

STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF MGNREG SCHEME IN BELGAUM DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION :

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, or NREGA, was brought into force by the Union government in February 2006. The Act is far-reaching in its intent and scope. It is the first nation-wide employment scheme that guarantees employment legally to India's rural population. Naturally, it has generated intense speculation and interest. The NREGA is being implemented in 200 socio-economically most backward districts of 27 states in the country. It guarantees 100 days of unskilled jobs per rural household. More importantly, the Act aims at eradication of extreme poverty and at making villages self-sustaining through productive assets creation (such as water tanks and soil conservation works). This is meant to regenerate the rural natural resource base, which in turn will result in sustainable livelihoods for residents. The Act puts Panchayati Raj Institutions (the third tier of government in India i.e the village level) at the helm of affairs, beginning with identifying the eligible households to planning the works to be undertaken. The government has referred to it as an "Act of the people, by the people, and for the people".

But is the Act living up to its scope and potential? the NREGA faces a two-pronged challenge: the immediate one of addressing the skyrocketing unemployment crisis in rural areas, and a longer-term one of contributing to village economy in a sustained manner.

Effective implementation of the Act would require planning labour-intensive works for the needy poor on a continuous and sustained basis. These works must build the right kind of assets to promote development of local/regional economy. To ensure that the impact of the Act is sustainable and lasts over the longer term, these assets must be managed well and in an equitable way to generate benefits for the poor, as well as to promote pro-poor economic growth. In this context, the NREGA should be seen more as a livelihood-generating programme than a wage-earning scheme. It also offers a unique opportunity to turn around rural development.

This Act is an important step towards the realization of the right to work. It is also expected to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis, by developing the economic and social infrastructure in rural areas. The choice of works seeks to address the causes of chronic poverty such as drought, deforestation and soil erosion. Effectively implemented, the employment generated under the Act has the potential of transforming the geography of poverty. NREGA calls for the formulation of a Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (REGS) by each State Governments within six months of the date of commencement of the Act. The purpose of the Scheme is to give effect to the legal guarantee of work, by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed employment to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to the conditions of this Act. Each Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is required to have the minimum features specified in Schedule I and Schedule II of the Act. Section 4 of the Act also provides that until such a Scheme is notified by the State Government, the Annual or Perspective Plan of the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) or the National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP), whichever is in force in that area, shall be deemed to be the action plan for the Scheme for the purposes of the Act.

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These Guidelines have been formulated to facilitate the design and implementation of Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes. NREGA is the first ever law internationally, that guarantees wage employment at an unprecedented scale. The primary goal of NREGA is to create a **strong social safety net** for vulnerable groups by providing a fall-back employment source, when other employment sources are scarce or inadequate. It strives to strengthen the natural resource base by providing work focused on water conservation, land development and drought proofing, thus **reducing migration** by rural poor households in the lean period. It acts as a model of governance reform anchored on the principles of transparency and accountability by serving as **growth engine** for sustainable development of agricultural economy.

Salient Features :

The programme was unique in many aspects that helped to achieve the support of various stakeholders. Some of its salient features NREGA are :

- **Wholesome Package.** It is an employment programme coupled with a rural upliftment scheme to create social equity, an empowerment scheme and a crucial public investment method to create durable assets.
- **Strong Legal Framework:** The State is made legally binding to satisfy the right to work and wage payment within 15 days as per this scheme. State Governments are liable to pay unemployment allowance to wage seekers if it fails to provide employment within the stipulated time.
- **Demand Driven:** Resource transfer under NREGA is based on the demand unlike the other employment programmes and thus provides another critical incentive to states to leverage the act to meet employment needs of the poor.
- **Decentralized Planning:** The programme strengthens decentralization and deepens the processes of democracy by giving a pivotal role to the Panchayati Raj institutions in planning, monitoring and implementation.
- **Women Empowerment:** At least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women who have registered under the scheme making them independent and increasing their overall awareness.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Social audits by the Gram Sabhas, mandatory disclosure of muster rolls, public accessibility of all documents and account, regular updating of job cards infuses transparency and accountability in governance.
- **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:** The scheme lays emphasis on responsive implementation process. All accounts and records related to the scheme are available for public scrutiny.
- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** Centralization of data because of its wide scale has been resolved through web enabled Management Information System.

