

Challenges and Issues of MGNREGS in Kerala

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I. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of the MGNREGS is 'to provide for the enhancement of the livelihood security of the households in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment' in a year. Hence, the main indicator of progress and performance of employment under MGNREGS are the person days of employment per household seeking employment and then, whether these households are getting hundred days of employment in a year and how many households provided employment as against demand for employment under the scheme and employment among social groups. Though MGNREGS is self-targeting, the question is whether the poor households are able to exercise the right and access employment. Occupationally the poorest in rural areas are agricultural labourers while socially more disadvantaged are scheduled castes (SC), schedule tribes (ST) and women. It is very much essential to understanding the challenges and issues faced by the workers from different sections of society. Taking the aspects into consideration, challenges and issues of MGNREGS across the states can be analyzed on the basis of the indicators such as economic aspects, freedom of choice and autonomy, gender discrimination and issues of basic facilities.

II. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The survey covered a total population of 1181 out of which 591 were MGNREGS and 590 were coolie workers. This study used Percentage distribution and cross Tabulation

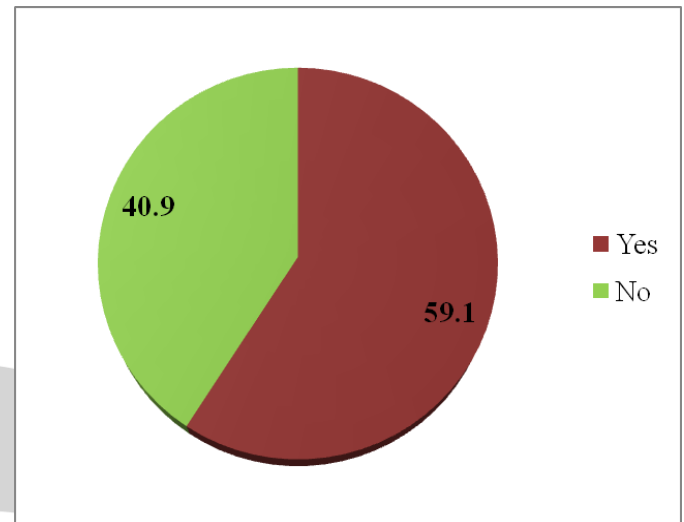
This study exposed the various challenges of MGNREGS workers in Kerala

Economic Status of MGNREGS in Kerala

The single most important distinguishing feature of MGNREGS from employment programmes of the past is that the provision of work is triggered by the demand for work by wage-seekers and provided as their legal right. One of the most important aspects of MGNREGS is that the villagers can rightfully demand employment. The authority is responsible to provide employment in response to demand or provide employment allowance in the case it is unable to do so. For performance analysis it is essential to look at the response of government in providing employment against the demand raised by workers. The MGNREGS can target development using huge demand for casual jobs. It has made a dent on poverty by increasing employment opportunities. Economic Status of population analysed through work participation of last one month and

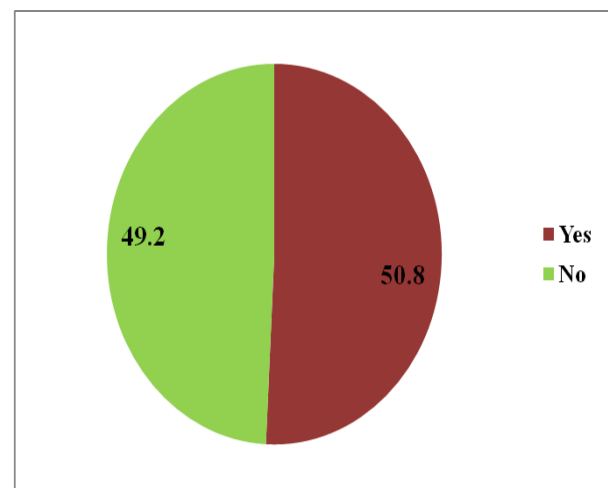
insufficiency of income for livelihood due to delay of payment.

