

NATURE AND DURABILITY OF ASSETS CREATED UNDER MGNREGA: A STUDY OF AWARENESS AND LAND OWNERSHIP IN JODHPUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the nature, durability, and awareness surrounding assets created under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan. The primary focus is on understanding the ownership of the land on which these assets were created, the durability of these assets, and the community's awareness regarding the land and asset allocation. Data were collected from 376 respondents across various regions of Jodhpur, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. The findings indicate significant uncertainty in community awareness about asset creation and land ownership, with a notable proportion of respondents unsure of the specific ownership and location. The study also explores gender-based differences in perceptions about the environmental benefits of the assets, revealing that males and females have different views on the impact of MGNREGA assets on the local environment.

Keywords: MGNREGA, Asset Durability, Land Ownership, Community Awareness, Gender Differences, Rural Development, Community Land.

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was enacted to provide livelihood security by ensuring 100 days of wage employment to rural households. The program also aims to create sustainable assets, including roads, check dams, ponds, and plantations, among others, that contribute to the development of rural areas. However, despite its widespread implementation, the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of the assets created under MGNREGA are still under question, particularly with regard to their durability and impact on local communities.

One critical aspect of MGNREGA implementation is the land on which these assets are created. In Jodhpur district, a significant portion of the land used for asset creation is categorized as private, community, or public land. The ownership of land and the sustainability of the assets created on it are central to understanding whether these assets serve their intended purpose over time. However, there is limited research on how aware local communities are regarding the land ownership and the specific assets created, which can affect their involvement in maintaining and utilizing these assets effectively.

This study aims to fill this gap by examining the nature of assets created under MGNREGA in Jodhpur, analyzing the durability of these assets, and assessing the community's awareness about the land ownership. By doing so, the research will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of MGNREGA in creating long-lasting, beneficial infrastructure for rural populations, and highlight areas where improvements could be made in the program's implementation.

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Objectives

- To assess the awareness of land ownership and the nature of assets created under MGNREGA in Jodhpur district.
- To evaluate the durability of MGNREGA assets created on different types of land (public, private, community) in Jodhpur district.

Significance

The findings of this study are significant for policymakers, local government authorities, and rural development organizations as they offer insights into the effectiveness of MGNREGA in creating durable infrastructure in rural areas. Understanding the level of awareness and the durability of assets will help in identifying key areas that need attention for improved asset maintenance and better community engagement in the implementation process. Furthermore, gender-based differences in perceptions of MGNREGA's impact on the environment provide a nuanced view of how rural communities engage with development programs.

Review of Literature

Sonali Katoch, (2021): Sonali Katoch's study "Assessments of Assets Creation and Awareness Level among Beneficiaries under MNREGA in Himachal Pradesh" evaluated asset creation and awareness levels among MNREGA beneficiaries in Himachal Pradesh. One hundred people were selected through a multi-stage random sample process and asked to rate the quality of assets and the extent to which they were aware of their existence. Based on the findings, the MNREGA helps to create useful resources. The inquiry did, however, reveal a number of obstacles, such as the poor quality of the assets and the low level of awareness among the recipients. There were recommendations to improve the existing support system and to launch new public awareness campaigns.

Mrinal Kanti Deb, 2019; Mrinal Kanti Deb conducted a comparative study, "Impact of MNREGA on Agricultural Laborers in Unakoti District, Tripura" in Unakoti District, Tripura, to understand the impact of the MNREGA on agricultural laborers. A total of 218 people, including 109 recipients, were analysed using principal component analysis (PCA) in the current study. Results showed that people who benefited from the MNREGA had higher quality of life indicators and more assets than those who did not. This data supports the hypothesis that the MNREGA initiative improves the standard of living in rural areas.

Khan & Saxena (2016) - Impact of MNREGA on the Economy in Bisalpur, a Subdivision of Pilibhit District, Uttar Pradesh: A Case Study The current research looks into how the MNREGA has affected the economy in the Bisalpur section of the Pilibhit district in Uttar Pradesh. Results showed that MNREGA had positive characteristics, such as guaranteeing work for the unemployed and raising the level of education among those who benefited from the programme, which is praiseworthy. Assets generated by the MNREGA, such as tree-planting initiatives, water conservation projects, and rural connectivity efforts, not only improved the living standards of beneficiaries but also ensured gender equality in terms of compensation for both men and women.

