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PERFORMANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME (MGNREGS) IN KARBI ANGLONG DISTRICT OF ASSAM (INDIA)

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ABSTRACT----------

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) is a unique rural development scheme implemented by Govt. of India from 2nd February, 2006. The scheme aims to provide an acceptable means of subsistence and livelihood by assuring 100 days of wage employment. In addition to eradicate rural poverty and unemployment, the scheme has given scope to impact on reduction of migration, agricultural productivity, financial inclusion, inclusive growth and women empowerment. This paper using secondary data attempted to assess the working and performance of MGNREGS in Karbi Anglong district of Assam with regard to employment generation, financial progress, women participation, inclusiveness of different social classes in the scheme. The study showed that female participation and inclusiveness of different social classes in the scheme were satisfactory. But inclusion of differently able people was less than the expected level. The study also showed that the scheme failed to ensure the 100 days job guarantee to the majority of job card holders during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21.

KEY WORDS: *Employment Generation, job card, women participation----------*

INTRODUCTION

Implemented from February 2, 2006, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Schemes (MGNREGS) is a unique rural development scheme operated by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. The scheme aims to provide an acceptable means of subsistence and livelihood by assuring 100 days of wage employment per financial year. It is a demand driven programme and pays equal wage to both man and woman. The MGNREG Act envisages minimum 33 percent women participation in MGNREGS activities. (http://nrega.nic.in/home.aspx) The scheme has an effect on alleviation of poverty, reduction of emigration of rural poor besides restricting child labour. Through creation of productive assets, the scheme also contributes in making village self-sustaining. (Panda and Majumdar, 2013)

MGNREGS has facilitated in strengthening the decentralised process of democracy by giving a crucial role to the Panchayati Raj Institutions regarding planning, monitoring and implementation. Several studies were conducted to appraise MGNREGS and its related issues (e.g.Ambasta et. al, 2008; Dey and Bedi, 2010; Panda and Majumder, 2013; Negi et. al.,2015). Some studies have analyzed the effect of the schemes while some others have discussed on the problems in implementation of the schemes (for e.g. Kareemulla et. al, 2009; Khera and Nayak ,2009; Hazarika,2009; Ahuja et. al.,2011; Harish et.al.,2011;Saraswat, 2011; Kharkwal and Kumar,2015; Marchang, 2016; Rani and Jahanara,2019). It is imperative to evaluate the performance of MGNREGS to be informed about the actual execution status of the scheme for rural development. However, in recent times, research work on performance of MGNREGS in Karbi Anglong district is scanty. This paper attempts to investigate the execution of MGNREGS in Karbi Anglong district and in the state of Assam in general.

Table 1: Physical progress of MGNREGS in India from 2015-16 to 2020-21

Feature	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Total job card issued (in Crore)	13.10	12.83	12.82	13.34	14.06	15.50
Employment provided to households (in crore)	4.55	4.86	4.86	5.27	5.48	7.55
Persondays (in crore)	234.94	235.23	233.67	267.81	265.27	388.91

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Source: http//mnregaweb4.nic.in

In India, the total job card issued during the year 2015-16 was 13.10 crore which has increased to 15.50 crore in 2020-21 (Table1). Up to 2020-21, 7.55 crore employments have been provided to households. Moreover, more than 388 crore persondays has been generated in 2020-21 from 234.94 crores in 2015-16.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study by **Ambasta et. al (2008**) exhibited that the number and quality of human resources deployed to execute the responsibilities of NREGA were inadequate. The other lacunas noticed in implementation of NREGA are absence of real social audit, availability of muster rolls on work site etc. Therefore, the study argued for deployment of full-time professionals at all levels, exclusively dedicated to implementation of NREGA with necessary support staff.

Kareemulla et. al (2009) studied the effect of National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) on rural livelihoods in Ananthapur district in Andhra Pradesh applying multi-stage random sampling. It reported that the NREGS had brought down the migration level from about 27 percent to only 7 percent in the sample villages. The study revealed that the scheme was unsuccessful in providing wage employment for 100 days as average employment was only for 25 days per household in the study area.

According to **Khera and Nayak (2009)**, MGNREGS has significantly contributed to the socio-economic status of the beneficiaries by enhancing food security. Moreover, the scheme has benefitted the women workers as they have enjoyed relatively safe and decent working condition.

Hazarika (2009), in his study in Morigaon and Bongaigaon districts of Assam, found that the scheme is successful to bring a higher position to the beneficiaries. After joining the scheme, the beneficiaries have become able to fulfil their own requirement.

A study conducted by **IRMA (2010)** exhibited that MGNREGA provided additional income to the families irrespective of gender and it helped a lot in promotion of rural economy and economic empowerment of women.

Dey and Bedi (2010) tried to examine whether NREGS served as a social safety net by giving a source of employment while other options were scarce. It revealed that the scheme had failed to fulfil this goal. In other areas like awareness and information about the scheme, issue of job card, payment of wage, the functioning of the scheme is good.

Harish et.al. (2011) measured the influence of MGNREGA on income generation and labourer supply to agriculture. The study concluded that the scheme had helped the beneficiaries by increasing their income and consequently it reduced their debt burden up to a certain limit and fuelled labourer scarcity for agricultural activities.

Saraswat's (2011) study in Andhra Pradesh for the period 2006-09 examines MGNREGA's contribution in accessibility to financial services. The analysis exhibits that participation in MGNREGA helped the beneficiaries to borrow more from formal financial sources. The investigation also revealed that the scheme created a link between financial institutions and financially excluded poor as it provided wage through bank and post office accounts.

Akthar et.al. (2012) examined the relation between rural development scheme and rural migration. According to the study, MGNREGS is an alternative path to stop rural migration. By assuring 100 days wage employment, the scheme has reduced migration of unskilled, landless labour force from rural to urban areas.

