 provide the distribution of population in different caste categories as per Indian Census 2011 and sample distribution among different caste categories in surveyed villages.

Table: 6.1. Distribution of Population in Different Caste Categories in Surveyed Villages

caste	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
SC	680	685	1365
ST	98	106	204
OBC	9	10	19
GENERAL	550	489	1039
TOTAL	1337	1290	2627

Source: Census of India, 2011.

Table: 6.2. Distribution of Population in Different Caste Categories in Sample Population

caste	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
SC	121	196	317
ST	14	17	31
OBC	4	5	9
GENERAL	110	98	208
TOTAL	249	316	565

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

A part of structured questionnaire was designed to get responses from field survey to understand the intersection of caste and gender. The Category wise share of population to total population for SC's, ST's, OBC'S and General castes are 52 percent 7.8 percent, 0.7 percent and 39.6 percent respectively. Though scheduled caste population accounts for the highest share in total, it accounts for 23.2 percent of participating sample. The share of OBC population in total population and participating population is striking. They account for only 0.7 percent of total population, but participation percentage is 47.4 percent. The participation share is 15.2 percent for ST's. For general category population, participation share is 36.8 percent. Except Scheduled Castes and General category population, share in participation is high in other two categories compared to their proportions in the total population.

Table: 6.3. Comparison between Share of Different Castes to Total Population and Caste-Specific MGNREGS Participation

Caste	Share in Total Population as per Census 2011		Share in Sample ¹⁹ Participated in MGNREGS in 2014-15		Male/Female Gap in MGNREGS Participation*
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
SC	49.8%	50.2%	38.2%	61.8%	+23.6%
ST	48%	52%	45.2%	54.8%	+9.6
OBC	47.4%	52.6%	44.4%	55.6%	+11.2%
General	52.9%	47.1%	52.9%	47.1%	-5.8%

* Positive male-female gap means higher share of women than men and vice-versa.

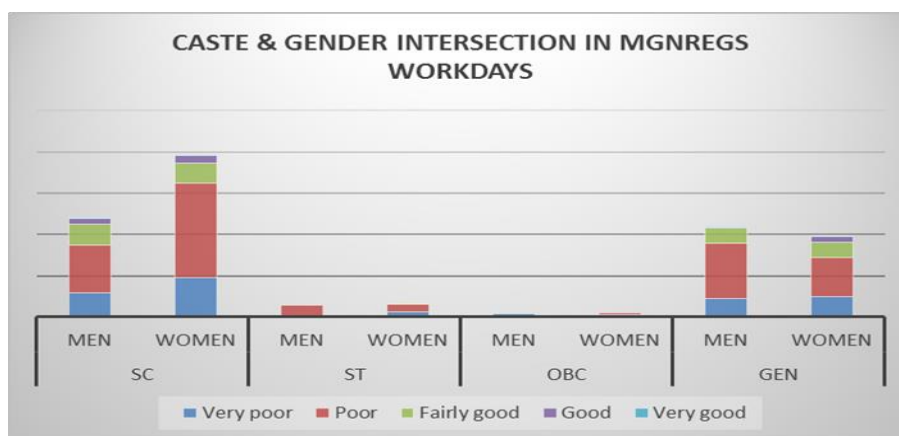
Source: Field Survey, 2015.

¹⁹ Samples are taken on purposive basis

Above Table shows the caste specific share of sample population. The sample is taken from those households which have worked more than 15 days in 2014-15, so each sample respondent represents MGNREGS worker. The sampling procedure followed is purposive sampling which shows that for all castes except General, women are main MGNREGS participators.²⁰ For all other castes, women participation exceeds the participation of men. The situation for general caste interestingly shows that men/women differences in participation in MGNREGS is exactly the same as their share in general caste population. What the situation calls for is a massive introspection of the caste-gender specific share of MGNREGS workers that are determined by caste-gender intersectionality.

MGNREGS follows household specific approach so in spite of the household selected for survey exhibits more than 15 workdays in 2014-15, the intra-household distribution of workdays among members cannot be understood without analysing the distribution of workdays among individuals. For this purpose, the number of workdays (MGNREGS workdays only) for year 2014-15 has been recorded in questionnaire survey and categorized in five categories. The distribution of workdays per category are; Very poor =less than 20 days²¹, poor= more than 20 days but less than 40 days, Fairly good= more than 41 days but less than 60 days, Good=More than 61 days but less than 80 days and Very good= More than 81 days to 100 days.

Graph: 4. Caste and Gender Intersection of MGNREGS Workdays



Source: Field Survey, 2015.

²⁰ The word 'participator' includes those who have worked for MGNREGS for 15 days or more. It is found in the survey that though number of women is high, the workdays obtained by them is less. The word 'participator' does not reflect the actual contribution of women in MGNREGS, rather their presence.

²¹ 15-20 days here.

From above chart, it is evident that the highest number of workdays are availed by the Scheduled Caste women followed by scheduled caste men. Men and women belonging to general caste exhibit lesser share than Scheduled Caste population. Women belonging to Scheduled Castes are subjected to lesser societal control than that of the women of general class women. The share of workdays are less for scheduled tribes and other backward classes in surveyed villages. Available workdays are mostly poor for all categories. The only exception in distribution of workdays has been observed in the general category population, where there is fewer number of workdays for women than men.

The caste-gender intersection in MGNREGS participation can be seen as the interplay of different factors; like intra-household decision making, existing job opportunities, work status of the respondents etc.

(B) Intersection of Caste-Gender-Household Power relation in MGNREGS Participation

It is assumed before the survey that position of women in the society as well as within household is a very significant determinant of MGNREGS participation. In a rural context, the position in society is a reflection of the caste group the women belong to and their income. As MGNREGS participators belong to lower income strata, so the factor of caste got utmost significance. The indicator taken to assess the household power relation is intra-household decision making. The question of intra-household decision making has obtained critical importance to understand the change in women's role as a domestic worker to an earning worker. Ramu (1987) has argued that work decisions, consumption and spending decisions, are highly related with women's position in household level. He has pointed out unequal economic resource distribution between men and women as a crucial factor for the process of decision making. Since household decision making is a regular and important part of everyday life affairs, an attempt has been taken to see how the intra-household decision making has taken place within households. For this, a part of the questionnaire was designed to capture the responses regarding household decision making. Though FGD responses are mostly qualitative, some questions have got quantitative responses too.

The following section presents quantification of responses that was obtained in focussed group discussion. This quantification is followed by qualitative responses to understand the situation clearly. This part of quantification is limited within women, so N= 40 here. Table 4.4. Shows how intersectionality of social attributes like caste and gender influences the household decision making pattern.

Table: 6.4. Caste-Gender Intersection in Decision Making regarding Household Activities among Focussed Group Discussion Respondents

Caste Category	Decision taken by Women Only	Decision taken by Men Only	Decision taken by Both Men and Women	Total
SC	5.26	83.0	11.78	100.00
ST	10.0	90.0	0.00	100.00
OBC	0.00	50.00	50.00	100.00
GENERAL	11.76	37.30	25.53	100.00

Source: Focussed Group Discussions, 2015

Decision making process related with household activities shows that the women taking independent decisions are very few in comparison with men across all caste categories. Joint decisions are less in number in comparison with independent decisions by men among all caste categories. No joint decision is mentioned by any member belonging to Scheduled Tribe category. Independent decision-making regarding household affairs shows highest gap in the case of scheduled caste population. Highest share of independent decisions of women is seen in the case of general class women.

Above Table shows the poor decision -making status of rural women across all caste categories.

Focussed group discussion with all these women has revealed an interesting finding that the pattern of decision-making regarding participation in MGNREGS is different from their day- to-day decision making patterns. For example, Sandhya Dule of ‘C’ village referred to MGNREGS “*a blessing to the poor*” and said they usually take joint decisions about placing a demand for MGNREGS work considering the other available work opportunities at the same time. According to her:

“If my husband gets to work as daily labour at the same time, I go for MGNREGS work. As we don’t want to miss the opportunity to get wage, so the decision is always joint for MGNREGS”.

Raju Bouri of ‘A’ village said:

“It is not that we get MGNREGS job whenever we demand; it depends on schedule of Panchayat. So we always discuss in our household who will apply for the work, as it is one labour at a time from a single household in our village”.

Though Sandhya Soren, a tribal women respondent of ‘A’ village told that taking decision about household affairs is a responsibility of men, but she had reported about her inclusion in discussion about MGNREGS participation. According to her:

“Discussion does not always mean that I will do the work, we think about the work available at other sites, their wage, daily expenditure to do it, distance and cost of staying for both of us if it is more than 30 kms away. If we take decision to out-migrate alone, my husband goes for it and I do MGNREGS job. For a woman, working in a known environment is much better than working alone in a new place.”

Table 4.5 Decision making pattern across caste and gender with regard to the participation in MGNREGS.

Table: 6.5. Process of MGNREGS Related Decision-Making by FGD Respondents

Caste Category	Decision taken by Women Only	Decision taken by Men Only	Decision taken by Both Men and Women	Total
SC	15.80	31.60	52.60	100.00
ST	50.00	0.00	50.00	100.00
OBC	0.00	50.00	50.00	100.00
GENERAL	20.8	26.3	52.9	100.00

Source: Focussed Group Discussions, 2015

While data related with decision making about various household activities reveals the predominance of men over women in all caste categories, the decision-making pattern is different for the same respondents for MGNREGS. Except OBC women, women of all caste categories have reported more cases of independent decision making regarding MGNREGS participation. It is interesting to note that the highest share of respondents has reported joint decision in terms of MGNREGS participation across all castes. The reasons behind this changed participation pattern as reported by FGD respondents are as follows:

Minati Das of ‘A’ village said:

“Panchayat prefers women over men for some work like plantation, cleaning etc. So at first we ask the Panchayat officials about the project. If the upcoming work prefers women, we take decision accordingly and jointly.”

Bipin Das of ‘C’ village commented:

“MGNREGS is completely different from other casual works. It requires huge amount of paper work, visiting panchayat, having bank account, preference of women and many more. As such a decision taken jointly is much wiser than an independent decision”.

Discussion described as a major process in decision making is more evident in the plateau villages than in the plain. Outmigration of males and nature of work are the significant determinants of intra-household selection of MGNREGS participators. For example, FGD and case studies reveal that if MGNREGS work related with excavation of water harvesting feature starts in summer, most of the FGD respondents in plateau decide it is for the men to work in such projects. The troublesome nature of scorching summer coupled with rugged terrain and unavailability of other jobs for men are depicted as major cause for the selection. The situation is reverse in rainy season when men get some opportunity to migrate for work and plantation work starts under MGNREGS. Women are preferred to work for MGNREGS in rainy season because of two factors; availability of other work for men and preference of women to do plantation by village authority.

In plain, the dominance of men is more vivid than in plateau. The ease of livelihood, more options for work round the year and comfortable terrain has made stricter control on women's decision and participation in MGNREGS. Contrary to the plateau, Panchayat does not play much active role in bringing the women in office. FGD responses show that MGNREGS has changed the passive role of women in plain to some extent, but not as much as in plateau.

Focussed Group discussion among residents of the villages reflects that there is no strong association between education and the process of decision making. Though it is argued by several researchers (Blood and Wolfe 1960; Alam, 2009; Namdeo 2017) that women's education contributes positively in household decision making, but no such association is seen in study area across men and women. FGD responses mostly highlight the earning men or the senior most male member of the household as the prime decision maker irrespective of their education.

Tables 6.4 and 6.5 show how caste and gender intersection controls the process of household decision making and how it has been changed after the introduction of MGNREGS.

Age is having a strong impact in the process of decision making, both for household activities and MGNREGS. Women gain more power over time in a family and FGD reveals that more

aged women gain a position to contribute in decision making process within the household. Women in general do not show a strong association between attending MGNREGS meeting and decision making regarding MGNREGS participation. This is because of the non-over decision making process. This is significant in the case of men as they are the usual contributors in MGNREGS meeting and can make their decision-making process more logical applying their newly gained information from the meeting.

Above discussion shows that:

(i) MGNREGS, although not significantly strong, has rendered positive impact on intra-household decision making on women. This has happened because MGNREGS work is not available as soon as villagers place work demand in study area. Discussion between the members of the household before applying is seen. However, it can be taken as a promising indicator of changing position of women within the household.

(ii) Household discussion before decision making is controlled by existing physical and cultural landscape of the region concerned. For example, in plateau, the factors of rough terrain and unavailability of other work options for men are major controlling factor for decision making process. Women in plain are subjected to much stricter control so their participation in decision making process is comparatively weaker than that of women in plateau.

Intersection of Caste-Occupation of the Women in MGNREGS

Intersection of caste and occupation determines MGNREGS participation and receiving benefits from this scheme. Primary occupation is a prime factor for MGNREGS participation. In all four locations, the primary occupation of workers and its nature determine the participation in MGNREGS. For example, samples whose primary occupation is agriculture participate in MGNREGS only in agriculturally lean season. Thus, the pattern of participation in MGNREGS depends on the seasonal pattern of work availability in village and its nearby locations and vice-versa.

To understand the intersectionality of women already in the workforce and women who have entered labour market only through MGNREGS, it is needed to study the characteristics of

the categorical sample in the study area. The following Table presents the distribution of respondents in three categories of sample. To reiterate, category-I presents the respondents who have worked in MGNREGS for 15-30 days in year 2014-15, category-II consists of the respondents who have worked in MGNREGS for more than 30 days in year 2014-15 and category-III represents women respondents who have worked for MGNREGS only in the reference year 2014-15.

Table: 6.6. Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories

Category of Individual Sample	Sex		Total
	Men	Women	
Sample worked 15-30 days (CATEGORY-I)	65(26.1%)	49(15.5%)	114(20.2%)
Sample worked more than 30 days (CATEGORY-II)	129(51.8%)	125(39.6%)	254(45.0%)
Sample worked in MGNREGS only (CATEGORY-III)	55(22.1%)	142(44.9%)	197 (34.8%)
Total	249 (100%)	316 (100%)	565 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table: 6.7. Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories in Plain

CATEGORY SPECIFIC DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLES IN PLAIN			
	Sex		Total
	Men	Women	
Household worked 15-30 days(CATEGORY-I)	34	28	62
Household worked more than 30 days(CATEGORY-II)	67	85	152
Household worked in MGNREGS only(CATEGORY-III)	17	90	107
Total	118	203	321

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table: 6.8. Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories in Plateau

CATEGORY SPECIFIC DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLES IN PLATEAU			
	Sex		Total
	Men	Women	
Household worked 15-30 days(CATEGORY-I)	31	21	52
Household worked more than 30 days(CATEGORY-II)	62	40	102
Household worked in MGNREGS only(CATEGORY-III)	38	52	90
Total	131	113	244

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Distribution of samples in above categories generates the following observations:

(i) If comparison is done in between first two categories (category-I and category-II), the number of workdays availed by men is more than women in general. This trend has remained the same when inter-location samples are compared.

(ii) A sharp contrast between the concentration of men and women in category -III sample is observed. Women are the major constituent of category-III sample as they are not having much work opportunity in a rural setting. More than 40% of women in plain and plateau have worked only for MGNREGS in surveyed year. The share is almost double than that of the men of the same category.

(iii) Less share of workdays by category I and II sample indicate that though women have entered labour market through MGNREGS, the number of available workdays is not at par with their demand. Mean workdays for women in plain is 35 whereas it is 30 in plateau. The demand is expected to be high as this section of women are unemployed.

Though category III women makes a homogeneous mass of unemployed rural women who have got to work through MGNREGS in the surveyed year, a cross caste category analysis has been done to understand their intersectionality.

Table: 6.9.Caste Based Distribution of Women Respondents in Different Sample Categories

Caste	Respondent Sample Category			Total
	CATEGORY-I	CATEGORY-II	CATEGORY-III	
SC	27 (13.77%)	73(37.24%)	96(48.98%)	196(100%)
ST	5(29.41%)	8(47.05%)	4(23.53%)	17(100%)
OBC	2(40.0%)	1(20.0%)	2(40.0%)	59100%)
GEN	15(15.30%)	43(43.88%)	40(40.82%)	98(100%)
TOTAL	49(15.50%)	125(39.56%)	142(44.94%)	316(100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table shows that women who have got an opportunity to work through MGNREGS for the first time belong mostly to Scheduled Caste category. Though OBC and General Category women share almost the same percentage, unavailability of OBC population in the

sample has made it difficult to comment on the scope that has been received by OBC women. The share of ST women is comparatively lower in MGNREGS than expected because number of tribal people qualified to sampling criteria was very less. Above Table shows from the caste and categorical intersection that women of scheduled caste community have received a positive boost up to work and earn wage through MGNREGS in study area. Before making a conclusion about intersectionality of MGNREGS workers, it is needed to see why a large section of women have not worked in the study area.

Table: 6.10. Reason for Not Participating in Other Works by Women

Reason for Working Only in MGNREGS for Women	Frequency	Percent
No other work was available Anywhere	37	26.1
It was restricted to go outside beforehand	35	24.64
Work within the village was permitted only	61	42.94
Having very small children (Less than 2 years)	2	1.4
No definite reason stated	7	4.92
Total	142	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table suggests that a significant proportion of village women have not worked anywhere except MGNREGS because of their restricted mobility within the villages. Provided with an opportunity to work within villages shows a great potential to bring women to work force. It is found in the field survey that women of category-III sample have got limited mobility through MGNREGS. The role of MGNREGS in regenerating rural resource base is praised by many respondents in focus group discussion, who think working for this scheme means to work for government and working for the betterment of their own village. This factor of pride has changed the mind-set of some rural people and encouraged women to work. Rina Dule (aged 27) of Basatpur village has reported harassment of local employers at the time of wage payment as the key discouraging factor. She positively said this factor has refrained her to join in some work. After eight years of starting of MGNREGS in her village she did not hear any single cases of such harassments and finally decided to join MGNREGS in 2014-15. According to another woman, Bimala Murmu of 'A' village:

“It is unusual in our caste not to work outside, but I did not. I am a tuberculosis patient and can't work hard. I applied for MGNREGS work for the first time and got seventeen days of work....I did planation and work of watering the saplings....I am happy that Panchayat has

helped me that much keeping my condition in their consideration.... I had made my mind to leave if harder works were assigned.”