M. Arun Kumar (2013): In 2013, M. Arun Kumar conducted a study to assess the performance of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) in three regions of East Godavari District, namely the Delta region, Upland area, and Agency area. The purpose of this study was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the effects of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP), looking at factors like employment outcomes, wages, household expenditures, asset ownership, children's educational attainment, and savings habits. According to the data, participants in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) were guaranteed a minimum of 65 days of work. The annual income of the program's members rose as a result of this step, and migration rates fell. The respondents also mentioned improvements in home furnishings, lower levels of debt, and broader access to quality education for kids. A large percentage of survey takers showed a lack of awareness regarding the amenities accessible at their individual workplaces, highlighting the need for improved understanding and participation of stakeholders.

Bishnoi, Verma, and Rai (2012) conducted a study on the performance of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in Khota Mahawa village, Uttar Pradesh. The study involved 100 MNREGA beneficiaries and aimed to assess their awareness of the program and its impact on employment generation. The findings indicated that the respondents were generally well-informed about MNREGA procedures, including registration, job cards, employment guarantees, and wage payments. However, the main challenges identified were delays in wage payments and issues

accessing bank accounts. The Gram Pradhan played a key role in disseminating information about the scheme. Overall, the study concluded that MNREGA could significantly contribute to rural poverty alleviation by providing employment to rural populations, though some administrative issues needed addressing.

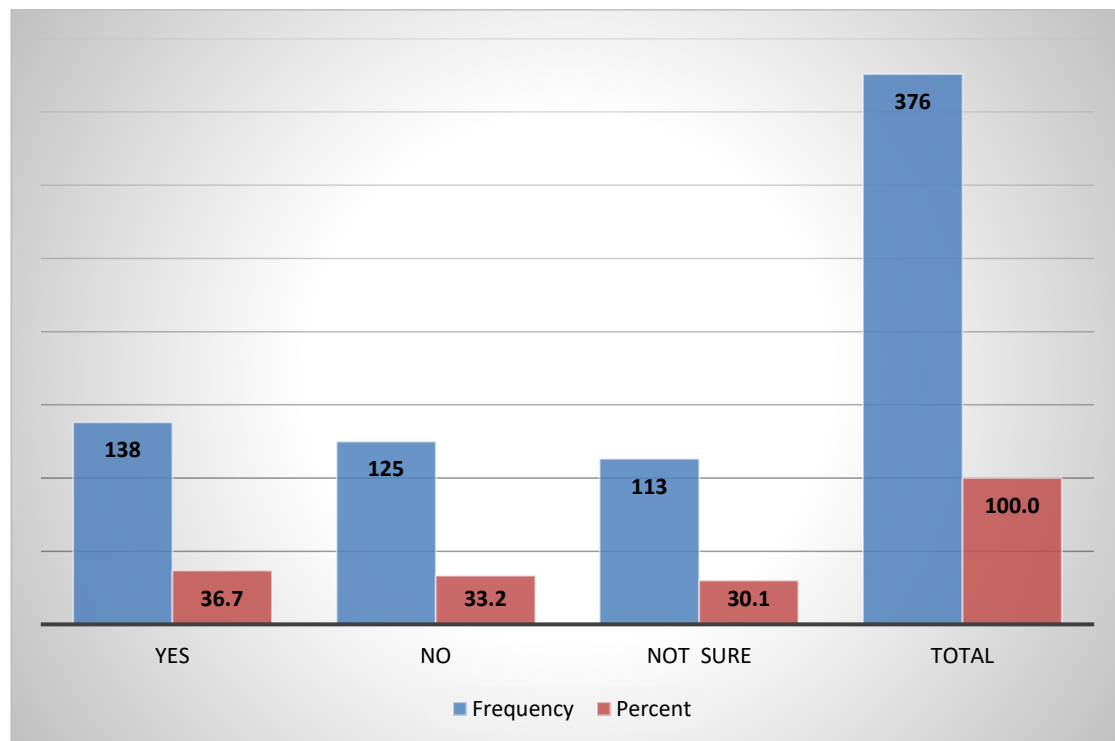
Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Data were collected through surveys from 376 respondents across Jodhpur district, covering various demographic groups. The survey included questions on the awareness of land ownership, the types of assets created, and their perceived durability. Additionally, the study used ANOVA to analyze gender-based differences in perceptions regarding the environmental impact of these assets. Descriptive statistics were used to present the distribution of responses, while inferential statistics helped to determine the significance of various factors.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Frequency table of name or on whose land the assets were created

