

An Analytical Study on the Impact of PMGSY in the Hills: A Case Study of Ukhrul District, Manipur

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Abstract

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) aims to improve transportation and connectivity in rural India. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana was launched in December 2000 to provide year-round road access to India's remote villages. As a government backed initiative, this program is part of efforts to alleviate poverty. This article examines the impact on the people living in the hills of Manipur by the initiative of the PMGSY under the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. About one billion people nationwide reside in rural areas without access to paved roads. Local businesses experience only modest gains in employment. The PMGSY aims to support the Government of India's aim of reducing poverty in rural areas by promoting economic growth and giving way to necessities that can improve the standard of living for the impoverished in rural areas. PMGSY's objective was to provide rural communities with access to the city's central business district. This article aims to explain how better rural road connectivity has increased agricultural output and generated additional employment. The analysis also examines PMGSY's impacts on several other domains, including urbanization, transport, health, education, and poverty reduction.

Keywords: road connectivity, socioeconomic impact, PMGSY, Manipur, rural development

Introduction

Rural road connectivity serves as a crucial element of rural development by enhancing access to economic and social services, which in turn fosters higher agricultural incomes and productive employment opportunities in India, thereby playing an essential role in sustainable poverty alleviation. Despite the initiatives undertaken over the years at both State and Central levels through various programs, numerous habitations in the country remain unconnected by all-weather roads. It is widely acknowledged that even when connectivity is established, the roads built are of such inferior quality (due to inadequate construction or upkeep) that they cannot consistently be classified as All-weather roads. In order to rectify the circumstances, the Government initiated the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana on December 25, 2000, aimed at ensuring all-weather connectivity to qualifying unconnected settlements.

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Scope of Evaluation Study and Methodology

This study covers only the State of Manipur with special reference to Ukhrul district. Ukhrul is one of the hill districts of Manipur State which is bounded by Myanmar in the East, Chandel district in the South, Senapati district in the West and Nagaland in the North. Located between 24 degrees North, 25 degrees South and 41 degrees 47 minutes longitude, covers an area of 4,544 sq. km. In 2011 Census, the district has recorded a total population of 183,998 of which 94,718 are males and 89,280 are females. It has sex ratio of 943 per one thousand males. It has a density of only 40 persons per sq.km. (Census Manipur, 2011) The evaluation methodology included the collection of data from the primary sources i.e. State level Implementing Authority/District level Implementing Authority/ Beneficiaries etc., through interviews, secondary data from a number of sources, newspaper reports and articles of interest in different journals etc. and interviews of the beneficiaries of rural connectivity and concerned officials of Rural Development Department at State/District/Panchayat level and other knowledgeable sources. In addition, the study has been supplemented with the spot observations made during the field survey.

Evaluation Study

- To assess out the extent to which objectives of the programme have been achieved.
- To conduct a qualitative evaluation of the program's physical and financial efficacy.
- To evaluate the influence of the initiative on the socio-economic circumstances of inhabitants in communities granted road access through the program.
- To identify the limitations in executing the software and recommendations for its modification.

Review of Literature

Ghosh Madhusudan (2017) In the study, "Infrastructure and Development in Rural India," the author identified power, irrigation, and roads as the principal determinants of agricultural productivity, production growth, poverty alleviation, and improvements in health and education. It further found that having access to roads matters more than the roads' quality for driving socio-economic progress in rural areas.

Biswas Rentu and Anwaruzzaman (2018) worked on "Impact of PMGSY on Socio Economic Development: A Case Study of Chandpur-Kushabaria Road, Murshidabad District, West Bengal." The study showed that 78 percent of respondents reported a positive impact of the PMGSY road on job creation, about 22 percent perceived no effect, and none reported a negative impact on employment.

Dr. Shivraj Meena, (2017) Rural Road Connectivity with PMGSY and its Impact: A Case Study. PMGSY aimed to ensure all eligible habitations had basic access through all-weather roads. This study examines the impact of rural road connectivity in the Gangapur City Block of Sawai Madhopur District, Rajasthan. The results offer valuable guidance for advancing rural development in the Gangapur City Block, though some modifications to government programs and implementation efforts remain necessary to fully realize the program's goals.