One key informant of Mandiha village told about the exploitation of local contractors and landlords and said that sometimes it relates to sexual exploitation also. As such she has decided not to work under them.

It was assumed that the prime reason of non-participation would be the lack of work opportunity, control on women and the financial condition of the household. The responses of field survey have further been analysed to understand the intersectionality of category-III women. For this, a cross caste analysis has been done

Table: 6.11. Caste –Specific Reason for Not Participating in Other Works by Women

Reason for Working Only in MGNREGS for Women	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
No other work was available Anywhere	24 (25%)	3(75.0%)	0(0.00%)	10(25.0%)
It was restricted to go outside beforehand	21(21.87%)	0(0.00%)	2(100%)	12(30.00%)
Permitted to work within the village only	47(48.96%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	14(35.0%)
Having small children (Less than 2 years of age)	0(0.00%)	1(25.0%)	0(0.00%)	1(2.5%)
No definite reason stated	4(4.17%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	3(7.5%)
Total	96(100%)	4(100%)	2(100%)	40(100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Above Table shows caste-based reasons of women opting to work only for MGNREGS in a whole year. This Table shows the restricted mobility of women for two caste groups, SC and General. The provision of MGNREGS to provide work in a village territory and preferring women to work at a lesser distance have generated positive outcome for the women of these two castes who did not find any opportunity to work earlier. The Table confirms positive boost up given by MGNREGS to rural women across castes.

Social restriction on women’s mobility in Indian rural villages is a long -term concern for policy makers. The restriction types and its intensity differ based on several intersectional characteristics of women such as caste, class, education, employment status etc. Women who have worked only for MGNREGS for the first time are intersectional in terms of caste. Apart from their caste-based identity, categorical intersection is also there. A section of women were not allowed to work outside village, another section was completely restricted to go outside the village beforehand, be it work or for other purposes. A detailed discussion was

conducted with village women to understand the issues which was not adequately addressed through structured questionnaire. Following responses in FGD worth mentioning:

“Earlier there was no provision for work. It is not possible for most of the women of this village to travel and work; Bus service is poor. So there is no other alternative to work within the village. Opportunities are limited here and they are availed by men.”

(Malati Saha ‘D’ Village)

I wanted to work but my in-laws did not allow me to do so for family honour. But when people got to work within the village with a good wage and they saw how our village has been transformed through it, they decided to let me work. It is the work for the betterment of our village.

(Radharani Mandal , ‘C’ Village)

In village, works are limited. Wages too are low. If we go to Bankura for construction work, we get good wage. But travelling to Bankura needs bus fare and cost of food. It takes approximately two and half hours of time one way. So, me and my co-sister used to stay at home only. Hundred days of work has given us a good wage, zero travel cost and opportunity to work and manage household chores together.

(Churamani Saren, ‘A’ Village)

All these responses can be divided into two intersectional classes of women; one group consists of the women workers who have worked for MGNREGS only in a year and who are subjected to limited or no social restrictions to work within the village, but could not go outside the villages. Apart from the social restriction, this class is subjected to the control of some economic factors like cost of travel, amount of wage offered in the village and availability of other employment opportunities etc. Other class refers to the part of sample women workers who have worked only for MGNREGS in the whole year and are subjected to strict social restrictions to work, even within the village.

For first category of women, offer of good wage with zero travel cost is the triggering factor which has motivated them to join MGNREGS. For second category, a sense of pride to join a government scheme, offer to work in a safe and known environment are the initiating factors. Intersections of these classes with caste generates a complex set up which makes the task of MGNREGS implementation tougher.

The analysis so far provides the evidence that all locations/ castes are not homogeneous in terms of imposing control on women even if the other factors (relief, wage, timing, opportunity) remain the same. This analysis paves the way for deeper understanding of intersection of gender and location for better implementation of the scheme. Trend of MGNREGS participation as analysed in earlier chapters suggest that participation is subjected to physiography as well as economic characteristics of the region. As MGNREGS is a demand driven employment scheme, so it is crucial to understand the gendered pattern of demand keeping a concern of locational factors. To understand the gendered pattern of MGNREGS work demand across locations and categories some graphs has been drawn. The purpose of drawing these graphs is as under:

- (i) To understand the pattern of demand by men and women in different agricultural seasons.
- (ii) To understand the seasonal pattern of demand by men and women in two different physiographic locations.
- (iii) To understand the seasonal pattern of demand between men and women who have worked for other works beside MGNREGS in 2014-15 and men and women who have worked only for MGNREGS in year 2014-15.

The following diagram (fig. 9) suggests that there is a relationship between demand for MGNREGS work and agricultural season. Structured questionnaire survey and FGD suggests that:

- (a) The demand of MGNREGS work in kharif season is predominantly placed by women across locations and sample categories. This season exhibits high demand of agricultural labours in nearby areas for which men are the primary job recipients. FGD suggests that women of the villages do not want to lose MGNREGS work when men of the villages are either working on their own land or hired within/outside villages to work in kharif season.
- (b) Contrary to the above situation, job demand by women is lesser in comparison with men across locations and sample categories in Zaid²² season. This is the summer time and very less agricultural practices are carried on in surveyed locations. Men generally remain jobless in this session and they are the primary applicants and recipient of MGNREGS work at that time. Two of the plateau villages are dry in nature and show water crisis in summer season. Two key informants told that managing household work and collection work with lesser availability of water is more time consuming for women in summer. Job demand by women

²²Agricultural crops which are grown in the short duration between Rabi and Kharif crop season, mainly from March to June, are called Zaid crops.

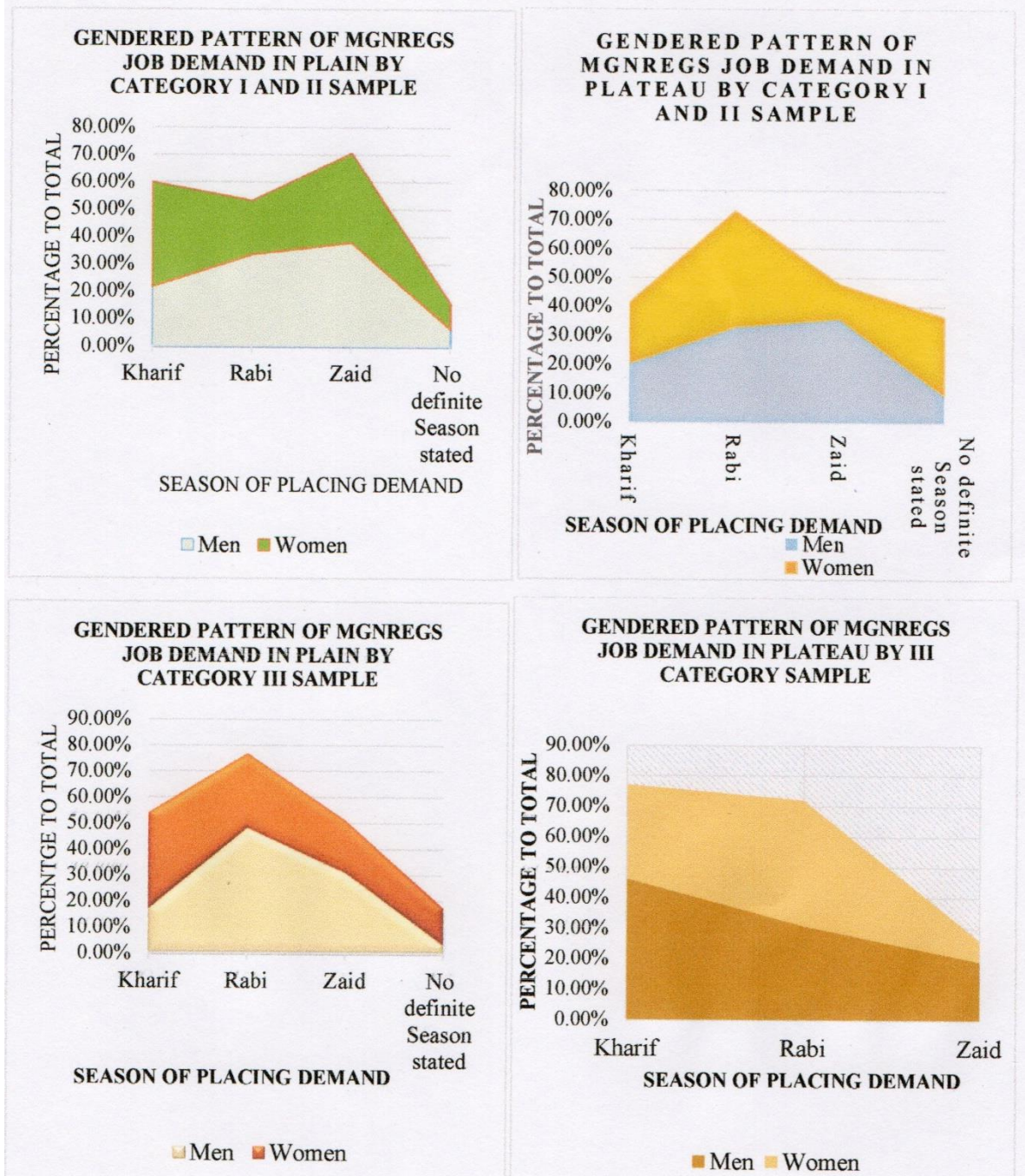
in zaid season is 20.8 percent lesser in plateau than in plain (for category I & II sample) and 13.3 percent lesser in plateau than in plain (for category III sample).

(c) Women in all categories and locations could not make a clear statement about perfect timing of their work demand (they vaguely state the season rather than months for demand). This incident is negligible in the case of men. A detail discussion with village officials and respondents suggests that women are not encouraged to come and place job demand on their own in most of the cases. Social restriction on women's mobility is the other contributing factor. The work demand in most of the cases is placed by male member of the family. A major part of women respondents said that their participation process is always assisted by men.

(d) The selection of two different physiographic locations has been done with a hypothesis that participation and benefits related with MGNREGS would be different in accordance with geographical characteristics. The two selected locations are distinct in terms of topographical and socio-economical characteristics. In plain the number of out-migrating respondents is comparatively lesser than the plateau. High intensity of cropping and demand of agricultural labours within village remains high in plain. Plateau, on the other hand exhibits high number of male outmigration in agricultural season because of lack of agricultural opportunities within the village. This factor accelerates high job demand by women in kharif season across categories. In plain, men are busy in that time for agricultural activities and women places the demand. In plateau, men out-migrates and women places the demand to work.

(e) A comparison has been done between women who have worked in MGNREGS together with other works and women who have worked only for MGNREGS. It was expected at the beginning that for second category there must be more or less equal demand throughout the year. But findings of structured questionnaire, FGD and case studies have remained different. Women shows more or less similar pattern of demand in different seasons. However, the result is different for two locations.

Graph: 4. Gendered Pattern of MGNREGS Job Demand by Different Category of Samples



Source: Field Survey , 2015.

(B) The intersection of Caste and Gender in Attaining MGNREGS Benefits

Benefits achieved from MGNREGS can be direct or indirect; direct benefits include employment, wage earning, benefits from MGNREGS created assets and indirect benefits include introduction with public sphere, reduced restriction on women, control over savings and household decision making and exchange of gendered roles which may result some rest and comfort to women. Since assessing these indirect benefits with an intersectional approach

is a complex task, responses of focussed group discussions are used simultaneously with quantitative data.

(i) Intersection of Caste, Gender and Location in Work Consistency of MGNREGS

It is an accepted fact that MGNREGS has played an exemplary role in reducing vulnerability of rural households, especially women. Apart from economic one, MGNREGA can be accounted for “social gains” for women (Basu, 2012). Sjoblom and Farrington (2008:3) stated; *“Another indirect benefit is that it has acted as an insurance for rural workers against unemployment, although the increase in employment and income generated may not be substantial. Furthermore, it has stabilised income for rural households as more work has been provided in the agricultural off-period (April to July). There is evidence that this has assisted income-smoothing among the poor and reduced their need to make adjustments by cutting down on food expenditure, sale of livestock, or resorting to taking expensive loans”*.

Various kind of benefits that are related with successful implementation of MGNREGS is essentially related with the number of available workdays. For this, a comparison of workdays is done between women of all castes. Table 6.12 shows the comparison across castes.

Table: 6.12. Comparison between Gender and Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays

caste	MGNREGS Workdays by Women				MGNREGS Workdays by Men			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.
SC	32.5153	196	14.231	43.767	35.008	121	17.333	49.511
ST	26.7059	17	11.373	42.586	28.142	14	7.304	25.954
OBC	22.0000	5	9.746	44.300	15.000	4	3.102	20.7
Gen	34.4184	98	15.614	45.365	32.627	110	12.899	39.534
Total	32.6266	316	14.592	44.724	33.249	249	15.160	45.5954

Source: Filed Survey, 2015.

Co-efficient value of standard deviation suggests that the highest intra-caste stability of MGNREGS workdays is found among tribal women and lowest is found among general caste women. This result is a combination of several factors like level of restrictions imposed on women, exposure to public sphere of work and government policies regarding backward class

employment etc. These factors have a positive impact in the case of tribal women in comparison with the women belonging to general caste in a rural setting. If the comparison is done across men and women, men are having more consistency in getting MGNREGS work than women except scheduled castes. Scheduled caste population represents 56.10 percent of the sample. Other backward classes are not adequately represented as they did not satisfy the criteria of sampling, i. e. more than 15 days of MGNREGS work in the year 2014-15. The consistency of work for Scheduled Caste women is a result of two factors; a) Government policy to fulfil the quota of at least one third women beneficiaries to total and b) Government policy to bring the marginalised classes into the mainstream through MGNREGS. These two intermingling factors have created consistent opportunity of Scheduled Caste women in the study area.

A cross locational analysis has been done to see the consistency of participation in plain and plateau to understand the locational extent of controlling factors of MGNREGS participation. It is evident from the Table 6.12 that women belonging to Scheduled Caste category are more consistent than men in MGNREGS work. This analysis is done to identify the intersectionality of women across caste, gender and location. In plain, women's consistency of work is more than men for Scheduled Caste and General category. For Plateau, the consistency of work is almost similar for men and women for Scheduled Caste category but for general category, men are more consistent in MGNREGS work. This analysis supports the analysis of the FGD responses in the earlier chapter which indicate about women's role as a secondary recipients of MGNREGS work in the plateau area.

Table: 6.13. Comparison between Gender and Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays in Plain

caste	MGNREGS Workdays by Women				MGNREGS Workdays by Men			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.
SC	33.6129	124	14.76	43.92	39.16	61	19.75	50.44
ST	30.8000	5	14.34	46.56	35.00	3	6.92	19.79
OBC	20.0000	4	10.00	50.00	15.00	3	7	52.00
Gen	35.9143	70	16.48	45.89	33.96	51	16.09	47.39
Total	34.0690	203	15.38	45.14	36.19	118	18.16	50.19

Table: 6.14. Comparison between Gender and Caste Categories on the basis of MGNREGS Workdays in Plateau

caste	MGNREGS Workdays by Women				MGNREGS Workdays by Men			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Co-Efficient of S.D.
SC	30.62	72	13.14	42.934	30.78	60	13.34	43.36
ST	25.00	12	10.12	40.506	26.27	11	6.46	24.61
OBC	30.00	1	---	-----	15.00	1	----	-----
Gen	30.67	28	12.70	41.41	31.47	59	9.29	29.53
Total	30.03	113	12.71	42.32	30.59	131	11.24	36.75

Source: Field Survey, 2015

The reason of these locational differences across men and women of different castes are observed as follows:

(a) Job availability determines the women's work consistency. Lack of other work opportunities have made women a secondary recipient of MGNREGS work. Caste specific analysis shows in all two locations, consistency of women of Scheduled Caste category is higher than men. FGD and interviews with village officials suggest that this situation is the reflection of authority's role in bringing marginalized women into the workforce.

(b) In plain, social restrictions are stricter and general caste women are subjected to more restrictions than that of the women of backward classes. Still the women of general caste got consistent workdays as compared to men. It is because of the existence of other work opportunities in plain and lesser restrictions on women for working in a known environment.

(c) The work availability factor (for other works) for men is a strong determinant of women's MGNREGS participation in plateau. Fewer work opportunities for men have also contributed negatively for women in plateau.

(ii) Caste- Category Intersection of Women Reported Livelihood Improvement by MGNREGS

Though it is difficult to measure the livelihood benefits of MGNREGS with an intersectional approach, an attempt has been taken to relate between the benefits achieved by women across castes. The responses received are divided into some broad categories. The benefits which are associated with MGNREGS work are opportunity to work and earn, better savings, loan repayment, ease of livelihood by MGNREGS created ponds and roads and micro-irrigation projects etc. The direct benefit of MGNREGS is earning. An attempt has been undertaken to understand the pattern of spending of MGNREGS wage. For this purpose, responses related to identify major head of spending is recorded for category -III workers. This is because the respondents will give more definite answers about their wage spending as they are not regular workers and got their wages through bank. It was expected that they will be more definite about the reason of their withdrawal of money from bank. In most of the cases, the earning from MGNREGS is spent in fulfilling the daily needs of the household. Following Table shows the major category of wage spending by category III samples.