Singh (2012) in his research study found that MGNREGA changed the socio-economic scenario of rural India by enhancing female participation in the activities under the scheme and generating resources in regard to natural resource management. The study observed that complaints of corruption, pilferage of funds and low level of utilization of budget provision were the major problems associated with the scheme.

Panda and Majumder (2013) argued for the necessity of critical examination about the implementation process of MGNREGS. Their study, using secondary data, reviewed MGNREGS to assess the pros and cons associated with the scheme.

The study carried out by **Bhattacharyya and Vauquline (2013)** exhibited that the MGNREGA was not successful with regard to enhancement of gender equality, alleviation of poverty of rural women.

Sustainable livelihood is crucial for development of rural poor. **Didde and Muthaiyan's (2013)** study found that the scheme contributed in achieving sustainable livelihood in the study area.

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Sharief (2013) stated that MGNREGA was successful in bringing positive influence among the people of marginalized section of the society. The study also observed that delay in payment, less payment, fake entry, duplication of work and wastage of fund were the lapses that put obstacles in successful implementation of the scheme.

Bhowmik's (2013) study in Tripura states that MGNREGS is doing well in the state in terms of equity. From the point of efficiency, the scheme is doing better in the state than many states.

Anand's (2014) study shows that the MGNREGP has beneficial effect on rural development by two ways, namely, through its influence on community assets and through its influence on individual household. The study reveals that participation in the programme has been influenced by the economic condition of the beneficiaries.

Das et. al. (2015) opined that economic empowerment of women was increased through the activities under MGNREGS. In their view, the scheme is a strong effort of the government to reduce unemployment and poverty.

Kharkwal and Kumar (2015) had used twelve indicators to assess the impact of MGNREGS on socio-economic status of the beneficiaries using three point scale. The study revealed that debts were increased along with the asset possession.

Farooqi and Saleem's (2015) study in remote areas of Aligarh district in Uttar Pradesh exhibit that MGNREGS has positive impact on the living standard of women beneficiaries in the study area.

Negi et. al. (2015) reveal that women participation has remarkably increased through the scheme. Employment generation and income earned through MGNREGA activities has favourable outcome on rural economy. Socio-economic impact is good which has been reflected by the raising standard of living.

According to **Bahugana et.al. (2016**), the MGNREGA plays an active role in improvement of the study area by uplifting the socio-economic status of the beneficiaries. However, they finds some barriers like formulation and design of programme, absence of awareness among the beneficiaries, improper coverage area etc. in effective execution of the scheme.

Marchang's (2016) analysis, based on secondary data, found an improvement in the livelihood and real wages of the rural poor, especially the STs, as a result of implementation of MGNREGA. The scheme has provided a source of supplementary income to the rural STs and thereby, it contributes to the reduction of poverty level, underemployment and unemployment.

Rani and Jahanara (2019) conducted a study in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh during the period from 2017-19 to assess the effect of MGNREGA on socio-economic status of the beneficiaries following ex- post facto research design. The researchers exhibit that the scheme has improved remarkably the purchasing capacity and empowerment of the beneficiaries.

Hussain and Singh (2022) opine that the scheme has not succeeded much in state Assam, especially in the districts of Kamrup, Hojai, Barpeta and Nalbari. The study also reveals that absence of worksite facility, faulty wage payment, illegal presence of contractors etc. are the obstacles for which the scheme has not achieved its goal perfectly.

OBJECTIVES

1) To analyze the physical and financial progress of MGNREGS in the study area.
2) To examine the inclusiveness of different social classes under MGNREGS
3) To analyze the participation of women and differently able person under MGNREGS in the study area.
4) To suggest, on the basis of the study, appropriate measures for fruitful implementation of MGNREGS.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is descriptive in nature. Secondary data gleaned from different sources has been considered. Employing data for the years from 2015-16 to 2020-21, this paper seeks to elucidate the performance of MGNREGS on these criteria: a) inclusiveness of various social classes in participation; b) participation of women; c) employment generated to differently able person; c) household completing 100 days of employment; d) gap in employment under MGNREGS; e) percentage of expenditure against total available funds; f) Wage-material Ratio; g) Wage per day per person. Further, comparative analysis is also made among Karbi Anglong, state Assam and India as a whole on the execution of MGNREGS.

- **Tools for Data Collection**: Secondary data published in MGNREGA Website and Statistical Handbook of Assam from 2016 to 2021 has been considered in the study.

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- **Tools for Data Analysis**: Tabular form, pictorial representation, average and percentages have been applied for analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

MGNERGA is the largest and comprehensive welfare programme of rural development to decrease rural poverty and unemployment by providing guaranteed employment on demand. Through employment opportunities, the scheme tries to give social protection to the poor people.

Empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups and creation of durable assets are also the aims of the scheme. (http://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx) Unlike the earlier employment schemes, it is right-based. The beneficiaries avail the rights like employment on demand, minimum wage, payment of wage within 15 days, equal wage for men and women, and provision of worksite facilities. Besides, 33% works are reserved for women.

Participation of Women

Availability of job in local area, kind of work, rate of remuneration etc. boost female participation in this scheme.