Area of Study: BELGAUM District :

Belgaum is the largest district in the State of Karnataka in terms of area, Belgaum lies on the northern boundary of Karnataka adjoining the State of Maharashtra and Goa. The majestic Sahyadris separate it from the State of Goa in the West. In the East lies the district of Bagalkot and Bijapur while on the South it is bounded by Gadag and Dharwad districts. Blessed with salubrious climate and cosmopolitan culture, located 125 kms from Goa, nestled in the foothills of the Western Ghats, Belgaum is surrounded by natural beauty in the form of rivers, hills and dense evergreen forests. A wide variety of historical sites, temples and churches exist in and around the city, most notably the Kamala Basti. The National Highway 4 and the broad gauge railway line between Bangalore and Mumbai cut through the district, providing excellent accessibility to the rest of the country. Belgaum is situated at an equal distance of 500 Kms from Bangalore, Mumbai. The nearest seaport is Karwar.

Demographics The taluka has 4 hoblies, 119 villages, 54 Gram Panchayats, 1 City Municipal Corporation. Markhanday River flows in the taluk but, irrigation facility is available in the taluka by means of wells and borewells. Agriculture is the main occupation in the taluk.

Etymology Belgaum is anglicized name of Belgaon a Marathi version of the word. The name is derived from the Sanskrit word Velugrama and Kannada word Venugrama i.e., "Bamboo Vilage".

Occupation Main occupation in the taluka is Industrial Activity and Agriculture. Of the total 103721 Hectres area, 63137 hectres area is cultivated and 12980 hectre area is cultivated more than once. Jowar, Maize, Paddy, Wheat, Sunflower, Sugarcane, Tobbacco, Cotton, Grapes and Mango are the main crops.

Table 1.1 Belgaum District in Numbers

Area	13,415 sq.kms
Forest Land	192731 Hectres
Latitude	15°23 to 16°58'N
Longitude	74°5' to 75°28'E
Population	47,78,439
Population Density	356 per sq. km
Sex Ratio	969
No. of Sub Division	3
No. of Tehsils	10
No. of Villages	1278
Average Rainfall	1270mm
Postal Code	5900XX
Std Code	0831
Literacy	73.94 percent

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM :

The primary goal of NREGA is to create a strong social safety net for vulnerable groups by providing a fall-back employment source, when other employment sources are scarce or inadequate. It strives to strengthen the natural resource base by providing work focused on water conservation, land development and drought proofing, thus reducing migration by rural poor households in the lean period. It acts as a model of governance reform anchored on the principles of transparency and accountability by serving as growth engine for sustainable development of agricultural economy. The present study is undertaken to ascertain the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in Belgaum District (MGNREGA). An endeavor has been made to analyze the impact of the Act, the efficacy of the implementing machinery and the overall change brought about by MGNREGA in the lives of the poor people residing in rural areas of Belgaum District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To ascertain the extent of awareness of the Act, the process of application for employment, registration, wage payment etc under MGNREGA,
2. To study the employment generation by the MGNREGA;
3. To study the benefits of the scheme to the poverty stricken sections of the society;
4. To suggest remedial measures to improve the efficacy of the implementing machinery/processes / procedures to Zilla Panchayat, Belgaum.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

The study on hand is primarily an explorative study. It has been developed on the plank of both primary and secondary data.

Primary Data: The primary data have been elicited by administering an exhaustive questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered on 200 sample respondents. The sample respondents would include the job card holders registered under the scheme (male, female, physically challenged, disadvantaged workers covered under the scheme in 5 villages of Belgaum District. Secondly, the villagers to know the general awareness of the scheme and feedback on the scheme at large. With a view to eliciting legitimate information from cross sections of the society, the research student estimated the information from ladies and the gent respondents. Thus the selection of the sample respondents presents the case of simple random sampling. The University of Investigation is Belgaum District.

