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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MGNREGP : A MICRO LEVEL STUDY.

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#### Manuscript Info

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#### Abstract

Government of India is implementing a lot of programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1978), National Rural Employment Program (NREP, 1980), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP, 1983), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS, 1993) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA, 2005) in order to provide employment opportunities to the rural poor. Among them the latest one, i.e MGNREGP is said to be making a lot of improvements. This programme aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. The scheme not only provides employment opportunities to the rural masses but also helps for the upliftment of the rural area. The various activities undertaken by MGNREGA are water conservation and water harvesting; drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation; irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works; land development, renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks; etc. To test the claims of MGNREGA a micro level study was conducted in a Odayagoundenpalayam village in TN Palayam of Block of Erode district. In this village, number of persons registered in MGNREGP were 553, out of which 306 belongs to SCs and the remaining 247 belongs to other caste. It was found that the major works undertaken in this village were delisting of ponds and deepening and strengthening of inlet canals. These works can be considered as useful given the agricultural background of the selected village.

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#### Introduction:-

To provide employment opportunities to the rural masses Government of India is implementing a lot of programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1978), National Rural Employment Program (NREP, 1980), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Program (RLEGP, 1983), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS, 1993) and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA, 2005). Since its inception MGNREGP is said to be making a lot of improvements in the livelihoods of rural poor. The scheme was introduced in 200 districts during financial year 2006-07 and 130 districts during the financial year 2007-08. In April 2008 NREGA expanded to entire rural area of the country covering 34 States and Union Territories, 614 Districts, 6,096 Blocks and 2.65 lakhs Gram Panchayats. This programme aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas

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by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

The basic objective of the Act is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment on demand. This work guarantee can also serve other objectives: generating productive assets, protecting the environment, rural empowerment of women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity, development initiative, public investments for creation of durable assets, decentralized implementation and so on.

#### **Activities covered under MGNREGA:-**

The various activities covered under MGNREGA are

- Water conservation and water harvesting;
- Drought proofing (including afforestation and tree plantation)
- Irrigation canals including micro and minor irrigation works;
- Provision of irrigation facility, horticulture plantation and land development facilities to land owned by households belonging to the Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes or Below Poverty Line families or to beneficiaries of land reforms or to the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojna of the Government of India or that of small farmers or marginal farmers as defined in the Agriculture Debt Waiver and Debt Relief Scheme, 2008. (The benefits of works on individual lands have been extended to small and marginal farmers vide notification dated 22.7.2009)
- Renovation of traditional water bodies including desilting of tanks;
- Land development;
- Flood control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas;
- Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access.
- Construction of Bharat Nirman, Rajiv Gandhi Sewa Kendra as Village Knowledge Resource Centre and Gram Panchayat Bhawan at Gram Panchayat level (included vide Notification dated 11.11.2009).
- Any other work which may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government.

#### **Stages of MGNREGA:-**

There are at least seven stages where workers need to monitor their entitlements

- a) Registration as a worker and receiving a 'job card'
- b) Applying for and receiving work
- c) Ensuring peoples participation and control over the planning process
- d) Organisation of the work site and measurement of work
- e) Payment of wages or payment of unemployment allowance
- f) Social audit after the work is completed, and
- g) Monitoring of the complaint and redressal machinery

#### **Objectives of the Study:-**

1. To find out the cropping pattern and source of irrigation of the selected village
2. To find out the performance of implementation of MGNREGP at the selected village in terms of selected variables and its impact on agriculture.

#### **Sources of Information and Data:-**

In Erode District of Tamil Nadu, T N Palayam Block consists of 10 Village Panchayats and out of them Odayagoundenpalayam village has been selected for the present study. In this village the number of registered persons with MGNREGP were 553, out of which 306 belong to SCs and the remaining 247 belong to other castes. Interviews were held with 56 (10% of the randomly selected sample, 31 SCs and 25 other caste persons) beneficiaries. Apart from this the organizer, President of village panchayat and ward members were also. The data regarding the Lower Bhavani Project (LBP) canal were obtained from the Engineering Division of Public Works Department (PWD) Gobi Branch.

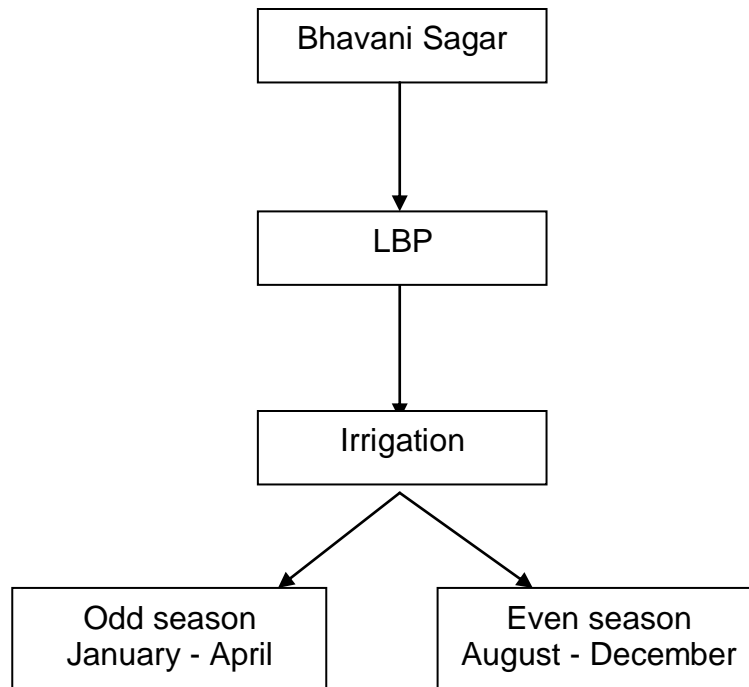
#### **Background of the selected Village:-**