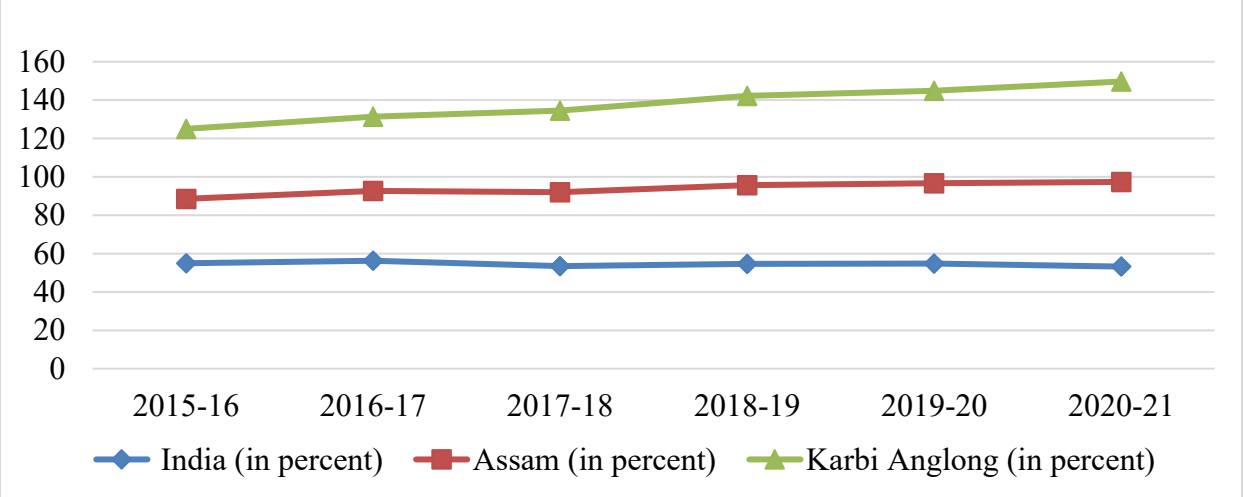
Table 2: Female Participation under MGNREGS

Year	Employment Generated (Persondays)								
	Assam (in Crore)			Karbi Anglong (in Lacs)			India (in crore)		
	Women	Total Employment	PC of women	Women	Total Employment	PC of Women	Women	Total Employment	PC of women
2015-16	1.63	4.86	33.54	3.73	10.23	36.46	129.25	234.94	55
2016-17	1.70	4.67	36.40	2.58	6.67	38.68	132.33	235.23	56.25
2017-18	1.85	4.81	38.46	4.43	10.39	42.60	125.12	233.67	53.54
2018-19	2.19	5.34	41.01	5.31	11.40	46.58	146.28	267.81	54.62
2019-20	2.61	6.24	41.83	7.87	16.29	48.31	145.36	265.27	54.80
2020-21	4.03	9.13	44.14	18.47	35.29	52.34	206.96	388.91	53.21
Average PC of women participation in Assam			39.23	Average PC of women participation in Karbi Anglong		44.16	Average PC of women participation in India		54.57

PC=Percentage

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021; https://rural.nic.in

Figure 1: Participation of Women in MGNREGS from 2015-16 to 2020-21



Female participation in MGNREGS during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21 has indicated an increasing trend in state Assam and Karbi Anglong district as shown in the table 2. At an average, 39.23 percent of total workers during the assessment period are women in Assam which is greater than the earmark of 33% quota of females in MGNREGS. Karbi Anglong is also able to cross the stipulated 33% share of women in MGNREGS. Further, in every year from

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2015-16 to 2020-21, female participation in MGNREGS in Karbi Anglong is higher than the state. Participation of females has risen remarkably from 36.51% in 2015-16 to 52.35% in 2020-21in the district. On an average, women have been given 44.16 % of total employment in Karbi Anglong district during the study period. Of course, as compared to national level, female participation in the scheme is less in Karbi Anglong district and in Assam state.

The data shows that overall participation of females in MGNREGS in the country is satisfactory during the study period. On an average, from 2015-16 to 2020-21, female workers in MGNREGS is 54.57 percent. Higher participation rate of women in MGNREGS implies awareness of the scheme among the women.

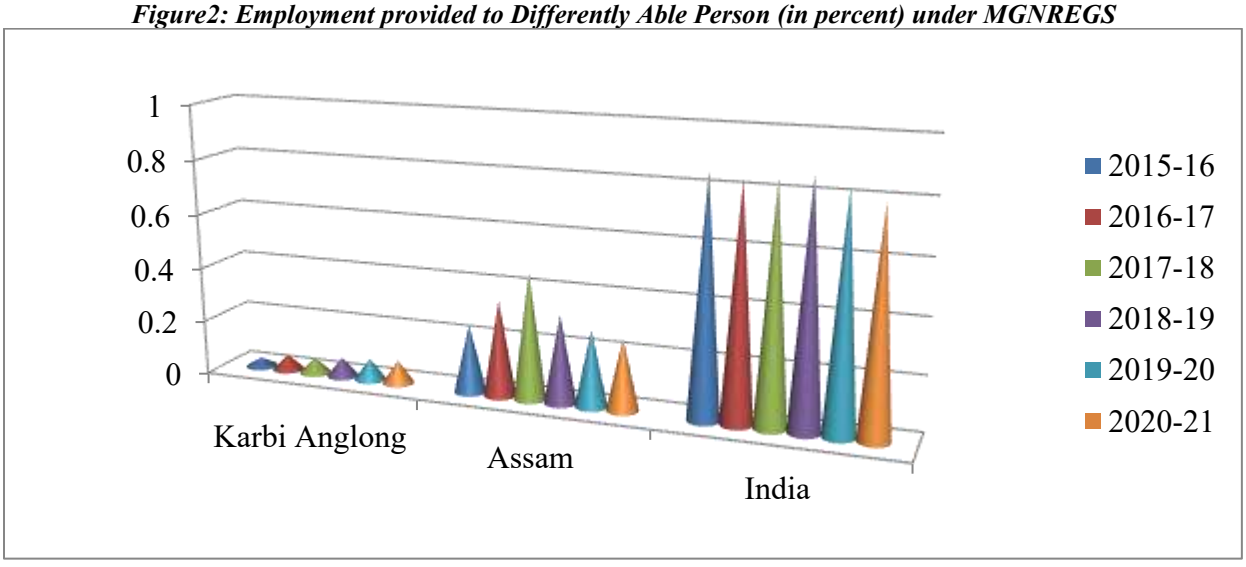
Participation of Differently Able People