Table: 6.15: Major Head of Spending of MGNREGS Wage by Category III Sample

Category of spending of MGNREGS Wage	PLAIN		PLATEAU	
	% to Total Men	% to Total Women	% to Total Men	% to Total Women
To bear regular family expenses	52.9	28.1	28.9	40.4
To purchase required things that are not regular	0	39.3	0	0
Savings for future	5.9	2.2	0	1.9
Expense for cultivation	5.9	0	0	0
Personal expenses	11.8	3.4	0	0
Educational expenses	11.8	2.2	0	0
Repairing of house	5.9	1.1	0	0
Medical expenses	5.9	0	0	0
Repay of loan amount	0	1.1	71.1	3.8
Savings for daughter's marriage	0	1.1	0	0
Can't spend it as per my own wish	0	21.3	0	53.8
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

The repay of loan amount is evident among men in plateau while the repayment of loan is almost absent in plain. FGD suggests about incidence of more indebtedness in plateau due to fewer work opportunities. In this context, following responses are worth mentioning:

“It was difficult for us to fulfil the need of our household before hundred days of work. It has secured us food. Moreover, now shop keepers do not refuse us to borrow household essentials, as they know we will repay it as soon as we get wage”.

(Bami Das, female, age-43, in ‘A’ village)

“The earning from MGNREGS is not sufficient; I don’t know how it was spent but it went all to meet household need”.

(Sonamani Soren, female, age 29, in of ‘D’ Village)

Nilima Mandal of ‘A’ Village told that MGNREGS has reduced her vulnerability to a great extent. Now she is able to buy food items for themselves. Similar response was received from Kamala Mandal of the same village, who added that MGNREGS has helped her to send her children in a nearest coaching centre.

Around 48% of FGD respondents of Scheduled Caste communities and 54% respondents of Scheduled Tribe communities have reported buying food items as their major benefit of MGNREGS earning. Repayment of loan and spending on children’s education are two significant outcomes of MGNREGS participation for general category respondents.

(iii) Caste- Power Intersection for Other Benefits from MGNREGS

Other benefits from MGNREGS include rise in the power of decision making, control over savings, better livelihood using MGNREGS resources and frequent access to public sphere. Previous discussion suggests that initiation of women in intra-household decision making has been started through MGNREGS intervention. Women who have not been a part of household decisions, started providing their opinion. The power and position of women within household were a significant measure of women participation in MGNREGS as well as is a major controlling factor for attaining the benefits. Though question of power and position of women are directly linked with control over women’s earning, still the other dimensions are also significant. It controls women’s mobility and their access to MGNREGS created CPR’s indirectly.

It has already been discussed how women's single access to bank is denied by existing cultural set up and how women are subjected to control over their own earning and savings. Focussed group discussion clearly indicates that though women have started experiencing the facility of banking and started enjoying an identity of official wage earner, MGNREGS has limited scope to change the nature of control on women's earning and savings.

And yet the role of MGNREGS in shaping women's livelihood is found to be positive in the study area. 35 per cent of the Scheduled Caste women respondents in FGD have stated that the newly constructed water harvesting features have helped to sustain a kitchen garden in their households. Some of them are for self-consumption and some of them are for profit earning. Still, for whatever purpose the kitchen garden has been used, it is adding more comfort to the livelihood of women, who bear the primary responsibility of cooking and managing food when there are no earning days. Kusum Mandi, a tribal woman of 'A' village has stated how a small kitchen garden has helped her immensely to provide food for the entire household. In a detailed interview, she said:

"A new pond was built near my house three years back and using that water I have started kitchen gardening throughout the year. Earlier it was for rainy months only. Now I raise seasonal vegetables using all adjacent land and roof of the household. Now I can feed vegetables to my children round the year I am so happy about it."

Some Scheduled Caste women in the surveyed location (especially in Haludkanali village) have mentioned earning good profit from their household kitchen garden raised with the help of MGNREGS generated water bodies. 'Hapadoba', a local name for MGNREGS created micro-irrigation services in the land of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes which have made remarkable changes in household food security and income. This work has undoubtedly benefitted marginalized women to a great extent. Village women of all caste categories have reported positive change in their livelihood regarding collection works. Plantation ground and lots of newly harvested/ regenerated water bodies have helped them to save time for collection of water. Similarly, the newly built roads through MGNREGS have made significant contribution to ease the struggle of women and wood /water collectors belonging to all castes.

It is found in FGD that unlike direct benefits of MGNREGS (workdays and earning), indirect benefits are in most cases have remained caste-neutral except the projects that are meant for Scheduled Caste / Scheduled Tribes only (like *Hapadoba*). Very little caste difference is seen in terms of indirect benefits as these assets are common to everybody. For this reasons, caste

based Tables are not calculated for indirect benefits. Following table shows a cross gender analysis of impact of MGNREGS related assets.

Table: 6.16. Cross Gender Improvement of Livelihood through MGNREGS Created Assets

Gender	Help from MGNREGS Created Assets								Total
	Ponds helps in irrigation	Pods helps in bathing	Ponds helps in bathing of cattle's	Roads helps in ease for collection	Plantation Provides nutritious food to children	Levelled Ground helps in children can play	Toilet Helped to maintain privacy	Micro-irrigation help to raise kitchen Garden	
Women	9	2	12	8	2	2	1	4	40
	22.5%	5.0%	30.0%	20.0%	5.0%	5.0%	2.5%	10.0%	100.0%
Men	7	2	9	9	1	4	2	6	40
	17.5%	5.0%	22.5%	22.5%	2.5%	10.0%	5.0%	15.0%	100.0%
Total	16	4	21	17	3	6	3	10	80
	20.0%	5.0%	26.3%	21.3%	3.8%	7.5%	3.8%	12.5%	100.0%

Source: Focussed Group Discussion, 2015

Above Table shows that MGNREGS created ponds have improved the livelihood of villagers specially women in many ways. Starting from irrigational facility, provision to bath cattle within village, enhanced income and food security, maintaining a kitchen garden or irrigated fields and less time for collection work etc. have helped women to a great extent. Some toilets were built in Basatpur Village in convergence with “Nirmal Bharat” scheme which has helped to maintain privacy of the women.

Gendered practices that emerge from labour and livelihood norms are heterogeneous and ununiformed in nature. This heterogeneity of practices is the products of stratification structures. Above discussion on intersectional social realities of MGNREGS workers attempts to locate women in different segments among which caste, work status and location are having foremost importance. MGNREGS has shown a positive trend of inclusive livelihood development for backward class women. Started from livelihood opportunities and employment generation, this scheme has rendered a great contribution on women of different segments in terms of household decision making and securing food to the household members. While intra-locational analysis suggests that MGNREGS and enhancement of benefits are subjected to topographic control, analysis across working groups suggests women who have entered labour market through MGNREGS are subjected to equal benefits

from it. Social and cultural characteristics have a great control over women in accrual of participation and benefits across caste groups.

The study on intersectionality of women in MGNREGS provides adequate example of accelerating factors of MGNREGS participation and benefits highlighting the restrictions and obstacles at the same time. A policy with a single framework for all is not a complete solution to women's problems due to intersectional attributes of women participants. Therefore, it can be concluded that viewing MGNREGS on a regionally contextualized basis would make this scheme more successful in terms of bringing women in the labour force.

Chapter-7

Summary and Conclusion

Introductory part of this thesis provides a brief introduction of the MGNREGS, its features, and entitlements and also gives an idea about the logic of case selection, selection of the study area, and procedure of sampling, distribution of samples across categories, conceptual note and the theoretical background of the study. The marginality types and their overlap, social stratification, cultural poverty and the intersectionality have provided the theoretical bases for the study.

This is followed by the review of literature dealing with an extensive survey of literature related with MGNREGA and tried to find out the issues that are relevant and not been recently addressed adequately. The research gaps are identified in the areas like exercising right by rural women and its constraints, linking of MGNREGS created rural assets with women's livelihood and constraints to gain the sustainable rural assets through MGNREGA etc.

It is felt that there is a remarkable dearth of literatures which have pointed out the physical diversity with socio-cultural normative and women's participation in MGNREGS. Since this study was oriented to see the understanding of the extent to which physiographic characteristics of a region have a bearing over MGNREGS's implementation and its outcomes, the questions were addressed through a quantitative, qualitative and mixed approach of research.

The state of West Bengal is selected for the study after a detailed analysis of composite score calculated on the basis of two MGNREGS related indicators (percentage increase in women persondays to total between 2006-07 to 2011-12 and increase in MGNREGS wage rate between 2006-07 to 2011-12 in rupees/day).

The entire state has been divided into three Gender Development Index categories and one (Bankura) from the lowest category and another (Bardhaman) from the high category have been selected. Since this selection was done to fulfil the purpose of the research to relate gendered marginalities with physiographic characteristics hence another criteria for district selection was used which was the presence of both the plain and the plateau in its

geographical extent. Selected districts are divided in broad physiographic units; that is, the presence of plain in the eastern part and plateau in the western part of both selected districts.

One block from each physiographic unit is chosen from each district. Out of the four chosen blocks, one village from each block is selected through the process of filtering.

Two types of indicators have been chosen to see how the implementation of MGNREGA is related with women's participation and their benefits from this initiative in different physiographic locations. These are general indicators for assessing the performance of MGNREGA and indicators related with women. The general indicators are taken for this purpose are (i) Number of persons demanded MGNREGS work out of total registered persons (ii) Number of persons received MGNREGS work out of total job demanding persons (iii) Households completed 100 days of employment out of total job receiving households and (iv) Person days generated per job demanding persons. Indicators related with women includes four indicators as well. These are (i) Share of women skilled worker to total skilled worker (ii) Share of women unskilled workers to total unskilled workers (iii) Share of active women workers to total registered women workers and (iv) Share of active women workers having bank account on their own name to total active women workers. On the basis of the analysis of these two sets of indicators, the findings are summarized as under:

(i) Though there is theoretical reservation of women as per MGNREGA guidelines (1/3rd of the direct beneficiaries should be women), analysis of secondary data shows that MGNREGS has not fulfilled its promise regarding 33 per cent reservation for women workers. Average share of skilled and unskilled women workers to total is far less than 33 per cent in both the locations. This result indicated marginalization of women in terms of participation in MGNREGS.

(ii) Analysis of the secondary data points out that there prevail differences between plains and plateau region as far as implementation of MGNREGA and direct benefits resulting from it are concerned. These differences are sometimes contradictory, for example with fewer work opportunities, plateau was expected to place more work demand than plain, but secondary data suggests 33.98 percent of registered person placed demand for MGNREGA work whereas in plain 50.46 percent of registered person had placed the work demand. Another contradiction is seen in the case of persondays generation where lesser demand has created more persondays per job demand (21.56 persondays per job demanding person in plateau and 18.97 persondays per job demanding person in plain). This should not be the case

as MGNREGA is a demand -driven scheme in which more demand of work signifies generation of more person days.

To see whether this contradiction exists in ground, an analysis of primary data has been done to see the extent of differences between two physiographic regions. An attempt has also been made to understand the difference between gendered categories of the sample taken for the study. These differences have been captured through primary survey-based indicators like number of workdays generated, share of men and women across workday's categories, distance of regular and MGNREGS worksites in plain and plateau region. FGD responses were also used to get the information on the same.

Following are the findings of the analysis of primary data:

(i) Share of workdays between plain and plateau region shows that the average number of workdays is more in the case of plains than in plateaus. The share of workdays by women is also more in plains. The male-female division of workdays shows that women have worked for more numbers of days than their men counterpart in the plains. Women in plain have shared the 61.82 percent of the total workdays generated in surveyed year. The situation is just opposite in the plateaus, where women have shared 45.85 percent of total workdays.

(ii) Both of the locations reveal that the promise of hundred days of employment is far away from reality. Modal class of workdays shows 21-40 days in both plain and plateau. This is consistent across gender.

(iii) A comparison between the distance of regular worksites and MGNREGA worksites shows that the distance covered by women in plains is lesser than the distance women traverse in the plateaus. Preference for home-based work among women is prevalent in plateaus while very few women in plain have expressed their preference for it. Mere occurrence of home-based work for women in plains contradicts the FGD responses of women in plain who have repeatedly indicated stricter control on their mobility, especially in the case of working in an unknown environment. Structured questionnaire survey and case studies explain this unwillingness as a result of the less remuneration of these works and presence of consistent work days for men and a steady source of income in plain. This response was generated through women's marginalization in public spaces. On the other hand, women in plateaus have revealed that they prefer home based work as it is relatively time saving and also saves their energy in walking through rugged terrain. Inconsistency of men's income as a result of fewer work opportunity is another reason.

(iv) The level of satisfaction related to MGNREGA work for women is different in plains and plateaus. While women in plain have reported enjoying lesser control on their mobility to do MGNREGA work as worksites are nearer and known and wage is comparatively high, women in plateau have expressed their satisfaction since they get better wages than their regular work and have to work for shorter duration. (Though official work hour for MGNREGS work is 8 hours but it ranges from 4 to 5 hours in plateau and lighter works like plantation, digging in shallow depth etc. are assigned to women because of sloppy and rugged terrain).

In primary survey it was found that out of total 18589 MGNREGS workdays generated in study area, 10310 workdays are covered by women (55.46 percent) in all four locations. A break up of data based on physiographic indicators shows the share of women to total workdays is 61.82 percent in plain and 45.85 percent in plateau. The distributional characteristics of workdays generate three important observations; first: men-women difference of MGNREGS workdays is lesser in plateau than in the plain. Second, the overall performance of plateau is poorer than the plain and lastly, there is marked difference between women's share of employment between the plateau and the plain. It is much higher in plain. All these observations indicate that there prevails variations in terms of MGNREGS participation in terms of men and women and across location.

The causes of the difference in work demand as reflected by structured questionnaire survey and Focussed Group Discussions are difference in available work opportunity in plain and plateau, stable income by village men, social restrictions on women etc. in plain and plateau. Plain is having better implementation of MGNREGA than in plateau in the field areas.

It was assumed before starting of the thesis that benefits from MGNREGA will be different in two physiographic setting though socio-economic characteristics are the same. Structured questionnaire survey, focussed group discussions and case studies have provided an indication about diversified benefits of MGNREGA. Positive outcomes of MGNREGA includes the fact that in certain instances it has provided the only opportunity to work and earn as reported by for 1/3rd of individual respondent, enhanced level of income and promotion of village livelihood through creation of rural assets. These outcomes are having varied occurrence in two physiographic settings. These are:

(i) 33.33 percent of total samples in plain and 36.88 percent of total samples in plateau have worked only in MGNREGS in the entire survey year. This provides a clue that MGNREGS is successful in providing some employment days (35 mean workdays in plain and 30 mean workdays in plateau) to the rural unemployed people. Analysis of workdays shows that the work has not been provided to an optimum level i.e., promised hundred days. Intra-category distribution of workdays shows that women have got more opportunities to work in the plains as compared to women in the plateau.

(ii) In both of the locations, women have got lesser income from MGNREGA than men. Men got more income from MGNREGS in plain than in plateau because of the better implementation of the scheme and higher allocation of workdays. In plateau region men have got lesser income as compared to men from the plains but higher income than women in plateaus as the implementation in plateau is not good as in the plains and also, in the plateaus, men are the primary recipients of MGNREGA work (because of the presence of fewer alternative work opportunity).

(iii) MGNREGA promotes creation of rural assets through local demand. Demand of assets is different in two physiographic settings. Demand is found at par with the physiography and the existing economic opportunities in the region. For example, pond is the most useful asset as per the responses of respondents in plains but micro-irrigation is preferred in plateaus. FGD reveals that plain areas are dominated by agriculture and kitchen gardens in every household. Therefore, ponds are the most desirable assets. The high water level helps in ensuring the availability of water throughout the year in plains while in plateaus they usually dried up. Limited agricultural practices along with dried pond leads to a preference of micro-irrigation over pond in the plateau region.

(iv) An analysis of spending of income shows that women in plateaus, who are subjected to lesser mobility control, are controlled more in the case of spending of their earning and reverse situation is found in plain. The contribution of MGNREGS to a reduction in the level of indebtedness is praiseworthy in plateaus. Women FGD respondents in plain have reported to spend their income to buy T.V, radio, internet pack, mobile phone, fan, cycle etc. The regularity of income earned by men's work is found to be key determinant of this type of spending pattern. the availability of regular income to men means that income of women is not considered essential in plains While in plateaus, the higher level of indebtedness, less work opportunity to men, absence of kitchen garden due to deep water table etc. are

responsible for lesser livelihood options and compels men to count on women's income as essential and thus the control of men over women's income is established. As an outcome, women workers in plateau are often subjected to deprivation from their own earnings.

This thesis pertaining to see how the promises of MGNREGA are translated on the ground. In field study, enormous effort has been given to identify the gap between the narratives of respondents and the key informants with the narratives of village officials. This chapter is based on qualitative methods like focussed group discussion, case studies, participant observation and observations from field. This chapter has identified significant gaps in narratives related to community dynamics of women. The participation of women in official procedures and village meetings related with MGNREGA is subjected to strict patriarchal societal norms. These norms are found to be stricter in plains than in the plateaus. Apart from the regional differences in the levels of patriarchy, this chapter has identified that there is a significant gap in the interpretation of success of MGNREGA at an official level and respondent level. However, some narratives point towards the affirmative impact of MGNREGA by transforming the livelihood of women to a great extent. Responses related to some socio-political aspects like marginalization of women in MGNREGS by local contractors / authority / society has also been discussed using direct narrations.

A part of the thesis deals with changes in household and community attributes of women MGNREGA workers and tried to answer the question whether there is any change in household as well as community gender dynamics because of the intervention of MGNREGA. It was expected that proper implementation of MGNREGS will bring some positive changes in household as well as community gender dynamics. An attempt was made to analyse responses for identification of changes in household gender dynamics.