Secondary Data: The secondary data is collected through online database maintained by MGREGA website. In addition to this counseling was sought from the academicians and the experts. I also made use of various journals, magazines and articles published in the light of the aforesaid study.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY :

Beneficiaries are largely illiterate and could not differentiate between the government officials and surveyors. They began discussing all their concerns in general. Getting them to focus on all the dimensions of the scheme was a challenge.

Resources including availability of time and information.

The present study is primarily a micro level study. it is therefore, the conclusions drawn through micro level studies cannot be generalised. This is the basic limitation.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND CONCLUSIONS

GENDER :

Table 1.2 Gender of the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid male	106	53.0	53.0	53.0
female	94	47.0	47.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Although the sample size and the choosing of the respondents were on the random basis, it is interesting to see that the respondents are evenly split between male and female respondents approximately.

AGE-GROUP: the age wise distribution of the respondents is given below.

Table 1.3 Age of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-28	40	20.0	20.0	20.0
29-38	73	36.5	36.5	56.5
39-48	57	28.5	28.5	85.0
49-58	30	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Maximum of the respondent belong to the age group of 29-38 and 39-48 years. It indicates that the earning population has been largely benefited from the scheme and the scheme has catered to the problem of seasonal unemployment.

The scheme devised by the government has reached to all the age groups. It indicates that the objective of the scheme of providing employment with age not being the criteria has been also fulfilled.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION :

Table 1.3 Split of data pertaining to the Level of Education of the sample respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid No Formal Education	101	50.5	50.5	50.5
Primary	53	26.5	26.5	77.0
Secondary	14	7.0	7.0	84.0
SSLC	24	12.0	12.0	96.0
HSC	6	3.0	3.0	99.0
Degree	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

With 50% of the population has no formal education another 25% have exposure to basic schooling. This emphasizes the fact that those who needed this employment (Manual Labour) have been successfully offered the jobs. While SSLC and PUC pass outs coming to do wage labour just goes to show even today there is a lot of unemployment in the country and even in spite of the basic education people find it difficult to get jobs.

CASTE :

The following table presents the Caste of the Respondents.

Table 1.4 Split of data pertaining to the Caste of the Respondents of the sample respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid SC	43	21.5	21.5	21.5
ST	17	8.5	8.5	30.0
OBC	38	19.0	19.0	49.0
GM	102	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Almost 20% of the respondents were Scheduled Castes, 8% from Scheduled Tribes, 19% from the Other Backward Classes and the rest from other castes.

The very fact that the half of the respondents are from backward classes, indicates that the objective of the government to uplift these classes have been largely met during the survey.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME:

Given below is the distribution of the Household Income of the respondents.

Table 1.5

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Less than 5000	63	31.5	31.5	31.5
Less than 10000	112	56.0	56.0	87.5
More than 10000	25	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

From the above table, it is observed that 56% of the people who have received job cards are in the bracket of income below Rs.10000 annually. It indicates that the scheme has been reached the needy and would help people who are seasonally employed.

32% of the respondents are in the income bracket of less than Rs. 5000 annually and 12% are having income more than Rs. 10000.

STATUS OF EMPLOYMENT :

Table 1.6 Split of data pertaining to the Status of Employment of the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Fully Employed	24	12.0	12.0	12.0
Seasonally Employed	146	73.0	73.0	85.0
Unemployed	27	13.5	13.5	98.5
Urban Employed	1	.5	.5	99.0
Any Other	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The very purpose of MGREG Scheme is to make employment available to the seasonally unemployed seems to have been largely accomplished, as 73% of the respondents under the survey are seasonally employed and 100 days of employment has been hugely benefited mainly to this bracket of people.

Rest of the respondents were fully employed or unemployed.

SOURCE OF AWARENESS :

Table 1.7 Split of data pertaining to the Source of Awareness among the respondents.