Figure-1 Percentage distribution of sample population by work Participation



It is observed from the figure 1 that nearly 60 percent of sample population are in the workforce within 30 days. It reflects that more population have availability of work during the last months rather than seasonal nature of the work. Figure-1 depicts the percentage distribution of sample population suffering from insufficiency of income due to delay of payment. It is noticed that nearly 51 percent of sample population suffering from insufficient income for livelihood due to delay of payment. Delay of payment is the one of the crucial issue faced by the MGNREGS workers in Kerala.

Figure. 2 Percentage distribution of sample population suffering from insufficiency of income due to delay of payment.



Socio Economic differentials in Economic status of MGNREGS in Kerala

It is essential to analyse the differentials in work participation of MGNREGS in Kerala in order to understand the economic condition of them. Table-1 depicts the Socio Economic differentials in Work Participation of MGNREGS in Kerala. Work participation 30 days prior to survey is taken for analysing the availability of working days. It is observed that work participation is high in the age group 19-45 and nearly 71 percent of males among sample population is engaged to work within 30 days. While looking into the marital status and work participation of sample population it is observed that higher work participation found among the currently Married persons, that is about 60.6 percent, followed by widowed and single 58.6 and 40 percent respectively. Work Participation found to be higher among Muslims (77.8 percent) followed by Christians (63 percent) and Hindus (55.7 percent). In the case of caste wise analysis there is a narrow difference can be found out, that is for general (62.6), SC/ST (57.6 percent) and OBC (56.8 percent). Looking into the health status of sample population in terms of morbidity and disability it is observed that as usual people free from both morbidity and disability are more engaged to work compared to their counter parts (61 and 59.1 percent respectively).

Table-1 Socio Economic differentials in Work Participation of MGNREGS in Kerala

Work participation	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	64.8 (162)	250
46-60	57.0 (138)	242
60+	49.5 (49)	99
Sex		
Male	70.7 (87)	123
Female	56.0 (262)	468
Marital Status		
Single	40.0 (12)	30
Married	60.6 (255)	421
Widow/separate/divorce	58.6 (82)	140
Religion		
Hindu	55.7 (239)	429
Muslim	77.8 (42)	54
Christian	63.0 (68)	108
Caste		
General	62.6 (124)	198
OBC	56.8 (92)	162
SC/ST	57.6 (133)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	57.7 (205)	355
No	61.0 (144)	236

Any Disability		
Yes	58.3 (28)	48
No	59.1 (321)	543

Table-2 depicts Socio-economic differentials of workers suffering from inefficiency of income for livelihood due to delay of payment. About 56.6 percent of People aged above 60 reported that they have deficiency of income due to delay of payment followed by the age group 46-60 and 19-45 (50.4 and 48.8 percent respectively). Females are more suffering from insufficiency of income compared to males. Widow/separate/divorced persons exposed to deficient income (1.4 percent) followed by single and married persons. About 54.5 percent of Hindus suffering from insufficiency of income due to delay of payment. Looking into religious status of population SC/ST suffering more compared to others. People are suffering from morbidity and disability also suffering from insufficient income due to lack of payment, that is 51.3 and 66.7 percent respectively

Table- 2 Socio-economic differentials of workers suffering from in sufficiency of income for livelihood due to delay of payment

Delay of payment	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	48.8(122)	250
46-60	50.4(122)	242
60+	56.6(56)	99
Sex		
Male	32.5(40)	123
Female	55.6(260)	468
Marital Status		
Single	46.7(14)	30
Married	44.2(186)	421
Widow/separate/divorce	71.4(100)	140
Religion		
Hindu	54.5(234)	429
Muslim	37.0(20)	54
Christian	42.6(46)	108
Caste		
General	45.5(90)	198
OBC	50.6(82)	162
SC/ST	55.4(128)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	51.3(182)	355
No	50.0(118)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	66.7(32)	48
No	49.4(268)	543

Freedom of choice, autonomy and fulfilment of work among MGNREGS in Kerala

Freedom of choice describes an individual's opportunity. Autonomy refers to thinking for oneself in uncertain and complex situations in which judgment is more important than routine. (Pitt & Phelan, 2008). It is essential to understand the freedom of choice, autonomy and fulfilment of work among MGNREA workers in Kerala in order to understand the empowerment and level of work satisfaction.