For marking the changes in household gender dynamics, two indicators were used: the changes in household decision making process and changes in household pattern of sharing work. It was difficult to get the answers as to whether MGNREGS brought some changes in decision making processes. So the entire decision making is divided into two sub categories: a) decision regarding daily household activities such as taking the decision about daily food, children's education, savings, to buy something new for household and house repair etc. and b) decisions that are related with MGNREGA such as who will place the demand, who will attend the meeting, who will work if job is provided and who will go to the panchayat to update about the upcoming work etc.).

Majority of men and women have reported about household decision taken through the process of discussion with family members. For Focused Group Discussions (FGD) conducted with 40 women reveal that the decision taken through discussion often includes the other male member of the family and the roles played by women are mostly passive in the case of daily household decisions. In the case of daily household activities, the independent decisions of women or joint decisions by husband -wife as a unit are very few whereas the joint participation is highest in the case of MGNREGS related decisions. FGD and case studies suggests that three factors play an intricate role behind this; separate job card (sometimes 3/4 job card in a household (mostly in joint families), preference of women workers by village authority and less time seeking work for women only. All these factors have facilitated the inclusion of women in decision making process.

Change in household gender dynamics is measured by the change in the pattern of household work sharing. Field survey shows that majority of women did not get any help while working for MGNREGA; even at the time of working for the first time and found it difficult to manage household chores along with outside work. Women who have worked only under MGNREGA have got more help from male members of their family than others. Work sharing by male members of the family has significant relationship with caste, structure of the family and social norms. FGD finding indicates that women who did not work earlier (category III samples) generally do not have a plan to manage the regular household chores together with work so they get some help from members of their family. Contrary to this, women who worked regularly other than MGNREGS (category I and II samples) showed better time management strategies to finish household work on time so they get comparatively lesser help from other members of the family. Apart from household gender dynamics, changes in community gender dynamics are also seen through opening of bank accounts and visits to Panchayat office. Majority of respondents (both men and women) have opened a bank account to get MGNREGS wage but the opening of account has helped women more than men.

Responses regarding participation in village meeting and MGNREGS related meeting show that there prevails a sharp gendered contradiction. Men are found to be more interested to join in village meetings than MGNREGS meetings. However, the situation is reverse for women. FGD and interviews of village officials suggests that village authority try to bring women in MGNREGS meetings to follow the official guidelines. Apart from this factor, convenient timing and less familial restriction on women contribute positively in women's participation

in MGNREGA meetings. Nevertheless, the presence in meeting does not essentially reflect the active participation of women. Men's attendance in meetings (both MGNREGS and other) is generally related with incidence of public speaking while it is not the case for women. It can be understood that though MGNREGS has helped to bring women to the meeting, but they mostly play a passive role. This situation has not changed through MGNREGS's intervention. Observation of MGNREGA meetings and FGD suggests that women's involvement in meeting is controlled more by social norms than physiographical characteristics.

This thesis tries to explore intersectional social realities of MGNREGS workers and attempts to locate them in terms of participation and benefits. The following points sum up the discussion.

(i) MGNREGS has shown a positive trend of inclusive livelihood development for women of backward classes, especially scheduled caste women. Starting from providing livelihood opportunities through employment generation, this scheme has rendered a great contribution to women of different segments in terms of household decision making and ensuring food and reduced indebtedness. While intra-locational analysis suggests that MGNREGS implementation and its benefits are subjected to topographic control, analysis across categorical sample suggests that women who have entered labour market through MGNREGS (category-III) have got more privileges than other categories (category-I and II) .

(ii) Nearly half of scheduled caste women showed partially restricted mobility for which they were not able to work beforehand. Nearly 30 percent of general caste women sample have showed 100 percent mobility restrictions. MGNREGS has worked like a boon to these women for whom no work option was available because of the familial restrictions. For these women, MGNREGS has undoubtedly opened a new space of work and reduced their marginalization to a great extent.

(iii) The locational intersectionality of women is found to be significant in terms of agricultural seasons. In kharif season, women have placed more work demand across locations and sample categories. High demand of agricultural labour within and outside village has caused men's absence and women's absorption in MGNREGS work. Contrary to this, job demand by women is lesser in comparison with men across locations and sample categories in Zaid season. This is the summer time and very less agricultural practices are

done in surveyed locations. Men generally remain jobless in this session and they are the primary applicants and recipient of MGNREGS work during this time. Zaid season shows women's marginalization in MGNREGS participation.

(iv) Inter-caste and inter-locational difference are seen in terms of women's participation in official registration and demand process.

(v) Inter-caste analysis of work consistency for women shows that women belonging to scheduled tribe and scheduled caste show more consistency of MGNREGS workdays than other castes though the work consistency of women is lesser than men in all locations. So it can be concluded that MGNREGS has done a magnificent work in bringing the rural marginalized women into public sphere of work.

(vi) Apart from the direct benefit of work and earning, not much intersectional benefits are seen in terms of MGNREGS created resources. Qualitative study of responses indicates about the impact of caste -gender-power relation within household but it was not very clear because of the lack of similar responses.

The study concludes that physiographical characteristics of a region is having a great bearing over the implementation of MGNREGA and its outcomes. A homogeneous policy framework inadequately addresses heterogeneous mass of population. The impact of theoretical homogeneity of MGNREGA over diversified mass of rural women has resulted in inadequate implementation and benefits. The study shows average demand of work, average workdays, and participation of women in official procedures of MGNREGA differ in the plains and the plateaus. Accordingly, outcomes are different.

The analysis of physiographic control shows elements of physiography is having significant bearing over gendered marginalization process. It determines work availability and other economic opportunities available to men and women and direct benefits are essentially linked with nature of economic opportunities available to men.

This study has identified women's marginalization starts right from the base level, at the time of placing demand for MGNREGA work. Starting with the deprivation in doing independent official procedures, women are marginalized in terms of workdays, attending village meeting

and independent spending of their earned wages within and outside their household. Entire study has indicated the degree of women's marginalization depends on women's location and related social norms. To reiterate, physiography is found to be linked with control on mobility of women, control on their public speaking habit and control on their own earning. The cross-cutting of physiographical characteristics of the region with diversified socio-cultural attributes has rendered a great impact on women's marginalization in a public policy like MGNREGA, its implementation and benefits.

Focussed group discussions and case studies suggest that though MGNREGA has made some promises for rural women, but their translation on the ground has remained inadequate. Sometimes, the scheme has failed to reach its inherent idea of inclusive growth. Official efforts are seen to be limited to ensure the number of women workers that are required as per official guidelines rather than ensuring considerable number of workdays to them. The thrust is often seen to be limited within 'numbers' or 'percentage' than the meaningful participation.

Similar findings relate to the incidence of women's attendance in village meeting. Mere attendance of women with passive participation indicates a strong existence of gendered marginalization within the entire process. Rural assets related responses show that there is some mismatch in official narrations with the narrations of the respondents. These mismatches are not conducive for women's livelihood in a rural setting as women's livelihood is found to be significantly affected by MGNREGA generated common property resources.

And yet, MGNREGA has definitely brought positive changes in household and community gender dynamics. Women have started to be included in intra-household decision making process by intervention of MGNREGA. Though the responses were not significantly positive, but they have definitely marked some positive initiation. Similarly, MGNREGA has reduced the level of marginality of women in public places by bringing them in meetings. Though women in the villages are found to be away from the effective participation and facing marginalization in meetings, but MGNREGA has ensured their presence in democratic level which was essentially 'men's space' few years ago. MGNREGA has transformed this 'men's space' to 'our space' which is unquestionably a significant achievement.

Besides special provisions for socially marginalized classes like scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, MGNREGA has not provided any special scope to unprivileged women having intersectional identity. The intersectionality of women has not been addressed in the entire process for which the policy has got insufficient results. The effect of intersectionality of women is seen more in terms of their participation than benefits from the scheme.

It can be concluded from the discussion that MGNREGA has played somewhat positive role in reducing gendered marginalities in the field areas. Though some inadequacies are found in policy implementation, overall impact of MGNREGS on women is worth noticing.

REFERENCES

Abraham, V. (2017). Stagnant Employment Growth: Last Three Years May Have Been the Worst. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 52(38,) 23
September. <https://www.epw.in/journal/2017/38/commentary/stagnant-employment-growth.html>

Abraham, V. (2013). Missing Labour or Consistent "De-Feminisation"? *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(31), 03 August. <https://www.epw.in/journal/2013/31/special-articles/missing-labour-or-consistent-de-feminisation.html>

Adcock, C.S. (2013). *The limits of tolerance: Indian secularism and the politics of religious freedom*. Oxford University Press. New York.

Afridi, F., 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: University of Wisconsin.

Afridi, F., Mukhopadhyay, A., & Sahoo, S. (2016). Female labour force participation and child education in India: Evidence from the national rural employment guarantee scheme. *IZA Journal of Labour and Development*, 5(7).

Agarwal, B. (1997). Bargaining and gender relations: Within and beyond the Household. *Feminist Economics*, 3(1), 1–51. doi:10.1080/135457097338799. http://www.binaagarwal.com/downloads/apapers/bargaining_and_gender_relations.pdf.

Agarwal, B. (1997). Bargaining and gender relations within and beyond the household. *Feminist Economics*, 3(1), 1–51. doi:10.1080/135457097338799

Agarwal, B. (2010). *Gender and green governance: The political economy of women's presence within and beyond community Forestry*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Agarwal, S., & Devi, M. M. (2015). Empowerment of women through MGNREGA with reference to Chhattisgarh. *Indian Journal of Applied Research*, 5, 657–659.

Akerlof, A. (1999). Identity and the Economics of Organizations. George and Kranton, E. Rachel. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19(1), 9–32.

Alam, M.S. (2009). Is relative size of minority population linked to underdevelopment? *Economic & Political Weekly*, 44(48), 17–21.

Ambasta, P., Vijay, S.P.S., & Shah, M. (2008). Two years of NREGA: The road ahead. *Economic and Political Weekly*. (43). 41-50.

Ananta, KrN, (2016) Empowerment effects of the MGNREGA on women workers: A case study of four village panchayats of Majuli, Jorhat district. *South Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Water Studies*, 3: 62-69.

Andersen, J., Larsen, J.E. (1998) Gender, Poverty and Empowerment. *Critical Social Policy*, 18 (55), 241–258.

Azhagaiah, R. (2014). Impact of MGNREGA on the economic wellbeing of unskilled workers: Evidence from Puducherry region. *Pacific Business Review International*, 6(10).

Banerjee, S., & Ghosh, N. (2018). Introduction. Debating intersectionalities: Challenges for a methodological framework. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal*, (19). doi:[10.4000/samaj.4745](https://doi.org/10.4000/samaj.4745)

Barnes, B., Ernst, S., & Hyde, K. (1999). *Differences in groups: Heterogeneity and homogeneity. An introduction to groupwork. Basic texts in counselling and psychotherapy.* Palgrave. doi:[10.1007/978-1-349-90745-8_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-90745-8_7).

Barron, F. Harrington, D.M. (1981). Creativity, Intelligence, and Personality. *Annual Review of Psychology*, (32), 439-476 <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/abs/10.1146/annurev.ps.32.020181.002255>

Bassi, Nitin & M, Dinesh. (2010). NREGA and Rural Water Management in India: Improving the Welfare Effects. [IRAP Occasional Paper No. 3]. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/271832515_NREGA_and_Rural_Water_Management_in_India_Improving_the_Welfare_Effects/link/54d310140cf28e06972761c9/download

Basu, M.A. (2012). More benefits than cost: For women, the NREGA would bring important social gains. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/more-benefit-than-cost-for-women-the-nrega-would-bring-important-social-gains/cid/445254>

Berg, R. P., Yang, S. C. S., & Zanna, L. (2012). *Public investment in resource-abundant developing countries* [IMF working paper No. 12/274]. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2016/12/31/Public-Investment-in-Resource-Abundant-Developing-Countries-40105>

Bhatty, K. (2006). Employment guarantee and child rights. *Economic and Political Weekly*, May, 20, 1965–1967.

Bishnoi, R., Singh, P. K., Dubey, S., V., & Sangeetha. (2014). Gender Roles in Crop and Animal Husbandry Practices and Household Activities with respect to Changing Climate in Arid Ecosystem. *Indian Research Journal of Extension Education*, (50), 1–3.

Blood, R.O., Jr., & Wolfe, D.M. (1960). *Husbands and wives: The dynamics of family living*. Glencoe: Free Press.

Boserup, E. (1970). *Women's role in economic development*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Brah, A. & Phoenix, A. (2004). Ain't I A woman? Revisiting intersectionality. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(3), 75–86. Retrieved from <https://vc.bridgew.edu/jiws/vol5/iss3/8>

Brodwin, P. (2001). *Marginality and Cultural Intimacy in a Trans-National Haitian Community* (Report No. 91). Department of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee: U.S.

Carswell, G., & De Neve, G. (2014). MGNREGA in Tamil Nadu: A story of success and transformation? *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 14(4), 564–585. [doi:10.1111/joac.12054](https://doi.org/10.1111/joac.12054).

Cejka, M. A., & Eagly, A. H. (1999). Gender-stereotypic images of occupations correspond to the sex segregation of employment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25(4), 413–423. [doi:10.1177/0146167299025004002](https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167299025004002)

Chandrashekar, C. P., Ghosh, J. (2009). Social inclusion in the NREGS. <https://www.macrosan.org/fet/mar09/fet050309NREGS.htm>

Chapman, T., & Mishra, V. (2019). *Rewriting the rules: Women and work in India*. [ORF Special Report no. 80]. Observer Research

Foundation.<https://www.orfonline.org/research/rewriting-the-rules-women-and-work-in-india-47584/>

Chatterjee, S., Dutta Gupta, S. and & Upadhyay, P. (2017). Empowering women and stimulating development at bottom of pyramid through micro entrepreneurship. *Management Decision*. 56.

Choo, H. Y., & Ferree, M. M. (2010). Practicing intersectionality in sociological research: A critical analysis of inclusions, interactions, and institutions in the study of inequalities. *Sociological Theory*, 28(2), 129–149. doi:[10.1111/j.1467-9558.2010.01370.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2010.01370.x)

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and anti-racist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139–167.

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of colour. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299. doi:[10.2307/1229039](https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039)

Dahrendorm (1958). Social Stratification Theory. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/252690803/Social-Stratification-Theory-in-Bangla>

Daly, M., Lewis, J. (2000). The concept of social care and the analysis of contemporary welfare states. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51(2), pp. 281–298.

Darden, J. T. (1989). Blacks and other racial minorities: The significance of colour in inequality. *Urban Geography*, 10(6), 562–577. doi:[10.2747/0272-3638.10.6.562](https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.10.6.562).

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*, [Working Paper No.13-03]. UW-Whitewater, Department of Economics.

Dasgupta, P., & Goldar, B. (2005). *Female labour supply in Rural, India: An econometric analysis*. New Delhi: Institute of Economic Growth.

Dasgupta, S., & Sudarshan, M. R.(2013). *Issues in labour market inequality and women's participation in India's national rural employment guarantee programme* [Working Paper no. 98]International Labour Organization, India.

Davis, K., & Moore, W. E. (1945).Some principles of stratification. *American Sociological Review*, 10, 242–249. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2085643>

Davis, K. (2008).Intersectionality as buzzword: A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), 67–85. doi:[10.1177/1464700108086364](https://doi.org/10.1177/1464700108086364)

Davis, B. (2003). Marginality in a pluralistic society.*Eye on Psi Chi*, 2(1):1-4.

Desai, S., Vashishtha, P., & Joshi, O. (2015). *Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee act: A catalyst for rural transformation*. New Delhi: National Council of Applied Economic Research.

Dev, S. (2011).*NREGS and child wellbeing* (WP-2011-004) Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai.

Dey, N., Drèze, J., & Khera, R. (2006). *Employment guarantee act: A primer*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

Dheeraja,C., Madhuri,V.N., and Daimari, A. (2013) *Research Study on factors facilitating participation of women in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS* . National Institute of Rural Development. Research Report Series 98, http://nirdpr.org.in/nird_docs/rss/RS%2098.pdf

Dill, B. T., & Zambrana, R. (2009). *Critical thinking about inequality: An emerging lens*. Economic Policy Institute .Washington DC.

Dreze, J. (2007, July 6). Employment guarantee and corruption.*Hindustan*.

Dreze, J., & Oldiges, C. (2007).*Commendable ACT*. Front Line, 24(14), 14–27).

Duflo, E.(2012).Women empowerment and economic development. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 50(4), 1051–1079. doi:[10.1257/jel.50.4.1051](https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.50.4.1051)

Dutta, P., Murgai, R., Ravallion, M., & Van De Walle, D. (2014). *Right to work? Assessing India's employment guarantee scheme in Bihar*. World Bank Publications.

Dutta, S., Chakrabarti, M., Dholakia, R., Shah, R. R., Biswas, S. and Patel, Y. (2009). *A quick appraisal of NREGS and strategies for the next level*, Ahmedabad: Indian Institute of Management.

Dyer, M. (2018). Transforming communicative spaces: The rhythm of gender in meetings in Rural Solomon Islands. *Ecology and Society*, 23(1). doi:[10.5751/ES-09866-230117](https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-09866-230117)

Eagly, A. H., & Steffen, V. J. (1986). Gender stereotypes, occupational roles, and beliefs about part-time employees. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 10(3), 252–262. doi:[10.1111/j.1471-6402.1986.tb00751.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1986.tb00751.x)

Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (1999). The origins of sex differences in human behavior: Evolved dispositions versus social roles. *American Psychologist*, 54(6), 408–423. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.54.6.408>

Ehmkke, E.(2016).The right to employment and social protection in rural settings: The example of the Indian MGNREGA.<https://socialprotection-humanrights.org/expertcom/right-employment-social-protection-rural-settings-example-indian-mgnrega/on19.09.2019>

Eswaran, M., & Malhotra, N. (2011). Domestic violence and women's autonomy in developing countries: Theory and evidence. *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue Canadienne d'Économie*, 44(4), 1222–1263. doi:[10.1111/j.1540-5982.2011.01673.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5982.2011.01673.x)

Esquivel,V.(2016). Power and the Sustainable Development Goals: a feminist analysis. *Gender and Development*.[24. 10.1080/13552074.2016.1147872.](https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2016.1147872)

Fatima, A., & Sultana, H. (2009).Tracing out the U-shape relationship between female labor force participation rate and economic development for Pakistan.*International Journal of Social Economics*, 36(1/2), 182–198. doi:[10.1108/03068290910921253](https://doi.org/10.1108/03068290910921253)

Folbre, N. (1986).Cleaning house: New perspectives on Households and Economic Development. *Journal of Development Economics*,22(1), 5-40.