Table 3: Employment provided to Differently Able person

Year	Assam			Karbi Anglong			India		
	Employment to Differently Able Persons **(in Nos)**	Household provided employment **(in Lacs)**	Percentage	Employment to Differently Able Persons **(in Nos)**	Household provided employment **(in Lacs)**	Percentage	Employment to Differently Able Persons **(in) Lacs)**	Household provided employment **(in crore)**	Percentage
2015-16	3752	15.02	.25	22	.69	.032	3.90	4.55	.86
2016-17	5554	15.72	.35	30	.53	.056	4.07	4.86	.84
2017-18	7844	16.85	.46	36	.64	.056	4.12	4.86	.85
2018-19	5572	17.44	.32	44	.63	.069	4.61	5.27	.87
2019-20	5478	19.30	.28	55	.69	.079	4.63	5.48.	.84
2020-21	6616	25.12	.26	77	.91	.084	6.06	7.55	.80
Total	34816	109.45	.31	264	4.09	.064	27.39	32.57	.84
Average	5802.7	18.24	.31	44	.68	.064	4.57	5.43	.84

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021; http://nrega.nic.in

Figure2: Employment provided to Differently Able Person (in percent) under MGNREGS



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Table 3 presents the employment generated to differently able persons under MGNREGS in the study area during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21. As per the Person with Disability Act (PWD) of 1995, 3% employment should be provided to differently able person. It is observed from the table that MGNREGS has failed to provide the earmark of 3% employment to differently able person during the reference period. In Karbi Anglong, from 2015-16 to 2020-21, a total of 264 differently able persons were able to get employment under the scheme registering only 0.064% of total employment. In Assam, employment has been generated to a total of 34810 differently able persons amounting 0.32% of total employment during the same period. At national level also, during the assessment period the scheme is not successful in providing job to differently able persons in accordance with the Person with Disability Act (PWD) of 1995 and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD), 2016. On an average, employment provided to disable persons during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21 in the country is only 0.84% of total employment. However, as compared to Karbi Anglong district and state Assam, MGNREGS is doing better in national level with respect to employment provided to disable persons.

Physical and Financial Achievement of MGNREGS in the Study Area

Working of MGNREGS in the study area is analyzed with respect to employment status. Employment status is measured by three components, namely, employment provided to households, total job card issued to households and households finished 100 days of work.

Employment Generated To Different Social Groups

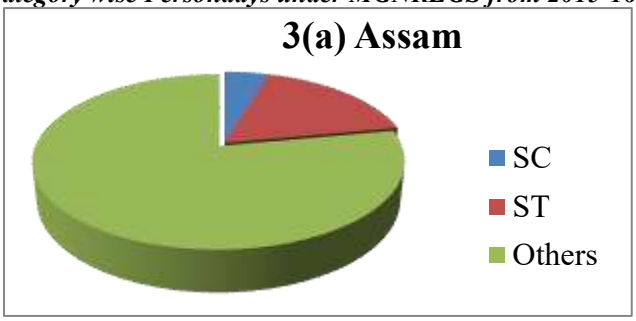
Table 4: Physical achievements under MGNREGS from 2015-16 to 2020-21

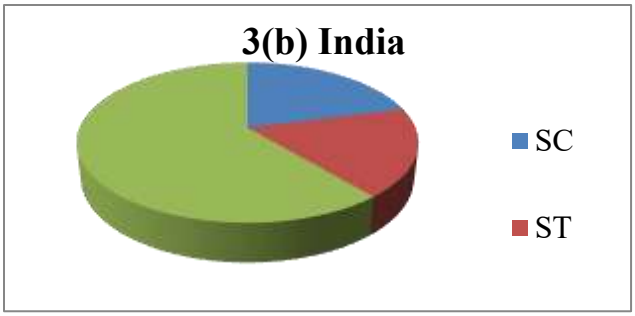
Year	Employment Generated (persondays)											
	Assam **(in crore)**				India **(in crore)**				Karbi Anglong **(in Lacs)**			
	SC	ST	Others	Total	SC	ST	Others	Total	SC	ST	Others	Total
2015-16	.25	.91	3.70	4.86	53.03	42.03	139.88	234.94	.26	8.16	1.81	10.23
2016-17	.22	.93	3.52	4.67	50.73	41.63	142.87	235.23	.12	5.46	1.09	6.67
2017-18	.22	.74	3.86	4.86	50.7	41	141.97	233.67	.24	8.54	1.62	10.4
2018-19	.27	1.07	4	5.34	55.86	46.8	165.15	267.81	.36	9.38	1.66	11.4
2019-20	.29	1.10	4.85	6.24	54.1	49.15	162.02	265.27	.58	13.6	2.11	16.29
2020-21	.40	1.32	7.4	9.12	77.27	69.83	241.81	388.91	1.71	27.56	6.01	35.28
Total	1.65	6.07	27.33	35.05	341.69	290.44	993.7	1598.83	3.27	72.71	14.29	90.27

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021; http://nrega.nic.in

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Figure3: Category wise Persondays under MGNREGS from 2015-16 to 2020-21