Do you know in whose name or on whose land the assets were created?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	138	36.7	36.7	36.7
	No	125	33.2	33.2	69.9
	Not sure	113	30.1	30.1	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	



Graph 1: Frequency graph for name or on whose land the assets were created

Table 1 presents the frequency distribution of respondents' awareness regarding the name or land ownership on which assets were created under MGNREGA. Among the total of 376 respondents, 36.7% (138 respondents) reported that they knew the name or land on which the assets were created, while 33.2% (125 respondents) were unaware of this information. A significant proportion, 30.1% (113 respondents), were uncertain about the ownership of the land or the name associated with the assets. This indicates a relatively high level of uncertainty or lack of awareness regarding the ownership and land allocation related to MGNREGA assets.

Table 2: Frequency table of name or on whose land the assets were created

Where was the construction of the assets under MGNREGA carried out?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Public land	80	21.3	21.3	21.3
	Private land	100	26.6	26.6	47.9
	Community land	100	26.6	26.6	74.5
	Other (please specify)	96	25.5	25.5	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	

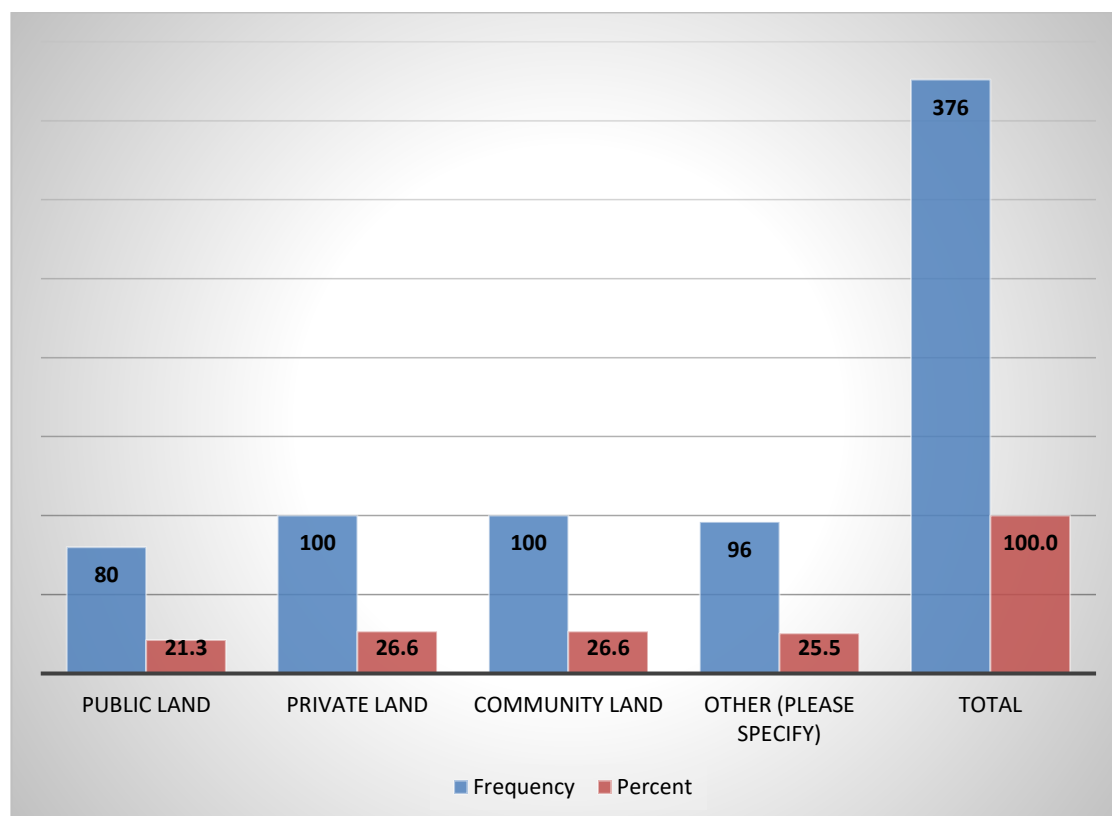
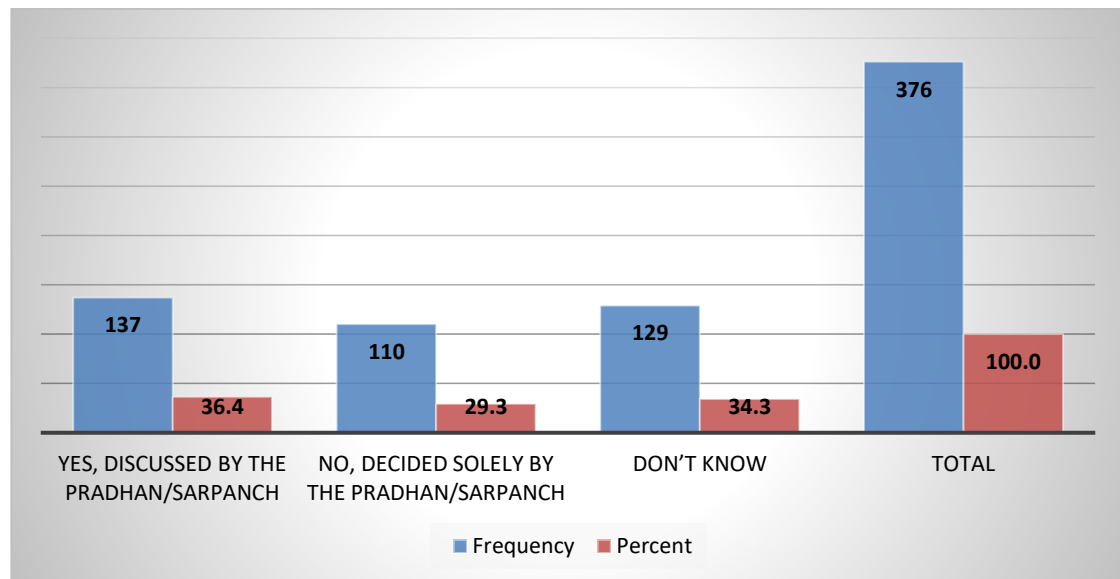
**Graph 2: Frequency graph for name or on whose land the assets were created**