Figure-3 Percentage distribution of MGNREA workers in Kerala by freedom of Choice

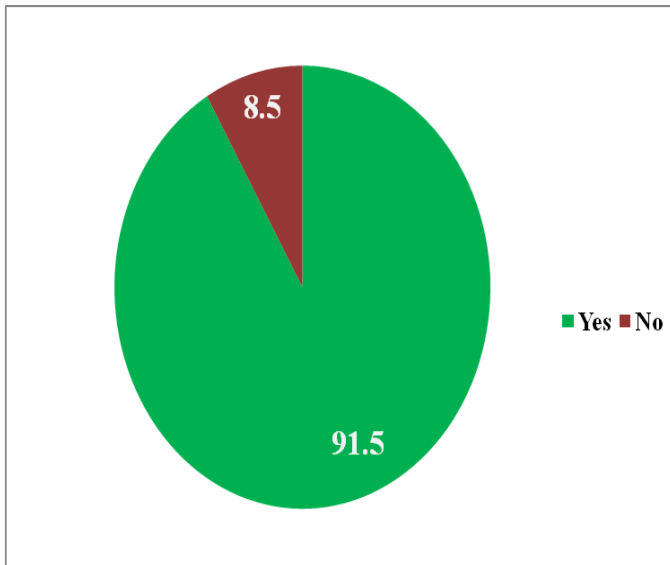


Figure. -4 Percentage distribution of MGNREA workers in Kerala by Fulfilment of work

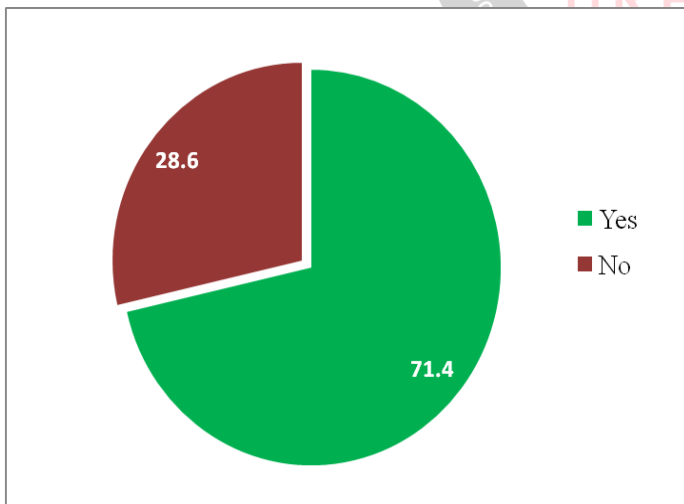


Figure-5 Percentage distribution of MGNREA workers in Kerala by Fulfilment of work

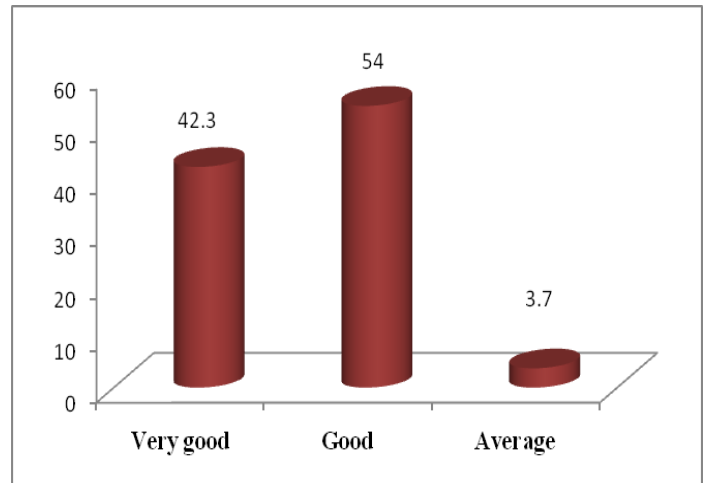


Table-3 Socio-economic differentials in Freedom of choice among MGNREAGS in Kerala