The total population of the village is 2027 out of which 1039 are males and 988 are females. The population consist of Gounders the backward community and SCs.

**Source of Irrigation:-**

In the study village the distribution of water from Bhavanisagar Dam (LBP) is the major source of irrigation. About 80 per cent of the net irrigated area uses canal water. With the help of open wells and bore wells farming operations are carried out throughout the year in this village.

In the alternative years during the odd season the village gets canal water for 4 months i.e from January 15 – April 15, during this period the major crops cultivated are paddy, maize, tapiaco etc and for the even season it gets water for 3 months from August 15 – December 15 which may extended upto December 31, which helps to grow groundnut, sugar cane and tobacco.

**Inlet Canal:-**

The canal water comes from Kodivery Branch and distributed through Odayagoundepalayam sub-branch. The length of it was 1km. It was further divided into three sluices, 1<sup>st</sup> right 27.17 acres, 2<sup>nd</sup> left sluice 42.02 acres and 3<sup>rd</sup> right sluice 65.36 acres. Regarding tail end it was divided into left which irrigates 33.02 acres, right 65.00 acres and straight 60.00 acres. Altogether the total area irrigated was 292.57 acres during the odd turn.

**Land Use and Cropping Pattern:-**

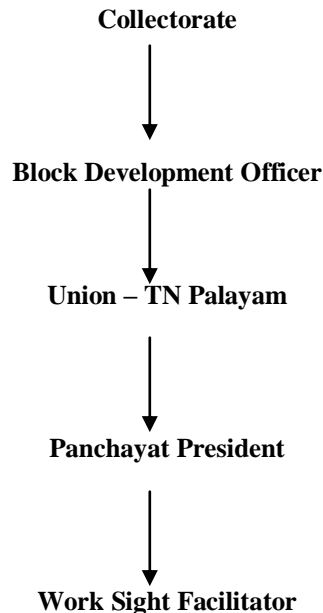
The total area of the village is 491.46 hectare and out of which 231.55 hectare are irrigated with canal water and 15 acre are irrigated with well water, as per the data obtained from the last fasli year

Category of land	Land Area in hectare
Canal water	231.53 hectare
Well and Borewell water	15 acres
CPR	52.04.92 hectare
Barren Land	199.41.64 hectare
Housing	8.37.94 hectare

The main occupation of the village is agriculture. Cash crops like sugarcane, tobacco, tapioca, cotton, plantation, turmeric and food crops like paddy and maize are cultivated. Regarding irrigation farmers are utilizing both well and canal water.

### Planning of MGNREGP in the Village

It involves the selection of projects / works and the channel of work allotment



### Supervision and Monitoring:-

The work allotted will be supervised by one among the registered members who is a literate. He / She has to allot the work and supervise the work (work site facilitator) and paid Rs 148/- per day.

TN Palayam Block consists of ten villages and there is by one office in-charge for work allotment. The work will be monitored by Overseer who belongs to the Engineering Division, TN Palayam Block. Revenue Inspectors will also make frequent visits to these villages.

### Performance of MNERGA:-

In this village the MNERGA has been in progress from 2009 onwards. Every year they have to renew their card. The wage in 2009 was Rs 80 and at present the wage increased to Rs 148/- per day.

### Nature of work done under MNERGP:-

The major works undertaken were delisting of ponds and deepening and strengthening of inlet canals, apart from desilting and laying of village roads.

Each group will be allotted work according to the measurement. A group consist of 20 members. Each group has to complete the allotted work. If they completed the work within the stipulated time period they will get full amount of wage (i.e Rs 148/- per day) otherwise they will get wages between Rs 115 and Rs 120 only.

Regarding the strengthening of inlet canals the amount was sanctioned twice i.e Rs 3.05 lakhs during 2009 – 2010 and Rs 3 lakhs during 2010 – 2011.

### Benefits from MGNREGA:-

The scheme not only benefits the rural people but also it paves way for the development of agriculture. Under this scheme the major works undertaken in the village like delisting of ponds and deepening and strengthening of inlet canals, apart from desilting and laying of village roads benefits the village a lot. The strengthening of inlet canals help in increasing the more number of acres get well irrigated.

### To Conclude:-

From the experience of MGNREGP in this village it was found that this scheme supplemented the growth of agriculture to a significant level.

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