Dr. S. Abash Parida. (2014). The PMGSY's role in improving quality of life in Odisha's rural areas. This study examines and measures the socioeconomic impact of PMGSY road projects on the quality of life of residents in selected rural villages. It documents the experiences and narratives associated with those impacts. The findings indicate that remote, poorly connected areas experienced slower social and economic progress compared with better-connected villages, while communities with long-established paved roads showed the most pronounced socioeconomic improvement.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the PMGSY is to provide Connectivity, by way of an All-weather Road (with necessary culverts and cross-drainage structures, which is operable throughout the year), to the eligible unconnected Habitations in the rural areas with a population of 500 persons and above in Plain areas. In respect of the Hill States (North-East, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttarakhand), the Desert Areas (as identified in the Desert Development Programme), the Tribal (Schedule V) areas and Selected Tribal and Backward Districts (as identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Planning Commission) the objective would be to connect eligible unconnected Habitations with a population of 250 persons and above. (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) | District Central North, Government of Delhi | India, n.d.) (Substituted vide Circular No. P-17025/39/2010-RC dated 10/3/2011)

The PMGSY will permit the Upgradation (to prescribed standards) of the existing roads in those Districts where all the eligible Habitations of the designated population size have been provided all-weather road connectivity. However, it must be noted that Upgradation is not central to the Programme. In Upgradation works, priority should be given to Through Routes of the Rural Core Network, which carry more traffic. (Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) | District Central North, Government of Delhi | India, n.d.)

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme. The scheme has been started in Manipur w.e.f. 25th December 2000 with the conversion of 642 roads of works of the then erstwhile Rural Roads Scheme under BMS (Basic Minimum Services) to PMGSY Phase -I with six divisions from the Public Works Department, Manipur as Programme Implementation Units (PIUs). The PMGSY is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme which is being implemented by the Manipur State Rural Roads Development Agency (MSRRDA) which was established in March, 2005. Bharat Nirman (BN) is also a part of PMGSY. BN covers new connectivity to villages having population of 500 in Manipur. From Phase VII onwards, only BN component has been considered along with BADP Roads of Border Blocks. (Economic Survey Manipur, 2022-2023)

IMPLEMENTATION OF PMGSY IN MANIPUR

The PMGSY Scheme is implemented by Manipur State Rural Roads Development Agency (MSRRDA) under the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RD&PR) Department, working alongside the Rural Engineering Department (RED)

PMGSY-1:- Envisages providing all weather access to eligible unconnected Habitations of 250 persons (based on Census-2001) and above including 20% up-gradation of existing roads.

As of March 31, 2024, among the approved 2066 projects (1858 Roads & 208 Bridges), 1869 projects (90%) (1713 Roads & 156 Bridges) have been finalized, and out of the sanctioned road length of 11348 km, 10538 km (93%) have been built. Out of the authorized 652 settlements, 621 (95%) have been linked. Regarding financial advancement from the approved amount of Rs. 5272.67 Crore, the expenditure recorded is Rs. 4491.11 Crore (85%).

PMGSY-II: - Aims to enhance the rural road infrastructure through the improvement of designated Through Routes and certain Major Rural Links (MRLs) considering factors such as population, educational, medical, veterinary, transport, and market amenities, among others. As of March 31, 2024, 48 out of the approved 58 projects (55 roads and 3 bridges) have been finalized, representing 83%, with 289 km of the sanctioned 325 km in road length completed, equating to 89%. Regarding the financial advancement from the approved Rs. 275.21 Crore, the expenditure recorded is Rs. 206.23 Crore (75%).

PMGSY-III: Aims to enhance the current Rural Road Network by the improvement of existing Thoroughfares and Principal Rural Connections, taking into account Population, Educational, Medical, Transport, and Market amenities.

The state has been allocated 812.50 km of road length under PMGSY-III, MORD has given Clearance for PMGSY-III (Batch-1) of 2023-24 for 56 nos of roads with a road length of 502.24 km having a sanctioned cost of Rs. 404.72 Cr on 7th March 2024. PRE EC held on 20th June, 2024 for balance road length of 322.85 km.

Achievement of PMGSY for the year 2023-2024 in Manipur.