Source of Awareness

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Neighbours	17	8.5	8.5	8.5
Relatives	5	2.5	2.5	11.0
Ward Member	5	2.5	2.5	13.5
Sarpanch	30	15.0	15.0	28.5
Media	20	10.0	10.0	38.5
Panchayat Office	123	61.5	61.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

It is interesting to note that 61% of the total respondents gather information on MGNREGA and its related aspects from the notifications of the local Panchayat offices. This could be taken as a barometer of the popularity of MGREGA scheme. It indicates that the Panchayat Officials have done a good deal of working on disseminating the details of the programme. Communicating all the features of the scheme to the beneficiaries is a very difficult job.

EASE OF REGISTRATION FOR JOB CARD :

Table 1.8 Split of data pertaining to the Ease of Registration for Job Card of the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	193	96.5	96.5	96.5
No	7	3.5	3.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The responses of the villages as regards the registration process and procedures under MGREGA scheme. 96% of the respondents have expressed their satisfaction on the formalities to be observed to enroll under MGREGA scheme. 4% of the respondents feel that the registration process is difficult. They find it difficult to register due to lack of awareness of formalities and the low literacy level of the respondents is also a major impediment in this regard. However, by and large it seems that the villagers tend to get along well with the MGREGA, its formalities and the official machinery implementing the same.

TIME GAP BETWEEN REGISTRATION :

Table 1.9 Split of data pertaining to the Time Gap between Registrations of the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid One Week	54	27.0	27.0	27.0
Two Weeks	78	39.0	39.00	66.00
Three Weeks	46	23.0	23.0	89.0
One Month	17	8.5	8.5	97.5
More than One Month	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Greater part of the respondents replied that they have received the job card within a week or within 15 days.

In compliance with the specifications of the scheme the job cards were offered within 15 days of registering for the job cards, by 66% of the respondents.

PAYMENTS TOWARDS JOB CARDS :

Table 1.10 Split of data pertaining to the Payments towards job cards by the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	12	6.0	6.0	6.0
No	188	94.0	94.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

94% of the respondents have made no such payments towards acquiring the job cards.

Few stray cases were found amounting to 6% of the population that they have made some payments towards procuring the job card.

PHOTOGRAPH ON JOB CARD :

Table 1.11 Split of data pertaining to the Photograph on Job Card of the respondents.

Does your Job Card have Photograph?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	144	72.0	72.0	72.0
No	56	28.0	28.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

72% of the respondents confirmed that they have photographs on their job cards.

Whereas there were small portion of respondents amounting to 28% who said that they were not sure about the photograph attached on their job cards.

PAYMENT MADE FOR PHOTOGRAPH :

Table 1.12 Split of data pertaining to the Payment made by the respondents towards photograph on the Job Card.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	18	9.0	9.0	9.0
No	182	91.0	91.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

91% of the respondents have made no such payments towards photographs on the job cards.

Few stray cases were found amounting to 9% of the population that they have made some payments towards photographs on the job card.

CUSTODY OF JOB CARD :

Table 1.13 Split of data pertaining to the custody of the Job Cards of the respondents.

Who has custody of Job Card?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Myself	113	56.5	56.5	56.5
Head of the Family	33	16.5	16.5	73.0
Ward Member	5	2.5	2.5	75.5
Sarpanch	10	5.0	5.0	80.5
Others	39	19.5	19.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

56% of the respondents replied that they themselves had the possession of the job cards and around 16% of the respondents had their job cards with their family members especially the women folk.

Some respondents said that their job cards were with the Gram Panchayat Officials. When asked upon

the reason to the officials they said that they had taken the job cards to attach the photographs and said that most of the card holders were illiterate and they found that they were incompetent to take the possession of the job card.

APPLICATION FOR JOB CARD :

Table 1.14 Split of data pertaining to the application for the job card made by the respondents.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	137	68.5	68.5	68.5
No	63	31.5	31.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Almost 70% of the respondents have submitted the application for the job card. However in most of the cases officials have assisted to complete as large number of beneficiaries are illiterate.

32% of the respondents got the employment offers and subsequently completed the application procedures. Usually before starting any work, the Panchayat officials make public announcements of the same through beat of drums; mostly people come forward to work after hearing such announcements.