FORCES. (2018). *Women in NREGA: Issues of child care case studies from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh*, report of the FORCES, New Delhi.

Gans, J.S.(1996).Comparative statics made simple: An introduction to recent advances. *Australian Economic Papers*, 35(66), 81–93. [doi:10.1111/j.1467-8454.1996.tb00039](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8454.1996.tb00039)

Global Employment Trends for Women.(2012).International Labour Organization, Geneva.https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/-dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_195447.pdf

Goldin, C.(1994). *The U-shaped female labour force functions in economic development and economic history*. (NBER Working Paper no. 4707). Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Gurung, Ghana,S.,&Collmair,M.(2005).*Marginality: Concepts and limitations*. [IP-6 working Paper no. 4]. Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South.

Gyaneshwar. (2016). Women empowerment through MGNREGS.*Anveshas international journal of research in regional studies law, Social sciences, journalism and management practices*, 1(7).

Haan, A.(2011). Inclusive growth? Labour migration and poverty in India. *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, (54).https://www.researchgate.net/publication/239806625_Inclusive_growth_Labour_migration_and_poverty_in_India

Haralambos, M, Herald, R.M. (Eds.). (1981). *The other America*.Oxford university press.

Haralambos,M.(1981).*Sociology: Themes and perspectives*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Houngbo, E.et.al.(2012).Genre et pauvreté chronique en milieu rural Au Benin. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259527591_Genre_et_pauvrete_chronique_en_milieu_rural_au_Benin

Himanshu. (2011)Employment trends in India: A re-examination. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 46(37), September, 43–59.

Hirway, I. (2005, October). Time use and macroeconomic modelling: Some methodological issues. [Paper Presentation]. In Unpaid work and economy: Gender, poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals, UNDP-Lévy Institute Conference.

Hirway, I., Saluja, M. R., & Yadav, B. (2010). *Employment guarantee programme and pro-poor growth: The study of A Village in Gujarat*. New Delhi: Academic Foundation.

Hirway, Indira & Saluja, M & Yadav, Bhupesh. (2008). An Economic Impact Analysis of Works Undertaken under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242689948_An_Economic_Impact_Analysis_of_Works_Undertaken_under_the_National_Rural_Employment_Guarantee_Act_NREGA/citation/download

Hoskins, I. (1993). Combining work and care for the elderly: An overview of the issues. *International Labour Review*, 132(3), 347–369.

I. L. O. (2017) *MGNREGA, Paid Work and Women's Empowerment* (Employment Working Paper No. 230) International Labour Organization, India. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_613735.pdf

I.L.O. (2016) *Global employment trends for women Women at work: Trends 2016*. Geneva. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_457317.pdf

I. L. O. (2013) *Repairing the economic and social fabric* (World of Work Report No. WCMS_214477) International Labour Organization, India https://www.ilo.org/global/research/globalreports/worldofwork/2013/WCMS_214477/lang--en/index.htm.

International Institute for Labour Studies.(2012) *Report of world of work. (2012) Better jobs for a better economy.* https://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/world-of-work/WCMS_179453/langen/index.htm#:~:text=The%20report%20emphasizes%20that%20while,reforms%20to%20boost%20employment%20creation.

International Organization for Migration.(2009). *Rural women and migration.* <https://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/docs/Rural-Women-and-Migration-Fact-Sheet.pdf>.

Ishikawa, Y. & Montanari, A. [Ed] (2003). *The New Geography of Human Mobility – Inequality Trends*, International Geographic Union.

ISST.(2007). Women and NREGA. Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi.

Joblom, D., Farrington, J. (2008). *The Indian National Rural Employment Guarantee Act: Will it reduce poverty and boost the economy?* (Project Briefing No.7) Overseas Development Institute. <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/614.pdf>

Jones B. Max Weber and the Concept of Social Class. *The Sociological Review*. 1975, 23(4), 729-757. doi:10.1111/j.1467-954X.1975.tb00538.x

Jones, M. (2009). *Phase Space: Geography, Relational Thinking, and Beyond*. *Progress in Human Geography*. PROG HUM GEOGR. 33. 487-506. 10.1177/0309132508101599.

Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurements of women's empowerment. <https://www.utoronto.ca/~kmacd/IDSC10/Readings/research%20design/empowerment.pdf>.

Kabeer, N. (2008). *Mainstreaming gender in social protection for the informal economy*. London. Commonwealth Secretariat.

Kapsos, S., Silberman, A., & Bourmpoula, E. (2016). Decline of women's labour force participation in India: Explaining the puzzling trend. *Transformation of Women at Work in Asia: an Unfinished Development Agenda*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Kar, S. (2013). Empowerment of women through NREGS: Issues and challenges, *Odisha Review*, February–March, 76–80.

Karak, M., Ray, S. (2015) *Women in NREGA: Issues of childcare*. https://econpapers.repec.org/scripts/redirector.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.esocialsciences.org%2FDownload%2FRepecDownload.aspx%3Ffilename%3DA2015825135320_39.pdf%26fcategory%3DArticles%26Aid%3D7338%26fref%3Drepec;h=repec:ess:wpaper:id:733

Kareemulla, K., Ramasundaram, P., Kumar, S., & Rama Rao, C. (2013) Impact of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India on Rural Poverty and Food Security. *Current Agriculture Research Journal*, 1(1), 13–28. [doi:10.12944/CARJ.1.1.02](https://doi.org/10.12944/CARJ.1.1.02)

Khera, R., Nayak, N.(2009). Women workers and perceptions. [Paper presentation].In FAO-IFAD-ILO Workshop on Gaps, Trends and Current Research in Gender Dimension of Agricultural and Rural Employment, Differential Pathways out of Poverty, Rhome.

Kimmel, J. (1998). Child care costs as a barrier to employment for single and married women. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 80(2), 287–299. [doi:10.1162/003465398557384](https://doi.org/10.1162/003465398557384)

Kirkemann, & Jakob., Martin and Tomas. (2007). *Applying a rights-based approach: An inspirational guide for civil society*. Danish Institute for Human Rights.

.Kumar et al. (2008), Kumar, M. Dinesh, A Patel, R Ravindranath and OP Singh (2008). Chasing a Mirage: Harvesting and Artificial Recharge in Naturally Water-scarce Regions. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 43(35).61-71.

Larsen, J.E.(2002, May). Spatialization and culturalization of social policy: Conducting marginal people in local communities [Paper presentation]. In Area-Based Initiatives in Contemporary Urban Policy, *Copenhagen*, Danish Building and Urban Research and European Urban Research Association.

Leimgruber, W.(2004). *Between global and local: Marginality and marginal regions in the context of globalization and deregulation*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Lewis, O. (1981). *Five Families ed. by Haralambos, M. Herald R.M., Sociology Themes and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Li, T. Sekhri, S. (2013). *The unintended consequences of employment-based safety net programs*.

<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.724.8410&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

Lindeborg, E. (2017). Exploring the complexity of gendered space and place in Rosengård through a feminist application of GIS. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d662/ddf4478c3d7534afc33f0ced4c648e156163.pdf>

Luke, T. W. and Tuathail, G.O. (1998). Global formations, local fundamentalisms, and fast geopolitics: 'America' in an accelerating world order, in A. Herod, G. ÓTuathail and S. M. Roberts (eds.) *An Unruly World? Globalization, Governance and Geography*. London/New York: Routledge.

Madan, T., N. MN. (1978). M. N. Srinivas's earlier work and the remembered village: An introduction. *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 12(1), 1–14. doi:[10.1177/006996677801200101](https://doi.org/10.1177/006996677801200101)

Madhuri, N. V., & Daimari, A. (2013). *Factors facilitating participation of women in Mahatma Gandhi NREGS*. Hyderabad: National Institute of Rural Development,

Malangmeih, L., Bhattacharyya, K., & Mitra, A. (2014). Impact of MGNREGA on Livelihood Security of Rural Households: A Case Study in Bankura district of West Bengal State, India. *Economic Affairs*, (59), 137.

Malek, M., Hossain, Md. A., Saha, R., & Gatzweiler, F. W. (2013). Mapping marginality hotspots and agricultural potentials in Bangladesh. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, ZEF Working Paper Series, no. 114. Bonn: University of Bonn, Center for Development Research (ZEF). doi:[10.2139/ssrn.2298663](https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2298663)

Mammen, K., & Paxson, C. (2000). Women's work and economic development. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 14(4), 141–164. doi:[10.1257/jep.14.4.141](https://doi.org/10.1257/jep.14.4.141)

Marx & Engels. (1998). *The Communist Manifesto*. Penguin group, New York.

Massey, Doreen (1994) *Space, place, and gender*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Massod, T., Ahmad, I. (2009). *An econometric analysis of inter-state variation in women's labour force participation in India*. Aligarh Muslim University.

Matsuda, M.J., 1991. Beside my sister, facing the enemy: legal theory out of coalition. *Stanford Law Review*, 43 (6), 1183–1192.

Mehretu, A., Pigozzi, Wm. B., & Sommers, M. L., (2003). Concepts in Social and Spatial Marginality. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0435-3684.2000.00076.x>.

Mehrotra, S. (2008). NREG two years on: Where do we go from here? *Economic and political weekly*, 43(31), 27-35.

Minati, S. (2014). Impact of MGNREGA on women empowerment: A case study of Cuttack District in Odisha. *Journal of Organisation and Human Behaviour*, 3(1), 44–50.

Müller-Böker, Ulrike; Geiger, Danilo; Geiser, Urs; Kansakar, Vidya; Kollmair, Michael; Molesworth, Kate; Suleri, Abid (2004). *JACS South Asia. Sustainable development in marginal regions of South Asia*. https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/95966/1/2004_Mueller-Boeker-et-al-2004_Kopie_.pdfIn.

Murray, W.R. (1994) *Introductory Sociology*. Oxford publishers.

Nair, K.N., T.P. Sreedharan & M. Anoopkumar. (2009). *A study of National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme in three Grama Panchayats of Kasaragod District*. (CDS working paper No.413). Trivandrum: CDS.

Namdeo, R, P. (2017). Impact of education on decision making ability of women. *Educational Quest- An International Journal of Education and Applied Social Sciences*, (8), 431- 434.

Nancy, F. (1986). Cleaning house: New perspectives on households and economic development. *Journal of Economic Development*, 22(1), 5–40.

Nandi, S. 2017. Expert's take: making unpaid work visible creates livelihoods for rural women. UN Women, 8 March, 2017
<http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/3/experts-take-subhalakshmi-nandi-unpaid-work>

Narayan, D. (2002) *Empowerment and poverty reduction: a sourcebook*. World Bank, Washington, DC.

Narayanan, S., & Das, U. (June 2014). *Employment guarantee for women in India evidence on participation and rationing in the MGNREGA from the national sample survey*. Mumbai: Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research.

Nath, A.(2016). Empowerment Effects of the MGNREGA on Women Workers: A Case Study of Four Village Panchayats of Majuli, Jorhat district. *South Asian Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*. 3, 62–69.http://sajms.com/wpcontent/uploads/2016/07/Empowerment_Effects_of_the_MG.pdf

Neetha, N., & Tresa, A, D. (2018) MGNREGA: *Asset Creation and Rural Development: An Evaluation of Category B Assets in Selected States*. Centre for Women's Development Studies, Mimeo, New Delhi.

Nicodemo, C. & Waldmann, R.(2009). *Child-Care and Participation in the Labor Market for Married Women in Mediterranean Countries*. [IZA Discussion Papers 3983] .Institute of Labor Economics (IZA).

NSS 68th Round India. (2011-2012) Household Consumer Expenditure.<http://www.icsrdataservice.in/datarepository/index.php/catalog/91>

NSS 55th Round India.(1999-2000) Household Consumer Expenditure.<http://www.icsrdataservice.in/datarepository/index.php/catalog/12>

Lewis, O. (1966). The Culture of Poverty.*Scientific American*, Vol. 215, No. 4, 19-25. [Scientific https://www.jstor.org/stable/24931078](https://www.jstor.org/stable/24931078)

Özbilgin, M. F., Beauregard, T. A., Tatli, A., & Bell, M. P. (2011) Work–Life, Diversity and Intersectionality: A Critical Review and Research Agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(2), 177–198. doi:[10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00291.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2010.00291.x)

Pampel, F. C., & Tanaka, K. (1986). Economic development and female labour force participation: A reconsideration. *Social Forces*, 64(3), 599–619. doi:[10.2307/2578815](https://doi.org/10.2307/2578815)

Pankaj, A. and Bhattacharya, M., (2017) *Socio-economic impacts of 'Category-B' assets under MGNREGS*. Report. Council for Social Development, New Delhi, India.

Pankaj, A. (Ed.). (2012). Right to work and Rural, India: Working of the Mahatma Gandhi National rural employment guarantee scheme (MGNREGS). SAGE Publications.

Pankaj, A.& Tankha, R.(2010). Empowerment Effects of the NREGS on Women Workers: a Study in Four States. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45.24-30.

Parsons, T. (1979). *Theory and Society*. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/656907>.

Pellissery, S., & Jalan, S. K. (2011). Towards transformative social protection: A gendered analysis of the employment guarantee act of India (MGNREGA). *Gender and Development*, 19(2), 283–294. doi:[10.1080/13552074.2011.592639](https://doi.org/10.1080/13552074.2011.592639)

Policy paper on NREGA. Centre for Science and Environment (2008) https://www.indiawaterportal.org/sites/default/files/iwp2/NREGA_Policy_Paper_2008.pdf

Poonia, J. (2012). Critical study of MGNREGA: Impact and women's participation. *International Journal of Human Development and Management Sciences*, 1(1): 35-55.

Pradan. (2008). *NREGA: Beyond wages to sustainable livelihoods*. http://www.pradan.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/NREGA_Workshop_Report-1.pdf.

Presser, B.H, & Sen, G. (Eds.). (2000). *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving beyond Cairo*. Oxford University Press.

Ramu, G.N. (1987). Indian Husbands/; Their Role Perceptions and Performance in Single- and Dual- Earner Families. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 49 (4), 903-915.

Rani, R., & Pokhriyal, A. K. (2016). Women empowerment and NREGA: Myth or reality. *Amity Business Review*, 17(1).

Ranjan, R. (2016). Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee act (MGNREGA): A critical appraisal of its performance since its inception. *IMJ*, 8(2), July–December.

Rao, N. (2005). Kinship matters: Women's land claims in the Santal parganas, Jharkhand. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11(4), 725–746. doi:[10.1111/j.1467-9655.2005.00259.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9655.2005.00259.x)

Ravi, S., & Engler, M. (2012). Workfare as an effective way to fight poverty: The case of India's NREGS. *Journal of Development Economics*, 67. doi:[10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.09.029](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.09.029)

Ravindranath, N. H., & Tiwari, R. (2009). *Environmental services and vulnerability reduction through NREGA; findings of the rapid assessment in Chitradurga District of Karnataka*. Centre for Sustainable Technologies, Indian Institute of Science.

Ray, H. (2010). (Ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Urban Studies*. Sage publications.

Report of the National Institute for Smart Government (2013-14).

Reyes, D.L.,Mulinari,M.I. (2002) *The Different Shapes of Power. Gender, Class and Ethnicity in Postcolonial Sweden*. Stockholm: Atlas Akademi.

Roy, C. S. (2013). Right based approach in accessing social sector services - A case study of MGNREGA. *Global Research Methodology Journal*, 2 (8) (March - April), 1-12.

Sabanna, Y. (2016). Women empowerment through MGNREGA in Karnataka. *Indian Journal of Research*, 5, 240–242.

Sanghi, S., Srija, A., & Shrinivas, S. V. (2015). Relook into the causes. *Journal for Decision Makers*. Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, 40(3), 255–268.

Sarin, M. (2015). Women in power. *Down to Earth*. Retrieved from <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/women-in-power-31421>

Sarkar, S., Sahoo, S., and Klasen, S. (2017). *Employment Transitions of Women in India: A Panel Analysis*. (Discussion paper series IZA DP No. 11086). IZA Institute of Labour Economics. <http://ftp.iza.org/dp11086.pdf>

Schieder, J., Gould, E. (2016). *Women's work and the gender pay gap*. <http://www.epi.org/publication>.

Schultz, T. (1990), Women's Changing Participation in the Labor Force: A World Perspective, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 38(3), 457-88, <https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:ucp:ecdecc:v:38:y:1990:i:3:p:457-88>.

Sen, A. (1981). *Poverty and famines: An essay on entitlement and deprivation*. Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (1990). *Gender and cooperative conflict*. Oxford University Press.

Sengupta, D. (2019) On Home and Belongingness: Contextualizing Enclave Politics [paper presentation]. In *Marginalization and Marginality in India with a focus on North Eastern Region: Multiple Contexts for State Intervention*, Tezpur University, Assam and OKDISCD, Guwahati, Assam.

Sengupta, S, .Sachdeva, S.(2017) *From double burden of women to a double boon” , Balancing unpaid care work and paid work* . Indian Institute of Social Studies Trust.<https://idl-bnc-idrc.dspacedirect.org/bitstream/handle/10625/56506/IDL-56506.pdf?sequence>

Shah, M, (2009). Multiplier Accelerator Synergy in NREGA, *The Hindu*. 30th April.