Freedom of choice	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	87.2(218)	250
46-60	92.6(224)	242
60+	100(99)	99
Sex		
Male	91.3(113)	123
Female	91.5(428)	468
Marital Status		
single	100(30)	30
married	88.6(373)	421
widow/separate/divorce	98.6(138)	140
Religion		
Hindu	90.7(389)	429
Muslim	88.9(48)	54
Christian	96.3(104)	108
Caste		
general	82.8(164)	198
OBC	93.8(152)	162
SC/ST	97.4(225)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	90.4(321)	355
No	93.2(220)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	87.5(42)	48
No	91.9(499)	543

Table-3 Socio-economic differentials in Freedom of choice among MGNREAGs in Kerala. It is observed that as the age increases freedom of choice tend to increases and it become its peak in sixties. It is also remarkable notice that all the workers above the age 60+ responds that they have

the freedom of choice. Not much difference can be found in between gender and freedom of choice. Coming to marital status never married workers and widow/separate/divorce persons enjoying more freedom compared to married workers (88.6 percent). Looking in to the relationship between religious status and freedom choice it is observed that Christians enjoying more freedom (96.3 percent), followed by Hindus (90.7 percent) and Muslims (only 88.9 percent). Marginalised sections of society enjoy more freedom compared to others. People not having morbidity and disability enjoying more e freedom of choice compared to their counter parts.

Table-4 Socio-economic differentials in Decision making power among MGNREAGs in Kerala

Decision making power	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	72.0(180)	250
46-60	71.9(174)	242
60+	68.7(68)	99
Sex		
Male	74.8(92)	123
Female	70.5(330)	468
Marital Status		
Single	60.0(18)	30
Married	73.2(308)	421
Widow/separate/divorce	68.6(96)	140
Religion		
Hindu	72.3(310)	429
Muslim	81.5(44)	54
Christian	63.0(68)	108
Caste		
general	80.8(160)	198
OBC	74.1(120)	162
SC/ST	61.5(142)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	70.4(250)	355
No	72.9(172)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	70.8(34)	48
No	71.5(388)	543

Table-4 Socio-economic differentials in decision making power among MGNREAGs in Kerala. It is observed that as the age increases decision making power of workers tend to decreases. Males have comparatively higher decision making ability compared to females (74.8 and 70.5 percent respectively). Coming to marital status married workers have higher decision making power (73.2 percent) followed

by widow/separate/divorced (68.6percent) and never married (60 percent). Looking in to the relationship between religious status and decision making power it is observed that Muslims enjoying more freedom (81.5 percent), followed by Hindus (72.3 percent) and Christians (only 63 percent). It is found that Marginalised sections of society like SC/ST have less autonomy compared to others. People not having morbidity and disability enjoying more e freedom of choice compared to their counter parts.

Table-5 Socio-economic differentials in level of satisfaction among MGNREAGs in Kerala