LIST OF APPROVED WORK FOR GRAM PANCHAYAT :

Table 1.15 Split of data pertaining to the list of approved work for Gram Panchayat.

Is there a list of approved work for this year in G.P. ?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	117	58.5	58.5	58.5
No	83	41.5	41.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The respondents had a devoid response upon asked whether they were aware about the list of approved works in their village. 60% of the respondents said that they were completely aware of the approved list of works to be taken up.

Whereas 42% said that they were unaware of the approved work list. It may be noted that the illiterate population would not be aware of the list put up at the Panchayat Office.

It is because they have not visited the Gram Panchayat office, or they have not opted for jobs in the current financial year.

DISPLAY OF LIST OF APPROVED WORK :

Table 1.16 Split of data pertaining to the display of list of approved work.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Always	67	33.5	33.5	33.5
Frequently	51	25.5	25.5	59.0
Sometimes	48	24.0	24.0	83.0
Rarely	14	7.0	7.0	90.0
Never	20	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

34% of the respondents claim that they 'always' find some or the other work/ job displayed on the notices of gram panchayats. Hence they find it easy to ascertain and plan for their job accordingly. However, 26% of the respondents have responded that work is displayed 'frequently' and 24% of the respondents mention that work is displayed 'sometimes'. Hence the majority of the respondents claim that list of work is displayed at Gram Panchayat offices.

It indicates that the officials, to a satisfactorily extent have managed to make people aware of the approved works to be implemented.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE WORK :

Table 1.17 Split of data pertaining to the knowledge about the work to the respondents.

How do you come to know about the work?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Directly from public display in the G.P.	52	26.0	26.0	26.0
Officials of G.P.	109	54.5	54.5	80.5
Elected Representatives of G.P.	17	8.5	8.5	89.0
From Other Villagers	22	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The Gram Panchayat Officials to have made good efforts to make the people aware of the approved works. This shows that the officials were keen on making the project successful and make it reach the deserving.

To a greater extent for around 55% of the respondents said that they got to know about the work from the officials of the Gram Panchayat.

COMPLAINTS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS :

Table 1.18 Split of data pertaining to the complaints of the respondents.

Complaints related to work place

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Lack of Shade	22	11.0	11.0	11.0
Lack of Drinking Water	13	6.5	6.5	17.5
Lack of First Aid	10	5.0	5.0	22.5
Lack of Creche	6	3.0	3.0	25.5
None of these	146	73.0	73.0	98.5
Others	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

There were a little complaints regarding the work place and most of the respondents were satisfied with the working condition.

CRITERIA FOR WAGE PAYMENTS :**Table 1.19 Split of data pertaining to the Criteria for Wage Payment of the respondents.****Criteria for Wage Payment**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Piece Rate/Task Based	29	14.5	14.5	14.5
Time Based/Daily Wages	159	79.5	79.5	94.0
Both	7	3.5	3.5	97.5
Others	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the respondents replied saying that their wages were based on time rather than task based.

An interesting insight came across during the conversation with the respondents especially the men who felt that the wages should be based on piece rate or based on task rather than on daily basis. Men feel that efforts will be better rewarded should it be calculated against work turn over rather than daily basis. As much as they applaud the equality they also say money does matter.

AWARENESS ABOUT MINIMUM WAGE :**Table 1.20 Split of data pertaining to the Awareness among the respondents.****Are you aware of the Notified Minimum Wage ?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	101	50.5	50.5	50.5
No	99	49.5	49.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The above chart depicts that the question on the awareness levels of the minimum wages per worker per day. 51% of the respondents were aware of the minimum amount of wages that they are entitled to per day. 50% of them said they do not know the daily wage that they are entitled to. These people are actually illiterates who do not even understand simple denominations of the currency. It may be noticed that as per the Act, the labourers falling under the Belgaum jurisdiction are entitled to a minimum wage of Rs 82 per day for a minimum of 100 days. These rates are revised for the fiscal 2010-11 as Rs 100 per day for a minimum of 100 days.