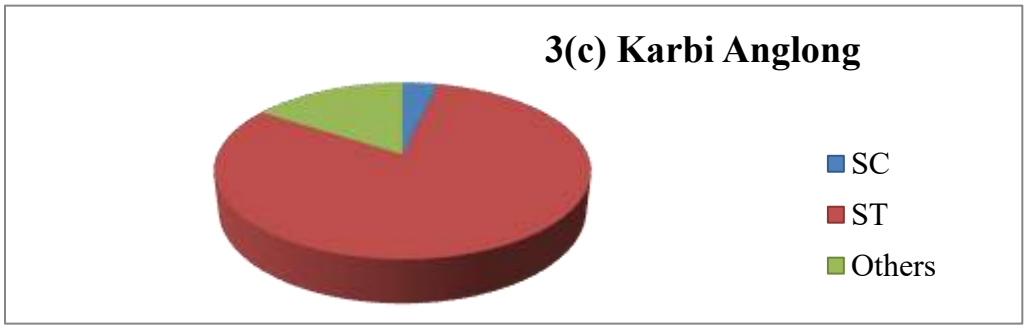


Table 4 presents the physical achievements with regard to persondays generated to various social class under MGNREGS during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21. The table presents that MGNREGS is able to generate a total of 1.65 crore persondays of employment to SC (Scheduled Caste) in Assam during the reference period. In the year 2020-21, employment generated to SC is 0.4 crore persondays, registering an increase of 60 percent from 0.25 crore persondays generated in 2015-16. In the same year, total persondays generated to ST (Scheduled Tribe) is 1.32 crore. It is an increase of 45 percent from 0.91 crore persondays generated in 2015-16. Among all the social groups, 'Others' including OBC and MOBC have been generated more persondays in comparison to SC and ST. Moreover, in the year 2020-21, highest number of employment is given to both SC and ST communities. At national level also, persondays generated to SC and ST communities under MGNREGS have recorded highest in the year 2020-21. In this year, the scheme has given rise to 77.27 crore persondays to SC while ST has got 69.83 crore persondays.

In Karbi Anglong district, ST community has been provided more employment in comparison to SC and other communities since majority of the population of the district is ST. Further, during the period of study, in the year 2020-21, highest number of persondays (27.56 lakh) has been provided to ST under MGNREGS in the district registering an increase of more than 237 percent from 8.16 lakh persondays generated in 2015-16.

Job Card Issued and Employment Provided To Households under MGNREGS

Under MGNREGS, job card is the most essential document to avail permission to apply for work. Records of workers' entitlement under MGNREGS are kept in it and the registered households are legally empowered to work with the help of job cards. (GoI, 2013) However, mere registration does not indicate the actual employment provided to household who were issued job cards. Employment is provided to job card holders only if the work is demanded.

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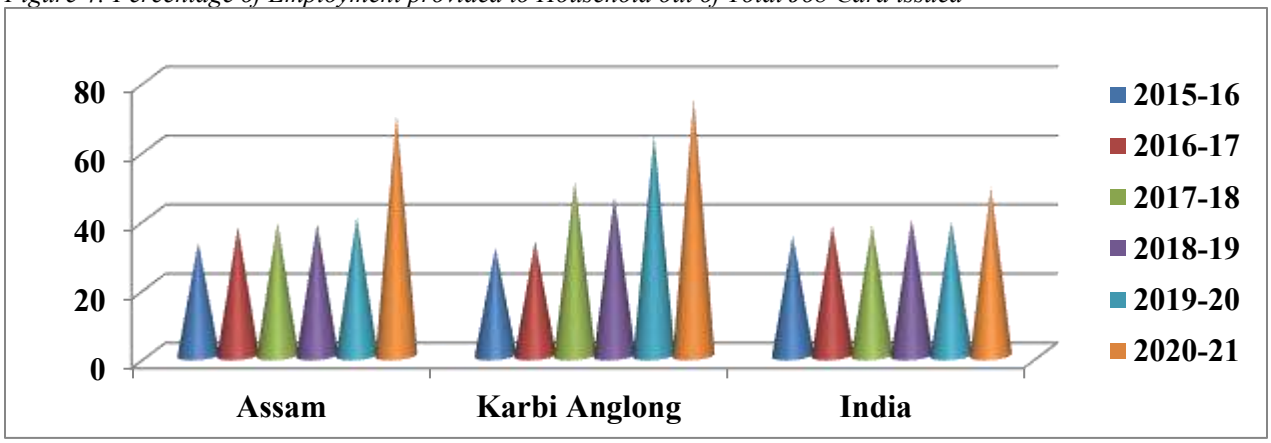
Table 5 depicts data on job card issued, employment generated to household and the percentage of household generated employment.

Table 5: Job Card issued and employment provided under MGNREGS

Year	Assam (in Lacs)			Karbi Anglong (in Lacs)			India (in Crore)		
	Job cards Issued	No. of HH provided employment	PC	Job cards Issued	No. of HH provided employment	PC	Job cards Issued	No. of HH provided employment	PC
2015-16	45.89	15.02	32.73	2.21	0.69	31.22	13.10	4.55	34.73
2016-17	42.15	15.72	37.30	1.6	0.53	33.12	12.83	4.86	37.88
2017-18	43.64	16.85	38.61	1.27	0.64	50.39	12.82	4.86	37.91
2018-19	45.67	17.44	38.19	1.37	0.63	45.98	13.34	5.27	39.50
2019-20	48.11	19.30	40.12	1.08	0.69	63.89	14.06	5.48	38.97
2020-21	36.04	25.12	69.70	1.22	0.91	74.59	15.50	7.55	48.71
Total	261.5	109.45	41.85	8.74	4.09	46.80	81.65	32.57	39.89

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021; http//mnregaweb4.nic.in

Figure 4: Percentage of Employment provided to Household out of Total Job Card issued



Data from the table reveals that the percentage of household provided employment out of total job card holders in Karbi Anglong district was 31.22 percent and it has reached to 74.59 percent in 2020-21 registering more than 138 percent increase over six years. In 2017-18, 2019-20 and 2020-21, guaranteed employment has been given to more than half of the job card holders.

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Data also shows that in the years 2015-16 and 2016-17, national level performance and the state Assam's performance regarding employment provided to household out of total job card issued is above the performance of Karbi Anglong district. However, from 2017-18 to 2020-21, Karbi Anglong district has continued to surpass national level performance and state Assam's performance by providing higher employment to total job card holders.