Shah, Mihir.(2008). The Real Radicalism in NREGA, *The Hindu*, 22nd May.

Shah,M.(2008) Two years of NREGA: The road ahead. *Economic and Political Weekly*, (23), 41-50. February.

Shah, Mihir.(2006). Will Employment Guarantee Deliver? *The Hindu*, 10th May.

Shah, Mihir. (2005). Employment Guarantee-MPs Lead the Way, *The Hindu*, 10th August

Shami, S. (1996). Gender, domestic space and urban upgrading: A case study from Amman. *Gender and Development*, 4(1, February), 17–23. doi:[10.1080/741921945](https://doi.org/10.1080/741921945)

Sharma, A. (2010). Mahatama Gandhi National rural employment guarantee act, 2005: A Rights-based Law for Inclusive Growth.<http://www.igntu.ac.in/eContent/IGNTU-eContent-352824621936-MA-PoliticalScience-4-Dr.GeorgeT.Haokip-Paper401PublicPolicyandDevelopmentinIndia-Unit4.pdf>.

Sharma, A. (2011). The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. *Innovative*, 271.

Shaw, A.(2013)Comparing NSSO's Employment Surveys - A Methodological Note.*Economic and political Weekly*, 48(30).<https://www.epw.in/journal/2013/30/web-exclusives/comparing-nssos-employment-surveys-methodological-note.html>

Silburn, S. R., Zubrick, S. R., Garton, A. F., Gurrin, L., Burton, P., Dalby, R., & Lawrence, D. (1996). *Western Australian Child Health Survey: Family and Community Health*. (Catalogue 4304.5.) Perth, Western Australia: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Sommers, L.M., Mehretu, A. And Pigozzi, B.W.(1999): Towards typologies of socio-economic marginality: North/ South comparisons', in Jussila, H., Majoral, R. and Mutambirwa, C. (eds). Marginality in space – past, present and future: Theoretical and methodological aspects of cultural, social and economic parameters of marginal and critical region. *The American Prospect*, 42, 67–70.

Srinivas. (1977). Kannabiran, K. (2009). Sociology of Caste and the Crooked Mirror: Recovering B R Ambedkar's Legacy. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44(4), 35–39. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40278831>

State Institute of Rural Development. (2017). *Factors Facilitating Participation of Women in MNREGS in Himachal Pradesh: a Study in Selected Districts of Himachal Pradesh*. Department of Rural Development, Himachal Pradesh.

Stewart, A. J., & McDermott, C. (2004). Gender in psychology. *Annual Review of Psychology*, (55), 519–544. doi:[10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.141537](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.141537)

Tansel, A. (2001). *Economic development and female labor force participation in Turkey: Time-series evidence and cross-province estimates*. (ERC working papers in economics). Ankara: Middle East Technical University, Economic Research Centre.

The World Bank Annual Report
.2012.<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/11844>. Washington, DC, 1.

Thomas, E. M. (2010). The relevance of NREGA in ensuring a corruption less wage employment programme and women empowerment Acase. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 152(14).

UN Development Program. (2019). *Female Work and Labour Force Participation in India: A Meta-Study*. (UN Publication No. 2019/06)
https://www.sattva.co.in/wpcontent/uploads/2019/06/Sattva_UNDP_Female-Work-And-Labour-Force-Participation-In-India.pdf.

United Nations (2016) *Global Sustainable Development Report 2016*. New York.
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/global-sustainable-development-report-2016.html>

UNDP and UNIFEM (2009). *Primers in Gender and Democratic Governance: Corruption, Accountability and Gender: Understanding the Connections*.

<https://www.undp.org/content/dam/aplaws/publication/en/publications/womens-empowerment/corruption-accountability-and-gender-understanding-the-connection/Corruption-accountability-and-gender.pdf>

Viswanath, R. (2014). *The pariah problem: Caste, religion and social in modern India*. New York: Columbia University Press.

World Bank. 2013. *The World Bank Annual Report 2013*. Washington, DC.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/16091> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

World Bank. 2012. *World Development Report 2012. Gender Equality and Development*.

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/4391> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.

World Development Report, 2012

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2012/Resources/7778105-1299699968583/7786210-1315936222006/chapter-5.pdf> .

World of Work Report.(2012). *Better jobs for a better economy*.International Institute for Labour Studies.https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_179453.pdf.

Wray,R.L.(2007).*The employer of last resort programme: Could it work for developing countries?* (Economic and labour market papers). Geneva. International Labour Office.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and feminist politics.*European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13(3), 193–209.doi:[10.1177/1350506806065752](https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506806065752)

ANNEXURE

Table: 1.1. (a) Phase wise District coverage of MGNREGA

Phase	Date	Districts
I	2.02.2006	200
II	2007-08	200+ 130 (new)
III	01.04.2008	Remaining Rural districts

Table: 1.1. (b) Phase wise Coverage of MGNREGA in West Bengal

Phase-I Districts	Phase-II Districts	Phase-III Districts
24 Paragana South	Cooch Behar	DGHC (Siliguri)
Bankura	Nadia	Howrah
Birbhum	Bardhaman	
Dinajpur Dakshin	Medinipur (East)	
Dinajpur Uttar	Noth 24 Paragana	
Jalpaiguri	Hoogly	
Maldah	Darjeeling	
Medinipur West		
Murshidabad		
Purulia		

Source: https://nrega.nic.in/MNREGA_Dist.pdf

Table: 1.2 Demographic characteristics of selected villages

Village	Total Population	Total Male Population	Total Female Population	Sex ratio	0-6 Male Population	0-6 Female Population
Mandiha	542	280	262	936	33	28
Haludkanali	530	259	271	1046	14	34
Basatpur	1019	505	514	1018	53	65
Gopendanga	536	293	243	829	41	26

Source: Census of India, 2011

Table: 1.3. (a) Total Person days Generated by MGNREGA and Person days Generated by Women across States in 2006-07

State	Total persondays in lakh	Women persondays in lakh
ANDHRA PRADESH	678.77	371.93
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	4.53	1.36
ASSAM	572.92	181.43
BIHAR	596.87	103.72
CHHATTISGARH	700.21	275.29
GUJARAT	100.48	50.44
HARYANA	24.12	7.38
HIMACHAL PRADESH	29.9	3.66
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	32.3	1.44
JHARKHAND	520.47	205.46
KARNATAKA	222.01	112.24
KERALA	20.48	13.44
MADHYA PRADESH	1971.77	852.53
MAHARASHTRA	159.28	59.05
MANIPUR	18.57	9.45
MEGHALAYA	47	24.22
MIZORAM	7.85	2.62
NAGALAND	13.08	3.92
ORISSA	799.34	284.58
PUNJAB	15.57	5.88
RAJASTHAN	998.87	670.68
SIKKIM	2.42	0.6
TAMIL NADU	182.79	148.27
TRIPURA	50.13	37.6
UTTAR PRADESH	822.91	136.21
UTTARAKHAND	40.6	12.37
WEST BENGAL	440.08	80.46

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 1.3. (b) Total Person days Generated by MGNREGA and Person days Generated by Women across States in 2011-12

State	Total persondays in lakh	Women persondays in lakh
ANDHRA PRADESH	293934388	169870795
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	72879	24977
ASSAM	35262948	8796870
BIHAR	68215769	19687045
CHHATTISGARH	120675662	55720356
GUJARAT	31299968	14461828
HARYANA	10936040	3987337
HIMACHAL PRADESH	27012832	16033760
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	20910314	3895806
JHARKHAND	60970795	19126838

KARNATAKA	70102741	32340909
KERALA	63309610	58828359
MADHYA PRADESH	168897897	72398492
MAHARASHTRA	77201857	35454207
MANIPUR	22407410	7568409
MEGHALAYA	16775080	6991911
MIZORAM	13059758	3166664
NAGALAND	29661076	7949994
ODISHA	45374551	17562813
PUNJAB	6451781	2787758
RAJASTHAN	212055139	146979926
SIKKIM	3287914	1471441
TAMIL NADU	301574571	223597433
TRIPURA	48973654	18958202
UTTAR PRADESH	267335990	45932853
UTTARAKHAND	19897711	8893264
WEST BENGAL	149593733	48623882

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 1.4.Details of the key informants for Case Studies

Sl. No.	Location	Age	Sex	Occupation
1	Haludkanali	29	Female	Housewife, 1 st time MGNREGA worker
2	Haludkanali	57	Male	Village Authority
3	Basatpur	45	Female	Member of local SHG
4	Basatpur	24	Female	Housewife, 1st time MGNREGA worker
5	Basatpur	59	Male	Village Authority
6	Basatpur	37	Male	Construction labour
7	Mandiha	19	Female	Cottage industry worker
8	Mandiha	32	Female	Domestic help
9	Gopendanga	41	Male	Local contractor
10	Gopendanga	31	Female	Housewife, 1st time MGNREGA worker

Table: 3.1. (a) Employment Related Data: Durgapur-Faridpur (Plateau) 2014-15

PANCHAYAT	Number .of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	total persondays
GOGLA	8952	2586	2586	1736	2	49584
GOURBAZAR	4715	2560	2560	1552	2	51256
ICHHAPUR	8532	2558	2558	1423	17	36950
JEMUA	3486	260	260	159	4	4387
LAUDOHA	9801	2865	2853	2198	0	60863
PRATAPPUR	8888	2369	2369	1735	9	63015

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.1. (b) Employment Related Data: Durgapur-Faridpur (Plateau) 2015-16

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	total persondays
AMBIKANAGAR	9809	3103	3103	1650	203	85234
BARIKUL	11140	4865	4865	2257	256	127433
HALUDKANALI	8788	3721	3721	1649	118	73845
PUDDI	3710	1832	1832	862	137	51217
RAJAKATA	11856	5113	5113	1895	130	105768
RANIBANDH	10354	3245	3245	1436	102	68512
RAUTORA	12622	4783	4783	2283	74	82314
RUDRA	9340	4179	4179	1793	184	98406

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.1. (c) Employment Related Data: Durgapur-Faridpur (Plateau) 2016-17

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	total persondays
GOGLA	9140	3343	3171	2633	12	95512
GOURBAZAR	5164	2552	2263	1455	46	73137
ICHHAPUR	8842	3021	2837	1658	58	64258
JEMUA	3573	801	751	493	16	21364
LAUDOHA	10089	2446	1842	1437	3	68458
PRATAPPUR	9752	3909	3217	2356	28	81828

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.1. (d) Employment Related Data: Ranibundh (Plateau) 2014-15

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	total persondays
AMBIKANAGAR	9326	2009	2008	1233	19	32038
BARIKUL	10238	2969	2967	1702	19	36947
HALUDKANALI	8380	1414	1414	874	8	16049
PUDDI	3507	1176	1176	736	30	25661
RAJAKATA	11120	2254	2254	1350	3	24961
RANIBANDH	9553	2097	2097	1234	0	19966
RAUTORA	11536	2570	2569	1665	8	29538
RUDRA	8676	2966	2966	1693	30	40136

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.1. (e) Employment Related Data: Ranibundh (Plateau) 2015-16

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	hh COMPLETED 100 DAYS	total persondays
AMBIKANAGAR	9809	3103	3103	1650	203	85234
BARIKUL	11140	4865	4865	2257	256	127433
HALUDKANALI	8788	3721	3721	1649	118	73845
PUDDI	3710	1832	1832	862	137	51217
RAJAKATA	11856	5113	5113	1895	130	105768
RANIBANDH	10354	3245	3245	1436	102	68512
RAUTORA	12622	4783	4783	2283	74	82314
RUDRA	9340	4179	4179	1793	184	98406

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.1. (f) Employment Related Data: Ranibundh (Plateau) 2016-17

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	total persondays
GOGLA	9140	3343	3171	2633	12	95512
GOURBAZAR	5164	2552	2263	1455	46	73137
ICHHAPUR	8842	3021	2837	1658	58	64258
JEMUA	3573	801	751	493	16	21364
LAUDOHA	10089	2446	1842	1437	3	68458
PRATAPPUR	9752	3909	3217	2356	28	81828

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. (a) Employment Related Data: Bhatar (Plain) 2014-15

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	hh COMPLETED 100 DAYS	total persondays
AMARUN-I	6461	5545	5545	2376	23	104163
AMARUN-II	8243	6779	6779	3029	18	105084
BALGONA	11850	8083	8083	4658	11	147728
BAMUNARA	13519	8696	8688	5516	6	129571
BARABELUN-I	6415	4002	4002	1970	4	47388
BARABELUN-II	4677	1777	1777	1554	0	25686
BHATAR	15096	13548	13548	6059	112	264829
BONPAS	10084	5076	5076	3588	13	105449
ERUAR	19231	11429	11428	5439	5	290798
MAHACHANDA	12193	7733	7733	4642	26	139466
MAHATA	12009	9389	9389	5825	0	156790
NITYANANDAPUR	9728	6609	6609	4912	0	78181
SAHEBGANJ-I	6811	4877	4877	2797	1	103267
SAHEBGANJ-II	9581	7799	7799	4399	10	208331

Table: 3.2. (b) Employment Related Data: Bhatar (Plain) 2015-16

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	Total persondays
AMARUN-I	6714	6714	23	20	0	804
AMARUN-II	8584	8584	6171	3021	244	193221
BALGONA	12209	12209	6474	4594	30	161478
BAMUNARA	13897	13897	7435	5153	19	144093
BARABELUN-I	6519	6519	3845	2132	130	101200
BARABELUN-II	4779	4779	1593	1516	0	52451
BHATAR	15508	15508	9410	5224	10	167094
BONPAS	10349	10349	6411	3595	270	231884
ERUAR	19522	19522	11951	5683	10	282944
MAHACHANDA	12567	12567	6831	4447	24	113617
MAHATA	12629	12629	7763	5779	5	327861
NITYANANDAPUR	10119	10119	7540	5071	20	198182
SAHEBGANJ-I	7016	7016	3870	2745	0	96494
SAHEBGANJ-II	9739	9739	6751	4316	96	143434

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. (c) Employment Related Data : Bhatar (Plain) 2016-17

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	Total persondays
AMARUN-I	6357	540	29	28	0	1158
AMARUN-II	8278	2744	2316	1673	0	40561
BALGONA	12210	3477	3337	2930	13	76375
BAMUNARA	13152	4160	3145	2606	1	82232
BARABELUN-I	6589	4492	3138	1761	8	63639
BARABELUN-II	4434	1444	1360	1308	0	40340
BHATAR	14468	5296	2698	1721	1	35887
BONPAS	8650	4601	4534	2924	52	152015
ERUAR	14988	8956	8932	5272	54	191162
MAHACHANDA	12313	3860	3771	2732	13	103674
MAHATA	12079	6698	6234	4935	0	188847
NITYANANDAPUR	9397	6858	6108	4379	7	135399
SAHEBGANJ-I	6436	3028	2951	2679	0	67007

SAHEBGANJ-II	9397	5018	4603	4252	2	111844
--------------	------	------	------	------	---	--------

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. (d) Employment Related Data : Onda (Plain) 2014-15

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	Total persondays
CHINGANI	5722	2432	2432	1314	1	13389
CHURAMONIPUR	5271	1339	1339	594	1	10403
KALYANI	4549	1625	1625	726	2	12245
KANTABARI	5480	2516	2516	1382	16	37356
LODNA	7237	1281	1281	723	3	13905
MAJDIHA	4539	438	438	235	0	4848
MEDINIPUR	8077	1967	1967	920	1	9901
NAKAJURI	5095	1822	1820	886	1	16305
NIKUNJAPUR	7764	1131	1131	578	8	10317
ONDA-I	4479	1163	1163	501	0	12271
ONDA-II	4688	957	957	455	0	7668
PUNISOLE	9274	2167	2167	1339	65	47052
RAMSAGAR	12639	3206	3206	1445	25	46882
RATANPUR	8066	3584	3584	1646	24	46158
SANTOR	8053	1830	1829	859	2	15014

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. (e) Employment Related Data : Onda (Plain) 2015-16

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	Total persondays
AMBIKANAGAR	9809	3103	3103	1650	203	85234
BARIKUL	11140	4865	4865	2257	256	127433
HALUDKANALI	8788	3721	3721	1649	118	73845
PUDDI	3710	1832	1832	862	137	51217
RAJAKATA	11856	5113	5113	1895	130	105768
RANIBANDH	10354	3245	3245	1436	102	68512
RAUTORA	12622	4783	4783	2283	74	82314
RUDRA	9340	4179	4179	1793	184	98406

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table: 3.2. (f) Employment Related Data : Onda (Plain) 2016-17

PANCHAYAT	Number of Registered persons	No. of person demanded job	Employment received by persons	No. of job receiving HH	Household completed 100 days	Total persondays
CHINGANI	6392	2114	1862	1119	36	42241
CHURAMONIPUR	5829	2834	2333	1327	24	53233
KALYANI	4967	2134	1878	1093	53	52043
KANTABARI	5741	2434	2294	1204	133	72258
LODNA	7569	987	844	499	43	23857
MAJDIHA	4821	2175	2053	1096	77	57284
MEDINIPUR	8935	2243	1666	902	29	35496
NAKAJURI	5993	3171	2980	1452	126	77185
NIKUNJAPUR	8001	1490	1137	713	14	36584
ONDA-I	5063	1431	1212	795	12	23686
ONDA-II	4957	1135	1107	572	77	32112
PUNISOLE	11906	2325	2245	1217	37	63587
RAMSAGAR	13513	6532	5786	2742	68	122567
RATANPUR	8508	3752	3396	1849	221	99210
SANTOR	8396	2555	2305	1241	86	66378

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table. 3.3. (a) Total Number of Skilled and Unskilled Workers in Plateau(2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17)