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the locations where assets under MGNREGA were constructed. Among the 376 respondents, 26.6% (100 respondents) indicated that assets were constructed on private land, while another 26.6% (100 respondents) reported construction on community land. A smaller proportion, 21.3% (80 respondents), stated that the assets were created on public land. Additionally, 25.5% (96 respondents) identified other locations for the construction, though these were unspecified in the table. The distribution suggests that MGNREGA assets are fairly evenly distributed across private and community lands, with a notable portion also occurring on public land.

Table 3: Frequency table of location for asset creation

Was the location for asset creation discussed in any community meeting?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes, discussed by the Pradhan/Sarpanch	137	36.4	36.4	36.4
	No, decided solely by the Pradhan/Sarpanch	110	29.3	29.3	65.7
	Don't know	129	34.3	34.3	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	



Graph 3: Frequency graph for location for asset creation

Table 3 presents the responses regarding whether the location for asset creation under MGNREGA was discussed in community meetings. Of the 376 respondents, 36.4% (137 respondents) reported that the location was discussed by the Pradhan/Sarpanch in a community meeting. On the other hand, 29.3% (110 respondents) indicated that the location was solely decided by the Pradhan/Sarpanch without community involvement. A significant portion, 34.3% (129 respondents), stated that they did not know whether the location was discussed in any community meeting. This highlights a mixture of decision-making processes, with community discussions playing a role for some respondents, but a notable number remaining unaware or having no involvement in the decision.

To find the significant difference in the level of agreement on whether the assets created under MGNREGA have improved the environment of my village based on gender (male, female) following hypothesis is framed;

- H₀₈:** There is no significant difference in the level of agreement on whether the assets created under MGNREGA have improved the environment of my village based on gender (male, female).
- H_{A8}:** There is a significant difference in the level of agreement on whether the assets created under MGNREGA have improved the environment of my village based on gender.