Further, the table also presents that, except in the year 2020-21, most of the job card holders are deprived of getting guaranteed employment under MGNREGS in Assam. In 2020-21, the state has shown improvement by providing employment to 69.70 percent of total job card holders.

At all India level also, household getting guaranteed employment is below fifty percent of the total job card holders during the reference period. In comparison to national level and state level, the scheme is successful in providing employment to more than half of total job card holders in Karbi Anglong in the years 2017-18 and 2019-20.

Moreover, on an average during 2015-16 to 2020-21, the scheme is able to provide employment to 41.85 percent of total card holders in Assam while at national level, employment is provided only to 39.89 percent of total job card holders during the same period. Karbi Anglong district has exhibited better performance than state and national level as on an average, 46.80 percent of total job card holders have been given employment during the same period.

Household Generated 100 Days Employment

In Karbi Anglong district, MGNREGS is still far from its objective of generating minimum 100 days of guaranteed employment to every household as depicted in table 6.

In 2015-16, only 103 households finished 100 days of work in Karbi Anglong which is 0.15 percent of total household given employment in the year. During the study period, in 2020-21, percentage of households given100 days employment is highest (2.15%) while in 2017-18, it is lowest (0.03%). Besides, on an average, in the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21, only 0.57 percent (392 nos) households were able to finish100 days of employment out of total households provided employment.

Table 6: Households provided 100 days of employment in Assam

Year	Assam			Karbi Anglong			India		
	Household provided employment (in Lacs)	**Household provided 100days employment (in Nos)**	**PC**	**Household Provided Employment (in Lacs)**	**Household provided 100days employment (in Nos)**	**PC**	**Household provided employment (in Crore)**	**Household provided 100days employment (in Crore)**	**PC**
2015-16	15.02	42362	2.82	0.69	103	0.15	4.55	0.44	9.67
2016-17	15.72	11501	0.73	0.53	20	0.04	4.86	0.40	8.23
2017-18	16.85	10938	0.65	0.64	22	0.03	4.86	0.29	5.97
2018-19	17.44	18468	1.06	0.63	139	0.22	5.27	0.52	9.87
2019-20	19.30	30053	1.56	0.69	99	0.14	5.48	0.41	7.48
2020-21	25.12	71701	2.85	0.91	1969	2.16	7.55	0.72	9.54
Average	18.24	30837.17	1.69	0.68	392	0.57	5.43	0.46	8.47

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Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021; https://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx

In state Assam and national level also MGNREGS has failed to reach the objective of providing 100 days of employment to every household during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21. However, in providing 100 days employment, the scheme works better in state Assam and national level than in Karbi Anglong district. In national level, on an average, out of total households provided employment, 8.47 percent is able to finish 100 days of employment while in state Assam, 1.69 percent of total households has finished 100 days employment during the study period.

Gap in Employment under MGNREGS

Claims for work sought by the job card holders and employment provided accordingly indicate the actual scenario of employment generation by MGNREGS. The gap between the number of households demanded employment and households provided employment is a good indicator to know whether it is sufficient enough to generate employment to the needy people. The table 7 provides data on the gap between claims for employment and actual employment given under MGNREGS during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21.

Table7: Gap in employment

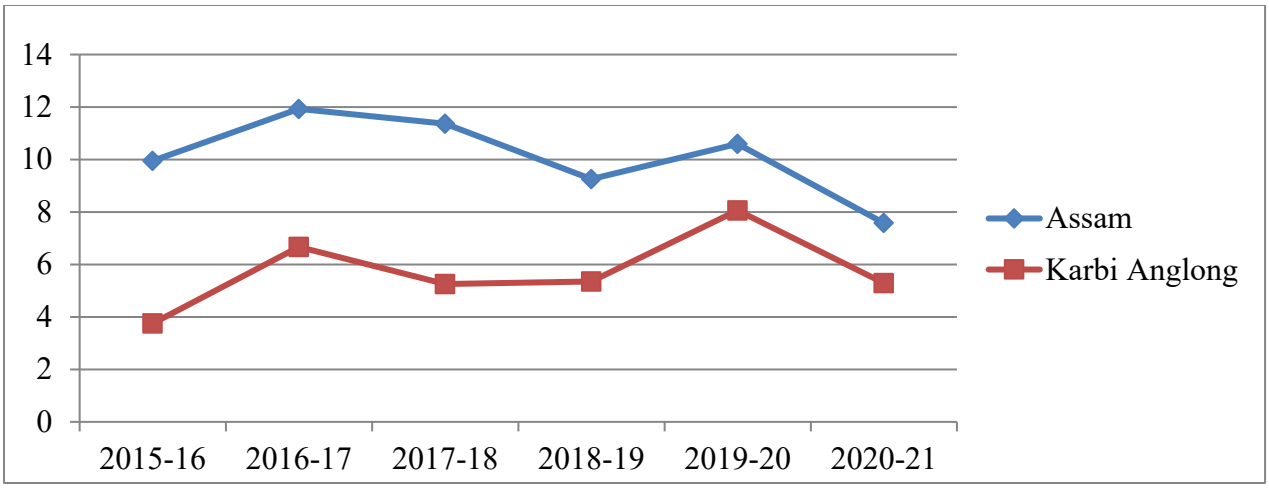
Year	Assam (in Lacs)				Karbi Anglong (in Nos)			
	Household demanded Employment	Household provided Employment	Gap	PC of Gap	Household demanded Employment	Household provided Employment	Gap	PC of Gap
2015-16	16.68	15.02	1.66	9.95	71357	68678	2679	3.75
2016-17	17.85	15.72	2.13	11.93	57114	53305	3809	6.67
2017-18	19.01	16.85	2.16	11.36	67700	64143	3557	5.25
2018-19	19.23	17.44	1.78	9.26	66478	62920	3558	5.35
2019-20	21.59	19.30	2.29	10.60	74920	68880	6040	8.06
2020-21	27.18	25.12	2.06	7.58	96628	68880	5110	5.29
Average	20.26	18.24	2.02	9.97	72366.16	68240.66	4125.5	5.7

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021

Data reveals that there is a gap in between claims for employment and actual employment given under MGNREGS. In Karbi Anglong, out of total 71357 households demanded employment, 68678 households have got employment in 2015-16 registering a gap of 3.75 percent. The gap is increased to 6.67 percent in 2016-17 and then decreased to 5.25 percent and 5.35 percent in 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively. During the period under study, the scheme recorded highest gap (8.06%) in providing employment to job seekers in the year 2019-20.