Sl. No.	Panchayat	2014-15		2014-15		2015-16		2015-16		2016-17		2016-17	
		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker	
		Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker
1	GOGLA	51	0	90	6	51	0	90	6	51	0	90	6
2	GOURBAZAR	7	1	82	5	7	1	82	5	7	1	82	5
3	ICHHAPUR	106	8	57	4	106	8	57	4	106	8	57	4
4	JEMUA	17	0	14	1	17	0	14	1	17	0	14	1
5	LAUDOHA	125	16	104	20	125	16	104	20	125	16	104	20
6	PRATAPPUR	133	18	141	10	133	18	141	10	133	18	141	10
7	AMBIKANAGAR	249	9	191	38	249	9	191	38	249	9	191	38
8	BARIKUL	237	34	249	43	237	34	249	43	237	34	249	43
9	HALUDKANALI	146	29	204	31	146	29	204	31	146	29	204	31
10	PUDDI	146	6	105	6	146	6	105	6	146	6	105	6
11	RAJAKATA	113	22	101	11	113	22	101	11	113	22	101	11
12	RANIBANDH	168	24	227	11	168	24	227	11	168	24	227	11
13	RAUTORA	74	11	322	81	74	11	322	81	74	11	322	81
14	RUDRA	99	19	209	32	99	19	209	32	99	19	209	32

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table. 3.3. (b) Total Number of Skilled and Unskilled Workers in Plain (2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17)

Sl. No.	Panchayat	2014-15		2014-15		2015-16		2015-16		2016-17		2016-17	
		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker		Skilled Worker		Semi Skilled Worker	
		Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker	Male Worker	Female Worker
1	AMARUN-I	51	3	59	12	51	3	59	12	51	3	59	12
2	AMARUN-II	60	10	89	16	60	10	89	16	60	10	89	16
3	BALGONA	368	31	175	15	368	31	175	15	368	31	175	15
4	BAMUNARA	110	4	139	30	110	4	139	30	110	4	139	30
5	BARABELUN-I	41	13	72	9	41	13	72	9	41	13	72	9
6	BARABELUN-II	12	2	49	1	12	2	49	1	12	2	49	1
7	BHATAR	97	12	216	44	97	12	216	44	97	12	216	44
8	BONPAS	214	19	102	14	214	19	102	14	214	19	102	14
9	ERUAR	269	7	189	57	269	7	189	57	269	7	189	57
10	MAHACHANDA	13	7	138	7	13	7	138	7	13	7	138	7
11	MAHATA	124	31	150	12	124	31	150	12	124	31	150	12
12	NITYANANDAP	201	37	148	11	201	37	148	11	201	37	148	11
13	SAHEBGANJ-I	89	35	81	9	89	35	81	9	89	35	81	9
14	SAHEBGANJ-II	46	2	107	12	46	2	107	12	46	2	107	12
15	CHINGANI	22	1	126	20	22	1	126	20	22	1	126	20
16	CHURAMONIPU	79	15	150	58	79	15	150	58	79	15	150	58
17	KALYANI	60	4	225	62	60	4	225	62	60	4	225	62
18	KANTABARI	66	10	121	26	66	10	121	26	66	10	121	26
19	LODNA	53	5	119	22	53	5	119	22	53	5	119	22
20	MAJDIHA	74	5	87	29	74	5	87	29	74	5	87	29
21	MEDINIPUR	58	10	142	57	58	10	142	57	58	10	142	57
22	NAKAJURI	54	14	159	33	54	14	159	33	54	14	159	33
23	NIKUNJAPUR	23	1	85	10	23	1	85	10	23	1	85	10
24	ONDA-I	35	5	74	17	35	5	74	17	35	5	74	17
25	ONDA-II	31	17	141	42	31	17	141	42	31	17	141	42
26	PUNISOLE	110	8	149	8	110	8	149	8	110	8	149	8
27	RAMSAGAR	111	25	236	64	111	25	236	64	111	25	236	64
28	RATANPUR	219	20	303	52	219	20	303	52	219	20	303	52
29	SANTOR	60	12	159	6	60	12	159	6	60	12	159	6

Source: www.nrega.nic.in

Table 5.1. Demand Pattern of MGNREGS Work across Location, Category (I & II) among Women and Men

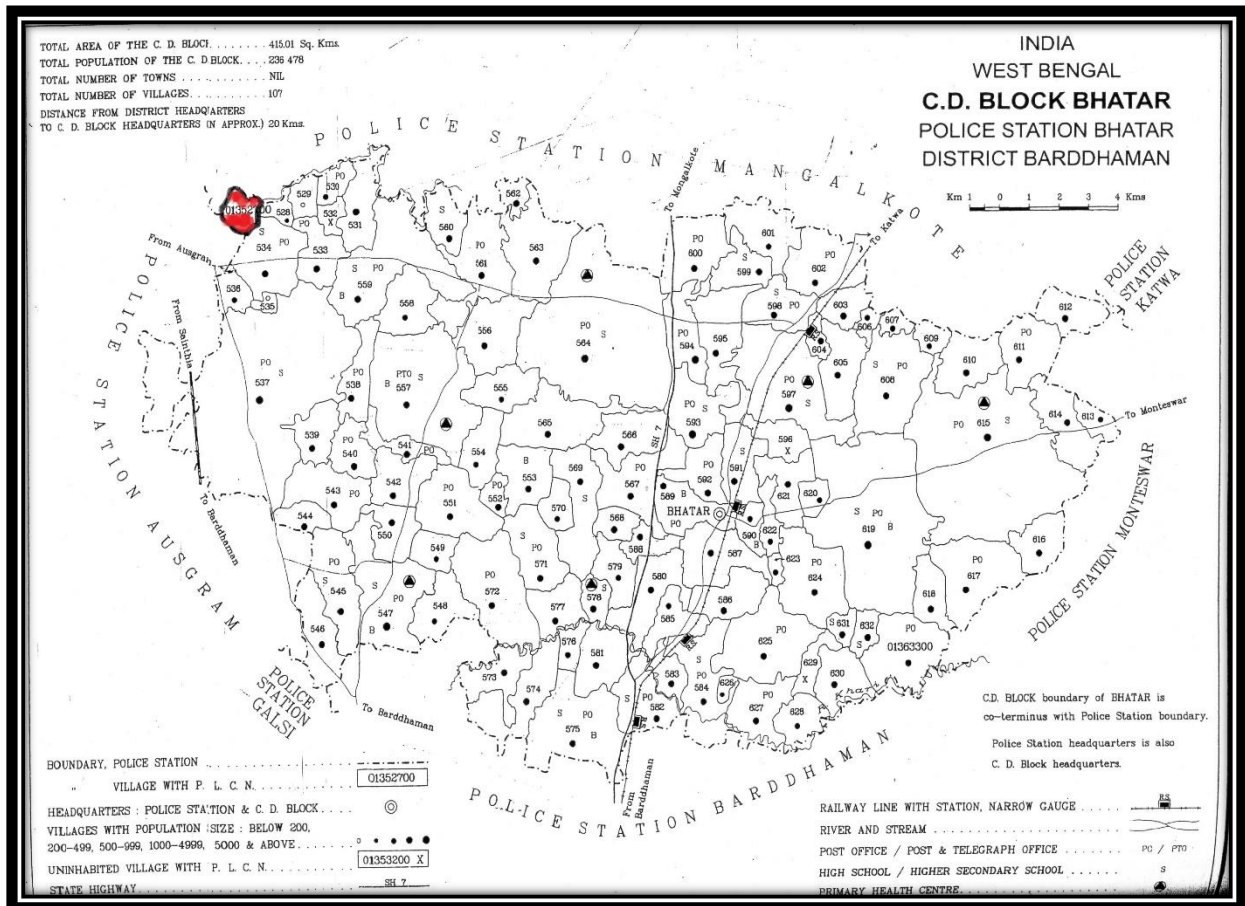
Respondents in %	PLAIN				PLATEAU			
	Kharif	Rabi	Zaid	No Definite season Stated	Kharif	Rabi	Zaid	No Definite season Stated
Women	38.30	19.60	32.7	9.40	20.9	40.30	11.9	26.9
Men	21.7	33.7	38.0	6.50	20.4	33.0	35.9	9.7

Source: Primary Survey, 2015

Table: 5.2. Demand Pattern of MGNREGS Work across Location, Category (III) among Women and Men

Respondents in %	PLAIN				PLATEAU			
	Kharif	Rabi	Zaid	No Definite season Stated	Kharif	Rabi	Zaid	No Definite season Stated
Women	36.9	28.6	20.20	14.3	31.0	41.0	6.90
Men	17.2	48.3	31.00	3.40	46.8	30.8	19.2

Source: Primary Survey, 2015



INDIA
WEST BENGAL
C.D. BLOCK FARIDPUR-DURGAPUR
POLICE STATION FARIDPUR, DURGAPUR (PART)
NEW TOWNSHIP AND COKE OVEN
DISTRICT BARDHAMAN

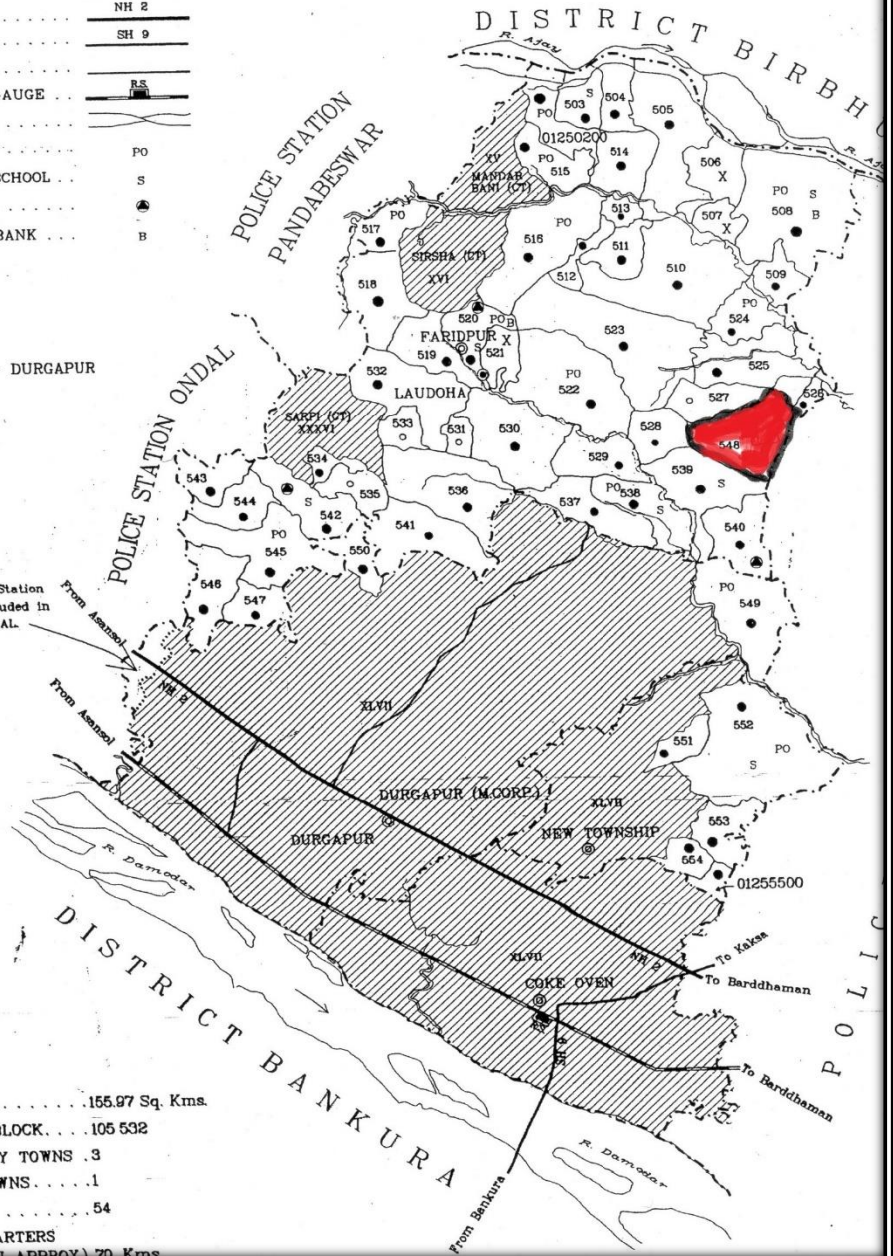
BOUNDARY, DISTRICT	-----
" POLICE STATION	-----
" C. D. BLOCK	-----
" VILLAGE WITH P. L. C. N.	01250200
HEADQUARTERS : POLICE STATION, C. D. BLOCK	⊙ ⊙
VILLAGES WITH POPULATION SIZE : BELOW 200, 200-499, 500-999, 1000-4999, 5000 & ABOVE	○ ● ● ● ● ●
UNINHABITED VILLAGE WITH P. L. C. N.	01250600 X
URBAN AREA WITH LOCATION CODE NUMBER.	XVI
NATIONAL HIGHWAY	NH 2
STATE HIGHWAY	SH 9
IMPORTANT METALLED ROAD	-----
RAILWAY LINE WITH STATION, BROAD GAUGE	RS
RIVER AND STREAM	~~~~~
POST OFFICE:	PO
HIGH SCHOOL / HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL	S
PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRE	●
COMMERCIAL BANK / CO-OPERATIVE BANK	B

Km 1 0 1 2 3 4 Kms

C. D. Block boundary of FARIDPUR - DURGAPUR
excludes the statutory town.

Part of Police Station
DURGAPUR included in
C. D. Block ONDAL.

TOTAL AREA OF THE C. D. BLOCK 155.97 Sq. Kms.
TOTAL POPULATION OF THE C. D. BLOCK 105 532
TOTAL NUMBER OF NON-STATUTORY TOWNS . 3
TOTAL NUMBER OF STATUTORY TOWNS 1
TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES 54
DISTANCE FROM DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
..... 70 Kms



INDIA
WEST BENGAL
C.D. BLOCK ONDA
POLICE STATION ONDA
DISTRICT BANKURA

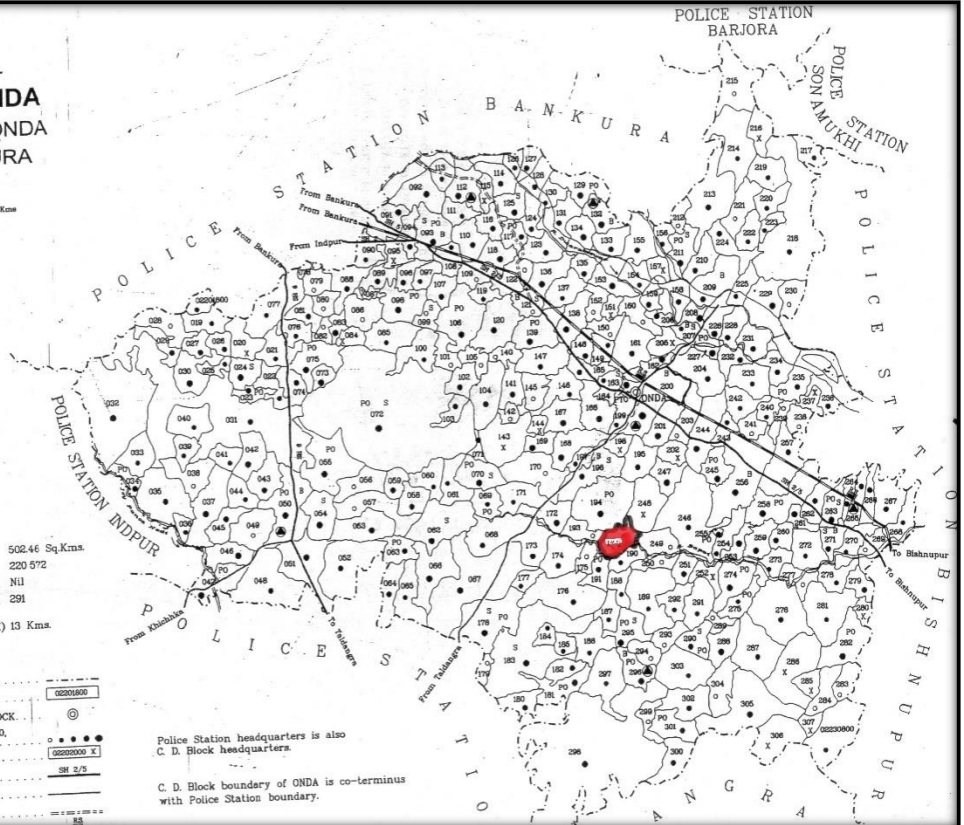


TOTAL AREA OF THE C. D. BLOCK 502.46 Sq.Kms.
 TOTAL POPULATION OF THE C. D. BLOCK . . . 220 872
 TOTAL NUMBER OF TOWNS Nil
 TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES 291
 DISTANCE FROM DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
 TO C. D. BLOCK HEADQUARTERS (IN APPROX) 13 Kms.

BOUNDARY, POLICE STATION	-----
VILLAGE WITH P.L.C.N.	②
HEADQUARTERS : POLICE STATION & C. D. BLOCK	⊙
VILLAGES WITH POPULATION SIZE : BELOW 200	○
200-499, 500-999, 1000-4999, 5000 & ABOVE	●
UNINHABITED VILLAGE WITH P.L.C.N.	⊠
STATE HIGHWAY	== 2/3 ==
IMPORTANT METALLED ROAD	====
UNMETALLED AND OTHER ROADS	-----

Police Station headquarters is also
C. D. Block headquarters.