Satisfaction of MGNREGS work	Very good	Good	Average	Total
Age				
19-45	50.4(126)	44.0(110)	5.6(14)	250
46-60	32.6(79)	64.9(157)	2.5(6)	242
60+	45.5(45)	52.5(52)	2.0(2)	99
Sex				
Male	53.7(66)	43.1(53)	3.3(4)	123
Female	39.3(184)	56.8(266)	3.8(18)	468
Marital Status				
single	26.7(8)	66.7(2)	6.7(2)	30
married	43.7(184)	52.5(22)	3.8(16)	421
widow/separate/divorce	41.4(58)	55.7(78)	2.9(4)	140
Religion				
Hindu	42.9(184)	53.8(231)	3.3(14)	429
Muslim	55.6(30)	44.4(24)	0(0)	54
Christian	33.3(36)	59.3(64)	7.4(8)	108
Caste				
General	46.5(92)	48.5(96)	5.1(10)	198
OBC	43.2(70)	51(84)	4.9(8)	162
SC/ST	38.1(88)	60.2(139)	1.7(4)	231
Having any Morbidity				
Yes	38.9(138)	59.4(211)	1.7(6)	355
No	47.5(112)	45.8(108)	6.8(16)	236
Any Disability				
Yes	33.3(16)	66.7(32)	0(0)	48
No	43.1(234)	52.9(287)	4.1(22)	543

Table-5 Socio-economic differentials in level of satisfaction among MGNREAGS in Kerala. For the better interpretation of results, the level of satisfaction measures

through three-point scale in according to very good. Good and average. Level of satisfaction of work higher among workers who aged between 19-45 years and above 60s. (50.4 and 45.5 percent respectively). Males found to have better satisfaction compared to their counter parts (53.7 and 39.3 percent respectively). Married workers (43.7 percent) experiences better satisfaction followed by widow/separate/divorce (41.4 percent) and never married workers(26.7 percent).Muslims (55.6 percent)experiences higher satisfaction compared to Hindus and Christians. Workers including general category found to be have better satisfaction compared to their others. Workers not having morbidity and disability are satisfied with their work compared to their counter parts

Abuses suffered by MGNREGS workers in Kerala

The commonly held definition of abuse, “a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain and maintain power and control over another. One thing to note about that definition is that we are talking about a pattern of behaviour, in other words, not just one incident. These behaviours can take on a number of different forms. Here we take the two types of abuses suffered by MGNREGS in Kerala, that is verbal/psychological abuse and Financial/Economic and social Abuses.

Figure 6. Type of abuse suffered by the MGNREGS workers in Kerala

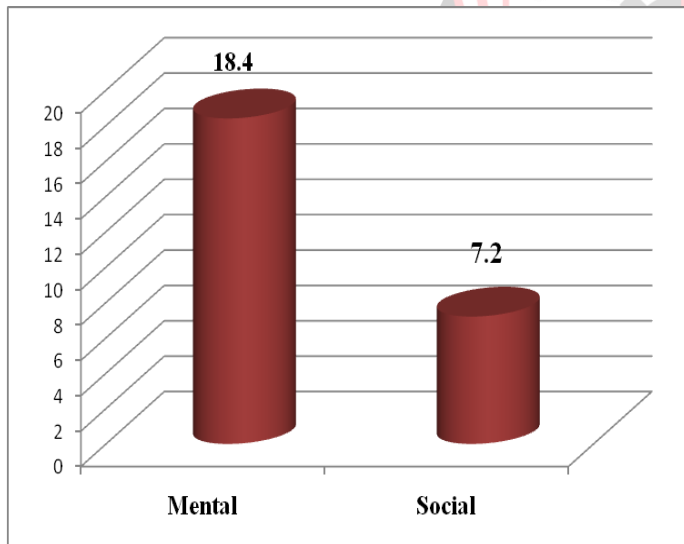


Table-6 Socio-economic differentials in Verbal and psychological abuses among MGNREGS in Kerala

Verbal and psychological abuses	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	16.8(42)	250
46-60	21.5(52)	242
60+	15.2(15)	99
Sex		
Male	25.2(31)	123
Female	16.7(78)	468

Marital Status		
single	6.7(2)	30
married	21.1(89)	421
widow/separate/divorce	12.9(18)	140
Religion		
Hindu	14.7(63)	429
Muslim	11.1(6)	54
Christian	37.0(40)	108
Caste		
general	20.2(40)	198
OBC	17.3(28)	162
SC/ST	17.7(41)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	20.6(73)	355
No	15.3(36)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	33.3(16)	48
No	18.4(109)	543