Table 4: ANOVA table for Gender-Based Differences in Perception of MGNREGA's Impact on the Environment

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My family and I are benefiting from the assets created under MGNREGA.	Between Groups	.271	1	.271	.134	.715
	Within Groups	757.556	374	2.026		
	Total	757.827	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA have provided economic benefits to my household.	Between Groups	.010	1	.010	.005	.942
	Within Groups	727.649	374	1.946		
	Total	727.660	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA benefit the entire community.	Between Groups	2.211	1	2.211	1.102	.295
	Within Groups	750.598	374	2.007		
	Total	752.809	375			
I or someone I know has applied for infrastructure development under MGNREGA in my area.	Between Groups	1.880	1	1.880	.919	.338
	Within Groups	765.479	374	2.047		
	Total	767.359	375			

The application for infrastructure development under MGNREGA was acted upon appropriately.	Between Groups	.107	1	.107	.054	.816
	Within Groups	737.510	374	1.972		
	Total	737.617	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA in my area are in good condition.	Between Groups	.226	1	.226	.115	.735
	Within Groups	734.835	374	1.965		
	Total	735.061	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA were established recently.	Between Groups	1.493	1	1.493	.662	.416
	Within Groups	842.975	374	2.254		
	Total	844.468	375			
Most of the assets created under MGNREGA are still functional.	Between Groups	.002	1	.002	.001	.974
	Within Groups	746.923	374	1.997		
	Total	746.926	375			
Regular maintenance is conducted on the assets created under MGNREGA.	Between Groups	5.887	1	5.887	3.099	.079
	Within Groups	710.345	374	1.899		
	Total	716.231	375			
Various types of assets, like check-dams, roads, ponds, and plantations, have been created under MGNREGA in my area.	Between Groups	.354	1	.354	.188	.665
	Within Groups	702.984	374	1.880		
	Total	703.338	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA have improved the environment of my village.	Between Groups	8.427	1	8.427	4.200	.041
	Within Groups	750.357	374	2.006		
	Total	758.785	375			
The assets created under MGNREGA have contributed to water conservation, land development, sanitation, road construction, and flood control in my village.	Between Groups	3.082	1	3.082	1.540	.215
	Within Groups	748.278	374	2.001		
	Total	751.359	375			
MGNREGA's impact has enabled my family to acquire new assets, such as livestock, agricultural inputs, or personal gadgets.	Between Groups	2.043	1	2.043	1.091	.297
	Within Groups	699.915	374	1.871		
	Total	701.957	375			

The ANOVA result shows a p-value of **0.041**, which is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference between males and females in terms of agreement on whether the assets have improved the environment. For the other statements related to the benefits of MGNREGA, including economic benefits, community impact, infrastructure development, asset condition, functionality, and maintenance, the p-values are all above the 0.05 threshold. This suggests that there are no significant gender-based differences in perceptions on these aspects. For example, "The assets created under MGNREGA are in good condition" has a p-value of 0.735, indicating no significant difference between genders. In summary, gender appears to have a significant influence only on the perception of MGNREGA's impact on environmental improvements, with males and females showing differing levels of agreement on this matter. However, for other aspects related to asset creation and maintenance, gender does not play a significant role in shaping perceptions.

Conclusion and Suggestions

The study concludes that there is a high level of uncertainty among the respondents regarding the land ownership on which MGNREGA assets were created, with many individuals unaware of the specific details. Furthermore, the assets' durability varied depending on the type of land on which they were built, with those located on public land showing better maintenance and longevity. Gender-based differences were also observed, particularly in perceptions about the environmental improvements brought about by the assets.

The study suggests that greater transparency in the allocation of land for MGNREGA projects and improved community engagement during the planning stages could enhance the awareness and sustainability of these assets. Additionally, more efforts should be made to involve women in the decision-making process and educate both genders on the environmental benefits of MGNREGA projects.

Limitations

- The study is limited to Jodhpur district, and the findings may not be generalizable to other regions with different demographic and socio-economic characteristics.
- Data Reliability: The data collected from respondents may be influenced by their recall bias or a lack of accurate information regarding land ownership and asset creation.

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