MODE OF WAGE PAYMENT :**Table 1.21 Split of data pertaining to the Mode of Wage Payment of the respondents.****Mode of Wage Payment**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Cash	42	21.0	21.0	21.0
Post Office	8	4.0	4.0	25.0
Bank	149	74.5	74.5	99.5
Others	1	.5	.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The above chart shows that 75% of the respondents receive their wages through banks and 4% of the respondents receive it through post offices. It is noticed that since the labourers work in small groups it is easy for the authorities to identify them by individual names and inform them of the credit made to their respective bank accounts. Hence, with this back drop the role of a muster/ register at the workplace is undermined.

The rest of the respondents have failed to understand the question correctly.

READING OUT OF THE MUSTER ROLL :

Table 5.22 Split of data pertaining to the present the reading out of muster roll to the respondents.

Is the Muster Roll read when wages are paid?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	69	34.5	34.5	34.5
No	131	65.5	65.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the people have not followed up on the muster roll updates. Most of the respondents are least concerned about the bureaucratic procedures. Their prime interest lies in getting the wages paid for their labour. This may be the reason why so many respondents at large are not bothered to get the muster read out.

AWARENESS ABOUT THE COMPLAINT BOOK :

Table 1.23 Split of data pertaining to the Awareness about the Complaint Book

Awareness about complaint book at G.P. Office?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	105	52.5	52.5	52.5
No	95	47.5	47.5	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The above graph shows that 52% of the respondents are able to locate a suggestion/ Complaint registers whenever they feel like doing so. 48% of the respondents say that they are not in a position to locate the suggestion/ complaint register.

Majority of the complaints of the unskilled workers are oral in nature; hence the authorities may have thought that it is redundant to have such a facility in some villages.

DISPOSAL OF COMPLAINTS :

Table 1.24 Split of data pertaining to the disposal of complaints of the respondents.

Are the complaints disposed within time?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	96	48.0	48.0	48.0
No	104	52.0	52.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The above Table shows that 48% of the respondents have nodded in affirmative as regards redressal of the complaints are concerned.

However, 52% of the total respondents say that their grievances are not handled properly by the concerned authorities. Further investigation threw light on the fact that most of the complaints are about

the delayed payments and officials said that they too are held on payments on time from the higher ups for release of payments.

SUGGESTIONS :

It is imperative that in a country like India where extreme diversity prevails, majority of them are illiterates and unskilled, implementation of such a scheme is a real challenge. It is commendable to note the over whelming response of the villagers to the scheme. There is no doubt that the scheme has been implemented in letter and spirit with all earnestness by the Zilla Panchayat machinery of Belgaum district. However a few suggestions are made based on observations, so as to further improve the efficiency of the scheme with a professional flair:

1. As has already been pointed out earlier that implementation of such mammoth schemes encompassing rural and illiterate individuals needs a good leader and an equally good team. We were happy to experience good leadership and team work at ZP Belgaum. It is therefore suggested that the State Government may provide stability of tenure to dynamic and result oriented officers so that the scheme is implemented in letter and spirit to its logical end. The beneficiaries are very happy with the scheme and therefore they have suggested that the scheme should continue.

2. The channels of communications between the Government and the villagers concerned may be made more robust so as to help the villagers to know the facilities available under a given scheme. This can also thwart the unwanted role of intermediaries who wish to make quick bucks by playing with innocence and ignorance of the villagers, this can also plug the lacunae often found in many Government schemes and their implementation processes and enhance the list of beneficiaries under the scheme.

3. Since skill formation is the bedrock for the success of schemes of the eminence of MGREGS, under this scheme lot of emphasis is given on the formation of skills. If the project/ employment are able to teach them permanent skills they then can use the same to earn their livelihood even when such projects are unavailable.

4. It is suggested that there may be periodic revision of wage rate and release of funds promptly. An effort in this direction is needed.

5. Decreasing the waiting time for receipt of wages will exert favorable impact of the scheme tremendously.

6. The projects must be planned and floated at the time when the seasonal unemployment hits the region. Synchronization of project during seasonal unemployment must be practiced.

This study of MGNREGS has illustrated to us, as to how 'great social ideas' can be successfully incorporated into Public Policy if they find the right support.

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