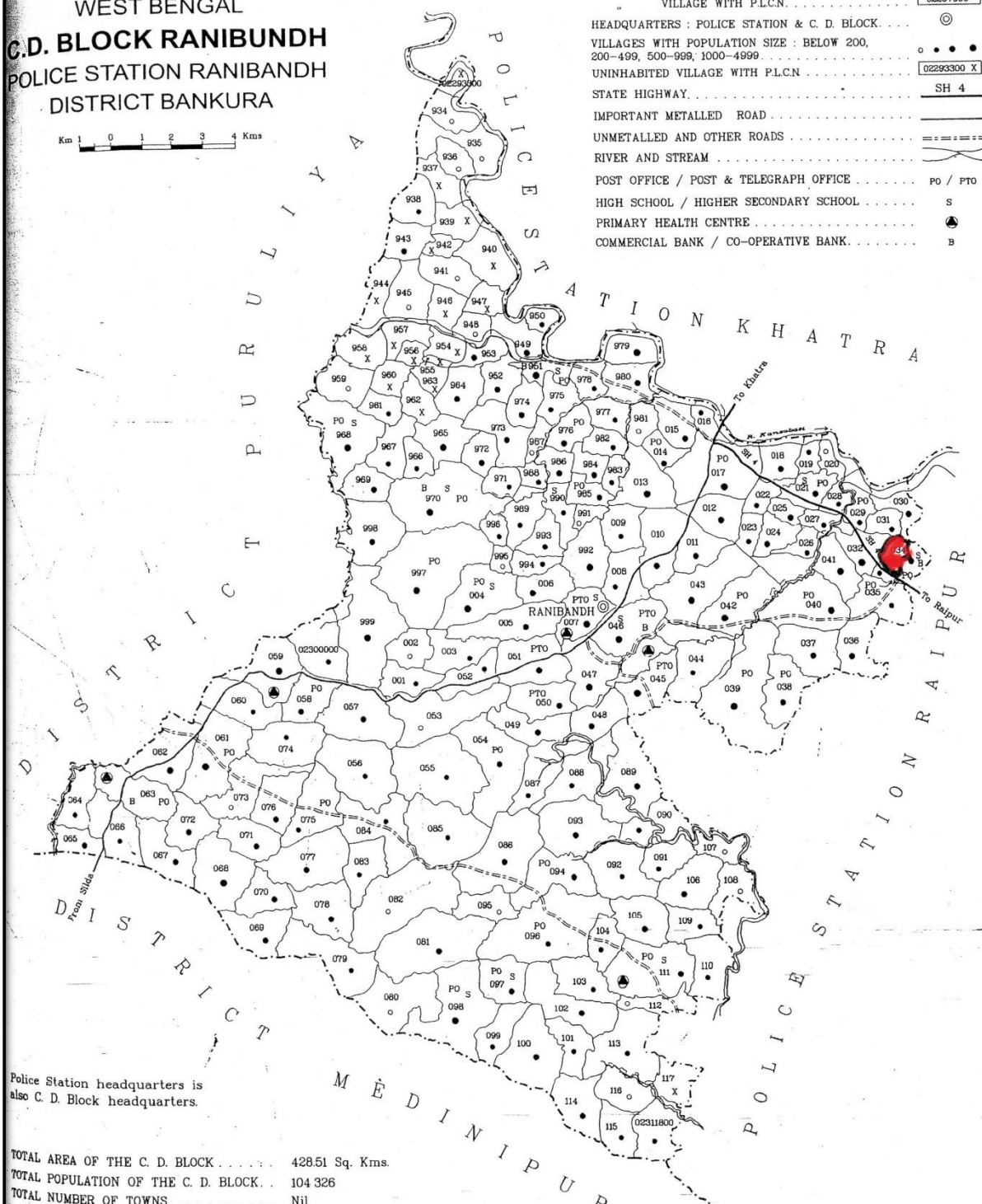
C. D. Block boundary of ONDA is co-terminus
with Police Station boundary.



INDIA
WEST BENGAL
C.D. BLOCK RANIBUNDH
POLICE STATION RANIBANDH
DISTRICT BANKURA

Km 1 0 1 2 3 4 Kms

- BOUNDARY, DISTRICT. - - - - -
- " POLICE STATION [02297900]
- " VILLAGE WITH P.L.C.N. [02293300 X]
- HEADQUARTERS : POLICE STATION & C. D. BLOCK. ⊙
- VILLAGES WITH POPULATION SIZE : BELOW 200, 200-499, 500-999, 1000-4999. ○ ● ● ● ●
- UNINHABITED VILLAGE WITH P.L.C.N. [02293300 X]
- STATE HIGHWAY. SH 4
- IMPORTANT METALLED ROAD ————
- UNMETALLED AND OTHER ROADS = = = = =
- RIVER AND STREAM ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
- POST OFFICE / POST & TELEGRAPH OFFICE PO / PTO
- HIGH SCHOOL / HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL S
- PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRE ●
- COMMERCIAL BANK / CO-OPERATIVE BANK. B



Police Station headquarters is also C. D. Block headquarters.

TOTAL AREA OF THE C. D. BLOCK 428.51 Sq. Kms.
 TOTAL POPULATION OF THE C. D. BLOCK 104 326
 TOTAL NUMBER OF TOWNS Nil
 TOTAL NUMBER OF VILLAGES 186
 DISTANCE FROM DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS TO C. D. BLOCK HEADQUARTERS (IN APPROX) 50 Kms.

C.D. BLOCK boundary of RANIBUNDH is co-terminus with Police Station boundary.

GENDERED MARGINALITIES AND WORK: A CASE OF MGNREGA IN RURAL WEST BENGAL

HOUSEHOLD LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE (Reference Year 2014- 2015)

Block: 0: Identification

District		Census Household Number	
Block		Serial Household Number	
Village		Respondent's Name	

District Codes: 1 = Burdwan, 2 = Bankura.

Block Codes: 1 = Durgapur-Faridpur, 2 = Bhatar, 3 = Ranibundh, 4 = Onda

Block: 1: Household Basic Characteristics

1	Name of Household Head	
22	Name of Caste/Tribe	
3	Religion	
4.	Family Size	<p>Adults in Total:</p> <p>No. of Adult Male:</p> <p>No. of Adult Female:</p> <p>Children In Total:</p>

Block-1 Codes: Q2: Caste Group: 1 = Gen ; 2 = SC; 3 = ST; 4 = OBC

Q3: Religion: 1 = Hinduism; 2 = Islam; 3 = Christianity; 4 = Sikhism; 5 = Jainism; 6 = Buddhism; 9 7 = Other (specify)

Block: 2: Housing Characteristics

1	Total number of rooms (excluding kitchen)	
	<i>List number of rooms which are:</i>	
1.1	kuchcha	
1.2	semi-pucca	
1.3	pucca	
2	Is there a separate kitchen?	
2.1	If yes, what type? (1 = kuchcha, 2 = semi-pucca, 3 = pucca)	
3	Number of storeys (write 1 if only ground floor)	
4	Type of plinth	
5	Type of roof (1 = kuchcha, 2 = pucca, 9 7 = Other (specify))	
6.	Do you have access to electricity in your house?	
7.	Do you have piped water in your homestead?	

Block: 3: Land Details

Sl. No.	Land type	Cultivation land		Non-Cultivation Land/ Non Farm land		Orchard/ Plantation land
		Irrigated	Unirrigated	Irrigated	Unirrigated	
(1)	(2)	(3)		(4)		(5)
1.	Land Owned					

2.	Land Possessed but Not Owned				
3.	land owned and possessed both				
4.	no land owned or possessed				
Block: 4: Other Asset Details					
Asset/ Facility	Yes/ No	Asset/Facility	Yes/No	Asset/Facility	Yes/No
Electricity		Television		Motorcycle	
Piped Water		Radio		Cell phone/landline	
Toilet		Bicycle		Fan	

Block: 5: Sources of Household Income/Livelihood

5.1. What are the Sources of Household Income in Last Year?

Serial No.	Sources of Household Income

Block-5 Codes

Q 8.2 Traditional occupations: 1=Barber; 2=Cobbler; 3=Ironsmith; 4=Carpenter; 5=Tailor;

6=Sweeper/rag-picker; 7=Washermen; 8= Potter; 9=Weaver; 10=Folk Artist; 11=Butcher; 12=Priest;

97=other (specify)

5.2	What are the two main sources of household income in the past one year? (use serial number of income)	
------------	---	--

Block: 6: Details of Household Members

Sl.No.	Name of the Household members	Age	Education	Occupation	Monthly Income	Whether Worked in MGNREGS in 2014-15	Days of Work under MGNREGS in 2014-15

Block: 7.A:MGNREGS Related Details of the Household

Did this HH applied for MGNREGS in 2014-2015? Yes=1, No=2	If 1, Whether this HH got job under MGNREGS in 2014-15 Yes=1, No=2	Number of MGNREGS job days covered by HH Members in 2014-2015	If 2, Did this HH get any Unemployment Allowance? Yes=1, No=2	If 2, Why ?	If the HH has participated, How the preference of members for MGNREGS work was set in this HH?	Did this household get the job days it sought to?	No. of Workers worked in MGNREGS only in 2014-2015
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
		Male-					Male-
		Female-					Female-
		Total-					Total--

Block: 7.B: MGNREGS Related Details of the Household

Reason for why he/she did not participate Earlier	Amount of total wage generated through MGNREGS in 2014-2015	Did MGNREGS participation have rendered any asset to your HH? Yes=1;No=2	If 1, Specify	Is your HH is getting some benefit from MGNREGS assets 1=Yes;2=No	If Yes, Specify	No. of Potential MGNREGS worker In the HH, If any	Name of the Workers	Preference for work (put 1,2,3,4)	Year from which HH has participated MGNREGS Work
(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)

Block : 8 : Household's Adult Member details

Sl. No.	Name	Sex (Code)	Age (years)	Education level	If completed education, number of completed years of education (Code)	Marital status (Code)	Employment Status (Code)	Whether Did MGNREGS work in 2014-2015
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Codes: 8. (3) : 1: Male 2: Female

8. (6) : 1: No education 2. Literate Only 3. 4 Years of education 4. 5-8 Years of education 5. 10 Years of education , 6.12 years of education 7. 14 Years of education 8. 15 years of education 9. 17 years of education 10. Technical education (specify).

8. (7): 1. Married 2.Never married 3.Widow 4.Spinster 5.Separated.

8. (8) 1. Employed 2. Not employed 3. Temporarily employed 4.Does housework only.

GENDERED MARGINALITIES AND WORK: A CASE OF MGNREGA IN RURAL WEST BENGAL

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL QUESTIONNAIRE (Reference Year 2014- 2015)

Block: 1. Descriptive Identification of Sample Respondent

1. District:	5. Household Serial no.
2. Block :	6. Name of informant: Sl. No in HH Q.S:
3. village name:	7. Stratum : APPLIED & GOT MGNREGS JOB IN 2014-2015
4. Census No. of Household :	8. Sub Stratum: (Male/female)

Block: 2: Sources of Livelihood

Primary Source of Income	Secondary Sources of Income
a) What is your main occupation?	a) Do you do anything else other than the main occupation?
b) What is the actual nature of that occupation?	b) If yes, what is the nature of that occupation?

Block: 2.a. Work Related questions

Do you get regular job through your primary occupation?	If you don't have any occupation other than MGNREGS and household chores, then why?	Do you think your qualification commensurate with your occupation?	In last 365 days, what is the approximate number of wage days you got & in what wage?	What did you do in the rest of the year?	Did you get job when you needed it?

How long you have travelled to do your primary job?(in km)	Do you travel alone? If no, with whom do you travel?	Do you get any conveyance allowance, if you are employed by a non-Govt. Employer?If yes, give detail	What types of worksite facilities you get in your regular worksites?	Did you see any alternatives for your present job in last three years? If yes specify the reason for change.	What types of general problems are associated with your regular job? (Use code)

Block: 3: MGNREGS Related Questions

3. A. Did you do MGNREGS work in year 2014-2015? (Codes: yes=1, no=2)

3. B.I. (For those who have answered code 1 for Q.no 3.A.)

When did your HH applied for MGNREGS job in 2014-2015	Main Reason for applying MGNREGS Job	Who placed the demand of job on behalf of your HH? (Name & Sex)	Do you know how the demand was placed?	If yes, details	If no, what is the reason?	Gap between job demand & Job Receiving	How intra-HH job distribution was decided in Your household?	What is the general decision making process about MGNREGS in your household (registration, participation etc?)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

Codes: 1=agriculturally lean season; 2= agricultural season

3. B.II. Work Related Details of MGNREGS

How many days did you work under MGNREGS in 2014-2015?	Did you do MGNREGS work of your own choice? (yes=1, No=2)	If no, what was the reason behind your participation?	Period of work In year 2014-2015 (multiple entries are possible for an individual within a HH)	Category of work done (multiple entries are possible for an individual within a HH)	Among all these work, which one is preferable to you and why?	Average time worked per day
			1.	1.		1.
			2.	2.		2.
			3.	3.		3.

Category of work	Wage earned per day	Worksite Facilities	Did you enjoy any of these worksite facilities? (yes=1, no=2)	If Yes, give detail	If No, what was the reason?	Distance of worksites	Did you get any extra amount for the worksites situated more than 5 kms radius? (applicable if any worksites was situated more than 5km radius)
1.	1.	1.				1.	
2.	2.	2.				2.	
3.	3.	3.				3.	

3. B.III. Spending Related Attributes of MGNREGS

Do you consider NREGS wage as an extra source of Income Yes=1;No=2	If 1, did you spend it as you wished to? (Use Code) Yes=1. No=2	If yes, what did you buy?	If no, who determined your spending?	Is he/ she is determines spending for other income sources of the HH too? (yes=1, no=2)	In that case, what did you buy?	If you do not consider MGNREGS as an extra source of income, Why it is so?
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

What was the mode of payment for MGNREGS job? (Daily=1/ weekly=2/ end of the whole work=3/ delayed(specify)=97	How the money was paid? (Through Bank=1, P.O=2, Cash=3)	If it was bank/P.O, who operates it?	How many bank accounts do you have?	If you have only 1 account, is that the MGNREGS account? (yes=1, no=2)	If you have more than one account , specify	If you have more than one account, When did you open this? (before MGNREGS/ After MGNREGS)
(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)

Do you use your MGNREGS account for other purposes also? (yes=1, no=2)	If yes, specify	How often do you operate your account of your own?	What are the general purpose of withdrawal of money	Who decides about money withdrawal (self=1, joint=2, other HH members=3)
(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)

3. B.IV. Mobility Related Attributes of MGNREGS (for women respondents only)

Are you allowed to do all kind of daily work available? (yes=1, no=2)	If no, which kind of work is allowed to you?	If you get the opportunity to work outside village, will you be allowed to do so? (yes=1, no=2)	If no, who will restrict you and why?	If you go outside, do you need to take someone as a company? (yes=1, no=2)	Whether he should be a male member or any other Person?
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)

Did you participate in NREGS meeting in your village in last 3years? (Yes=1;No=2)	If No, state the reason	Do you visit village Panchayat? (yes=1, no=2)	If no, state the reason	If yes, how often you visit Panchayat for MGNREGS & other purposes ?	What are the other purposes you visit Panchayat?	Do you feel free to visit Panchayat office for NREGS & other work? (Yes=1, no=2)	If no, state the reason	Did you participate in village meeting in your village in last 3years? (Yes=1;No=2)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)

3. B.V.Awareness Related Attributes of MGNREGS

Awareness Attributes	Respondent's answers
I. For how many days a household is entitled to get work under MGNREGS?	
ii. What is the current wage rate of NREGS & what was it in 2014-2015	
iii. Are you entitled for something if you won't get work after MGNREGS even after job demand? If yes, What?	
iv. What should be the gap between job demand & job receiving?	
v. Is there any difference between men and women in terms of distance? If so, what?	
vi. Do you think the villagers have a say indicating the nature of work should be done under MGNREGS?	
vii. Do you know, what assets should be built in a village through MGNREGS? If yes, Specify.	
viii. Do you know about unemployment allowance if you don't get MGNREGS work even after placing demand?	

3. B.VI Gender Relations Questions (Only for Women Respondents)

Questions	Respondent's answers
i. Does your Husband help you in Household Chores?	
ii. If Yes, What kind of help he render?	
iii. Does any of the male member of the family helps you when you do NREGS work? If yes, Specify	
iv. Does your son participate in household work?	
v. if yes, what kind of work?	
vi. Who takes the daily household decision?	
vii. Provide a brief detail of your household decision making process.	

viii. Can you spend money on your own self? (Yes=1;No=2)	
---	--

3. B. VII. Economic Activity Related Questions

Questions	Respondent's answer
i) Have you taken any loan in your own name?	
ii) If yes, for what purpose?	
iii) Does MGNREGS wage help you to repay the loan, fully or partially?	

3. B. VIII. MGNREGS Created Asset Related Questions

Questions	Respondent's answer
i) Do you know which assets have been created in your village through MGNREGA?	Yes/No
ii) If yes, which asset you prefer most and why?	
iii) If you have no preference, state reason	

3.B. IX. Questions for Women Workers (Worked under MGNREGS in 2014-15)

1. Did wages earned from MGNREGS made any difference in your day to day lives? If yes, in what ways.
2. In your absence if someone else does the household work? If someone else does? Who?
3. What kind of difficulties do you face while performing under NREGS?
4. Do you think, men should be preferred to do MGNREGS work? If so, then why?
5. Are there any functional problems for MGNREGS work? If yes, give detail.
6. If you get MGNREGS work and other work at the same time, what would you prefer and why?
7. Why did you work only in MGNREGS in year 2014-15 and not in other fields? (Applicable for category-III workers only)

3. B. X. Questions for Men Workers (Worked under MGNREGS in 2014-2015)

1. Do you think that NREGS work should be preferred for women? If yes, Why?
2. Do you think child care facilities are adequate in MGNREGS worksites? Do you think NREGS works for women results less child care?
3. What changes you would like to see in MGNREGS/ other work convenient to women?

4. Are there any functional problems for MGNREGS work? If yes, give detail.
5. If you get MGNREGS work and other work at the same time, what would you prefer and why?

4. Respondent's suggestion for the improvement of the situation.