Table-6 presents the Socio-economic differentials in Verbal and psychological abuses among MGNREGS in Kerala. it is found that higher prevalence abuse can be found in the age group 46-60 (21.5 percent) followed by the age group 19-45. It is remarkable to note that males suffers from more abuse than females (25.2 and 16.7 percent respectively). Considering the marital status of respondents married workers are suffering more abuse (21.1 percent). Looking into the religious status of workers, it is noticed that Christians (37 percent) are more exposed to the risk of abuse compared to other religious groups. At the same way caste wise analysis revealed that general category exposed to higher risk. It is also remarkable to note that workers having morbidity and disability are more prone to abuse.

Table 7 Socio-economic differentials in Financial/Economic and social Abuses among MGNREGS in Kerala

	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	8.8(22)	250
46-60	6.2(15)	242
60+	6.1(6)	99
Sex		
Male	8.9(11)	123
Female	6.8(32)	468
Marital Status		
single	0(0)	30
married	9.3(39)	421

widow/separate/divorce	2.9(4)	140
Religion		
Hindu	8.2(35)	429
Muslim	7.4(4)	54
Christian	3.7(43)	108

Caste		
general	1.0(2)	198
OBC	9.9(16)	162
SC/ST	10.8(25)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	7.6(27)	355
No	6.8(16)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	4.2(2)	48
No	7.6(41)	543

Table 7 presents the Socio-economic differentials in Financial/Economic and social Abuses among MGNREGS in Kerala. It is found that higher prevalence abuse can be found in the age group 19-45 (8.8 percent) followed by the age group 46-60. It is remarkable to note that males suffers from more abuse than females (8.9 and 6.8 percent respectively). Considering the marital status of respondents married workers are suffering more abuse (9.3 percent). Looking into the religious status of workers, it is noticed that Hindus (8.2 percent) are more exposed to the risk of abuse compared to other religious groups. At the same way caste wise analysis revealed that SC/ST population exposed to higher risk. It is also remarkable to note that workers having morbidity are more prone to abuse. In the case of disability workers free from any disability found to be more vulnerable in terms of abuse.

Gender Discrimination at workplace among MGNREGS in Kerala

Gender discrimination is the major social issue faced by the workers in Kerala. Wayne (1995) says that no law has ever attempted to define precisely the term 'discrimination', in the context of workforce, it can be defined as the giving of an unfair advantage (or disadvantage) to the members of the particular group in comparison to the members of other group. Here an attempt has been made to analyse the gender discrimination among MGNREGS in Kerala.

Figure 7.4.4 depicts the Percentage distribution of MGNREGS workers in Kerala by Gender discrimination. It is observed that only 4.4 percent of MGNREGS workers in Kerala reported that they experience gender discrimination for availing work.

Figure 7 Percentage distribution of MGNREGS workers in Kerala by Gender discrimination

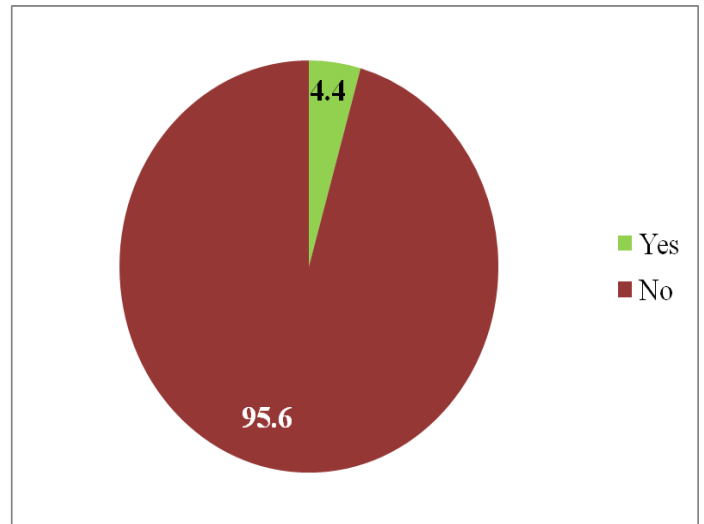


Table -8 Socio-economic differentials in Gender discrimination among MGNREGS workers in Kerala