Figure 5: Gap in Employment under MGNREGS (in percent)

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Moreover, on an average during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21, MGNREGS has failed to give employment to 5.7 percent of households who demanded job in Karbi Anglong while in state Assam, 9.97 percent of job seekers have not got employment. The percentage of gap in between employment demanded and employment provided in Assam is greater than in Karbi Anglong district for all the years under study. This indicates that MGNREG is doing better in providing employment to the job seekers in Karbi Anglong than in state level.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE UNDER MGNREGS

Utilization of Fund

Total expenditure under MGNREGS in Karbi Anglong stood at Rs. 21.31crore in 2015-16 and reached at Rs. 68.91crore in 2020-21 as depicted in Table 8. Total fund available has increased from Rs. 25.33 crore in 2015-16 to Rs. 75.44 crore in 2020-21.

Table 8: Utilization of Fund in MGNREGA from 2015-16 to 2020-21 (Rs. In Crore)

Year	Assam			Karbi Anglong		
	Total Available Fund	Total Expenditure	PC of expenditure out of total available fund	Total Available Fund	Total Expenditure	PC of expenditure out of total available fund
2015-16	651.51	592.88	91	25.33	21.31	84.13
2016-17	1877	1416.47	75.46	22.97	22.53	98.08
2017-18	1548.99	1485.24	95.88	28.46	28.08	98.66
2018-19	1420.38	1315.45	92.61	26.99	26.36	97.66
2019-20	1436.30	1476.29	102.78	29.09	28.30	97.28
2020-21	2855.62	2348.18	82.23	75.44	68.91	91.34
Total	9789.80	8634.51	88.20	208.28	195.49	93.86
Average	1631.63	1439.08	88.20	34.71	32.58	93.86

Source: Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-2021

On an average during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21, utilization of MGNREGS fund out of total available fund is 93.86percent. Moreover, except in 2015-16, fund utilization pattern of MGNREGS has been more than 90 percent. It was 84.13 in the year 2015-16 which is lowest utilization during the study period.

In Assam, on an average during the study period, the percentage of expenditure out of total available fund is 88.20percent. Further, except in the year 2015-16 and 2019-20, fund utilization in Karbi Anglong is above the state level during the reference period.

Table 9: Utilization of Fund in MGNREGA in India from 2015-16 to 2020-21

(Rs. In Crore)

Year	Total Fund Available	Total Expenditure	PC of Expenditure
2015-16	41673.98	43883.28	105.3
2016-17	59013.40	58151.52	98.54
2017-18	64408.04	63929.71	99.26

2018-19	70833.61	69361.82	97.92
2019-20	73752.81	67499.45	91.52
2020-21	117863.78	111693.23	94.76
Average	71257.60	69086.50	96.95

Source: https://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx

Table 9 depicts total expenditure under MGNREGS stood at Rs. 43883.28 crores in 2015-16 and reached at Rs. 111693.23 crores in 2020-21 at national level. On an average during the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21, utilization of MGNREGS fund is 96.95percent. This indicates that the fund has been more effectively utilized at national level than in Karbi Anglong.

The Wage –Material Ratio under MGNREGS

60:40 wage and material ratio has to be maintained for all works undertaken under MGNREGS. However, this ratio is not maintained in Karbi Anglong district as presented in table 10 and figure 6.

Table10: Wage –Material Ratio in MGNREGS from 2015-16 to 2020-21

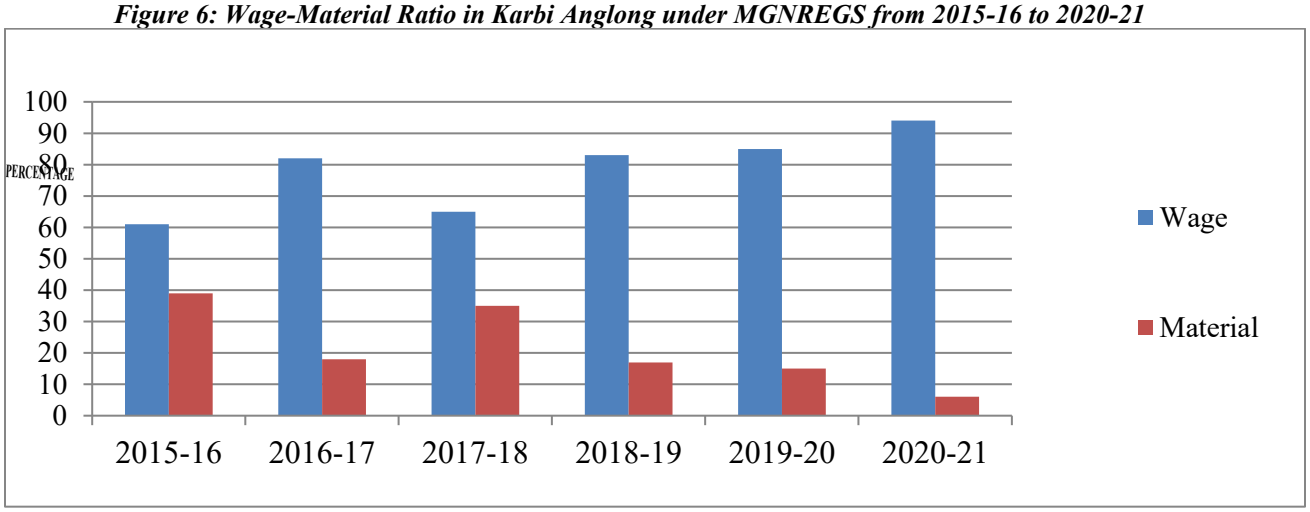
(Rs. In Crore)

