

02 July, 2019

Q. Though India has low level of labour force participation rates for women, but their participation in MNREGA is above 50%. What are the reasons for it? What changes MGNREGA has brought to the situation of women?

Ans. Women constitute only 26% of the country's labour workforce but their engagement in MGNREGA has been more than 50% consistently.

The main reasons for this increase are:-

- ① MGNREGA mandates that at least one-third women participation in jobs.
- ② The nature of job provided under MGNREGA is unskilled manual jobs. The level of skill in women is very less and so suited for jobs.
- ③ Due to rural to urban migration of men, there has been feminisation of rural workforce.
- ④ The increased participation has had positive impact on the empowerment of women but as per reports women workers are paid less than their counterparts.

The impact of such participation of women are:

- ① Women are now the earning hand which has improved their status in the villages.
- ② An earning woman can take better care of her family, education of children, health etc.
- ③ The women coming out of the houses and working in fields has broken the social taboo to stay secluded behind purdah.
- ④ Greater interaction has led to greater awareness and skills among rural women.

However, certain areas like ^{reduction in} gender-gap in wages, level of skills among women, other vocational jobs for women in rural set up should be encouraged so as to increase the women participation on all India level.