	Yes	Total
Age		
19-45	0.8(2)	250
46-60	6.6(16)	242
60+	8.1(8)	99
Sex		
Male	6.5(8)	115
Female	3.8(18)	450
Marital Status		
Single	0(0)	30
Married	4.3(18)	421
Widow/separate/divorce	5.7(8)	140
Religion		
Hindu	5.6(24)	429
Muslim	0(0)	54
Christian	1.9(2)	108
Caste		
General	1.0(198)	198
OBC	0(0)	162
SC/ST	10.4(24)	231
Having any Morbidity		
Yes	6.2(22)	355
No	1.7(4)	236
Any Disability		
Yes	16.7(8)	48
No	3.3(18)	543

Table 7.4.1 presents the Socio-economic differentials in Gender discrimination among MGNREGS workers in Kerala. High gender discrimination can be reported in the age above sixties. Apart from age workers includes Males, widow/separate/divorce, Hindus, SC/ST and having

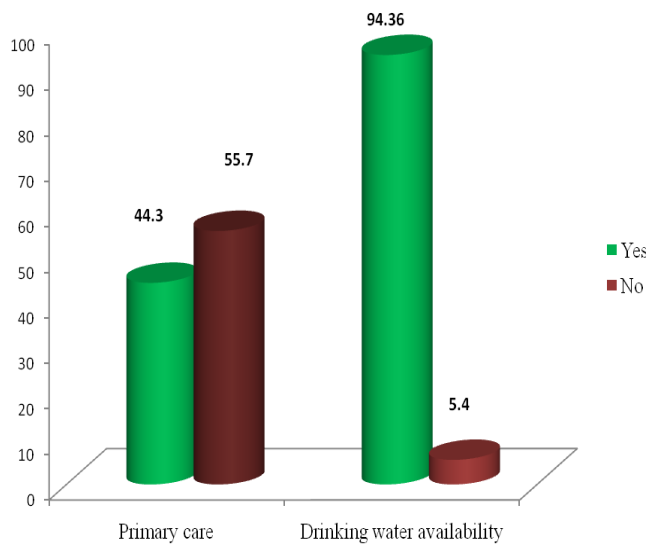
morbidity and disability found to be reported that they have experiences gender discrimination in work.

Deprivation of basic facilities among MGNREGS in Kerala

Accessibility of basic facilities is a crucial aspect which determine the living status of any population. Here we examine the basic facilities of GNREA workers in Kerala in terms of drinking water facilities and primary health care, which are the basic needs of workers in any region.

Figure 8 presents. Percentage distribution of MGNREGS workers in Kerala by basic facilities. It is observed that 44.3 percent of the MGNREGS workers in Kerala availing primary care in the worksite. It is remarkable to noticed that 94.36 percent of workers respond that they have the availability of drinking water in the work site.

Figure 8 Percentage distribution of MGNREGS workers in Kerala by basic facilities



CONCLUSION

Seasonal character of employment and delay of payment arises most important challenges faced by MGNREGS in Kerala. Apart from this different types of abuses such as verbal/psychological and financial/social/economic abuses from worksite and related surroundings. Gender discrimination, deprivation of basic facilities found to be less among workers in Kerala. Socio-economic differentials in all the factors are evident from the analysis.

The single most important distinguishing feature of MGNREGS from employment programmes of the past is that the provision of work is triggered by the demand for work by wage-seekers and provided as their legal right. One of the most important aspects of MGNREGS is that the villagers can rightfully demand employment. The authority is responsible to provide employment in response to demand or provide employment allowance in the case it is

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