Year	Karbi Anglong			Assam			India		
	Wage cost	**Material cost**	**Wage-Material Ratio (in %)**	**Wage cost**	**Material cost**	**Wage-Material Ratio (in %)**	**Wage cost**	**Material cost**	**Wage-Material Ratio (in %)**
2015-16	12.52	7.85	61:39	382.76	209.59	65:35	30889.47	10597.83	74:26
2016-17	17.74	3.79	82:18	1255.23	162.30	89:11	40749.81	14492.88	74:26
2017-18	18.11	9.85	65:35	922.78	554.47	62:38	43139.93	17986.62	71:29
2018-19	21.42	4.36	83:17	998.98	307.29	76:24	47239.95	19422.04	71:29
2019-20	25.67	4.49	85:15	1227.86	185.19	87:13	48861.88	15901.53	75:25
2020-21	64.84	4.40	94:6	1916.92	523.07	79:21	78017.35	29598.09	72:28
Average	26.72	5.79	82:18	1117.42	323.65	78:22	48149.73	17999.83	73:27

Source: https://nrega.nic.in ; Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2016-21

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Figure 6: Wage-Material Ratio in Karbi Anglong under MGNREGS from 2015-16 to 2020-21

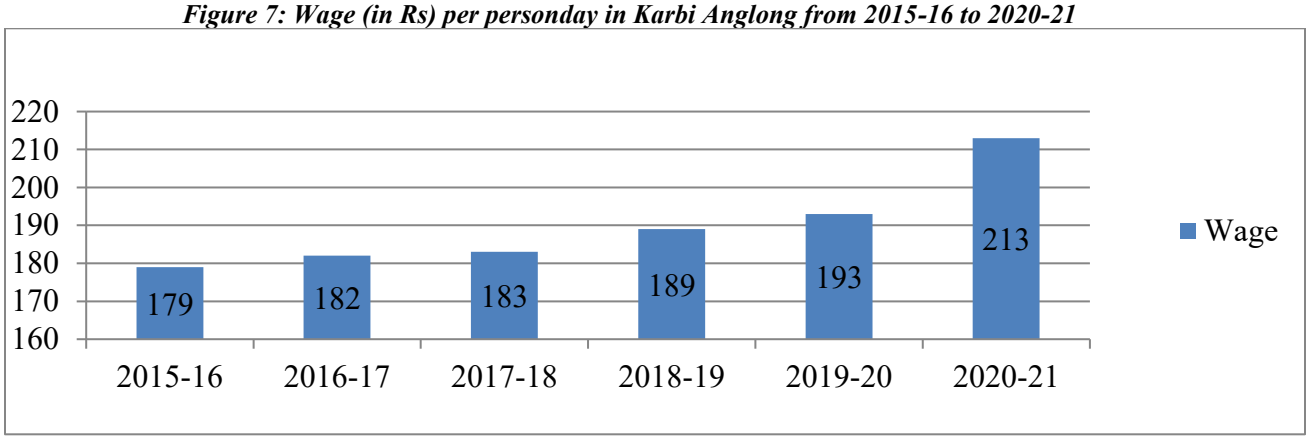


On an average during 2015-16 to 2020-21, wage-material ratio in Karbi Anglong is 82:18. This indicates that material cost is within the stipulated limit of 40 percent while wage cost exceeds the limit. Further, average wage cost (82%) in Karbi Anglong for the last six years (i.e. from 2015-16 to 2020-21) is above the state average and all India average. It is 78 percent and 73 percent in Assam and all India level respectively.

Average Wage per Persondays

During the period from 2015-16 to 2020-21, the wage paid under MGNREGS varies from Rs. 179/- to Rs. 213/- per day per person in Karbi Anglong district. On an average during the study period, the wage rate provided under MGNREGS is Rs.189.83/- only. This is lower than the minimum wage rate decided by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Govt. of India. Further, the wage rate is below the market wage rate prevailing in rural Karbi Anglong during the same time period. Rural wage in 2015-16 was around Rs. 250 per day per person and now it increases to Rs. 400 per day.

Figure 7: Wage (in Rs) per personday in Karbi Anglong from 2015-16 to 2020-21



SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of above analysis, a few suggestions are given for more effective and successful implementation of

MGNREGS.

- Target of 100 days employment per household should be strictly ensured.
- All the works under MGNREGS should be well planned with fixed time for completion
- Gap in claims for job and job provided should be minimized.
- Wage rate should be at par with the existing market rate.
- Wage-Material ratio should be observed as per MGNREGS guidelines.

Volume: 13 | Issue: 12 | December 2025 | Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0813| Impact Factor SJIF(2025): 8.733| ISSN: 2321 – 7847

CONCLUSION

From the study, we can conclude that the working of MGNREGS in the study area is satisfactory so far as female participation and inclusiveness of different social classes are concerned. But inclusion of differently able people is less than the expected level. There is need to improve their participation so far as sustainability is concerned. Besides, the scheme fails to ensure the 100 days job guarantee to the majority of job card holders.There is gap in employment demanded and employment provided. 60:40 wage and material ratio as per MGNREGS guidelines is not maintained. Further, wage rate is less than the market wage rate. Therefore, fruitful initiatives should be practised to overcome these barriers. MGNREGS may play a significant role in development of poor people of rural areas. Therefore, government, civil society, panchayat and local communities together should take proper initiatives to remove the lacunas in its implementation.

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