Out of 890 km of target road length (as set by MoRD, Gol), 59 km have been constructed and out of 32 target eligible habitations, 1 eligible habitations have been connected by completing 58 works (28 Roads & 30 Bridges) at an expenditure of Rs. 296.84 crore. Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India has indicative allocation of Rs. 660.00 crore for the Central Share and State share of Rs. 73.33 crore. Ministry has released Rs. 161.29 crore for central share and corresponding SMS for FY 2023-24 is yet to be released by the State. However the State has released Rs 301.48 co central share of FV 2022-23 along with corresponding SMS of RS. 33.50 Crore in FY 2023-24. (Annual Administrative Report 2023-2024, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Department)

Table no. 1 presents the State Report for PMGSY-I&II as 31/03/2024 since inception.

Sr. N o.	District Name	Sanctioned work of PMGSY – I & II				Completed of PMGSY – I & II			
		No of Road work	No of Bridge Work	Total Nos of Work	Road Length in KM	No of Road Work	No of Bridgework	Total Nos of Work	Road Length in KM

1	Bishnupur	156	7	163	397.66	151	6	157	419.49
2	Chandel/ Tengnoupal	221	15	236	1,620.62	191	10	201	1560.29
3	Churachandpur/ Pherzawl	220	38	258	2,314.89	181	25	206	1921.44
4	Imphal East/ Jiribam	257	35	292	607.91	256	25	281	614.68
5	Imphal West	214	11	225	435.46	214	9	223	426.14
6	Senapati/ Kangpokpi	280	35	315	2,050.51	267	31	298	1979.90
7	Tamenglong/ Noney	177	25	202	1,717.64	138	15	153	1610.23
8	Thoubal/ Kakching	195	17	212	622.95	194	13	207	630.12
9	Ukhrul/ Kamjong	193	28	221	1,905.30	166	25	191	1664.62
Total		1,913	211	2,124	11,672.94	1,758	159	1917	10826.91

Source: Manipur State Rural Roads Development Agency.

The above table presents the State report for PMGSY-I&II as on 31/03/2024 since inception. Senapati/Kangpokpi district got the highest number of sanctioned roads of 280. The road length of the sanctioned road in KM is 2,050.51. Tamenglong/Noney got the lowest sanction road of 177 and the road length IN KM is 1,717.64.

Ukhrul district got 193 sanctioned road. The road length in KM is 1,905.30. Out of the 193 sanctioned road 166 of the road length of 1664.62 has been completed.

Table no. 2 presents the Achievement of PMGSY-I & II for the 2023-2024 in the state of Manipur.

Sr.No.	District Name	No. of Roads Completed	No. of Bridges Completed	Total Nos of work Completed	Road Length Completed in KM	Expenditure Rs in Crore
1	Bishnupur	-	4	4	7.70	18.76
2	Chandel/Tengnoupal	-	2	2	1.32	35.90
3	Churachandpur	2	1	3	4.57	46.91
4	Imphal East/Jiribam	1	6	7	1.30	16.4

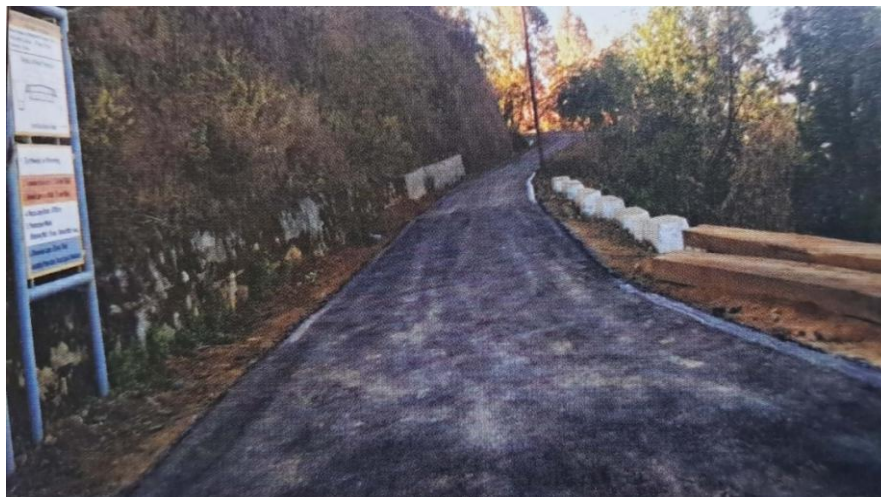
5	Imphal West	1	5	6	0.45	7.40
6	Senapati/Kangpokpi	8	5	13	4.40	30.98
7	Tamenglong/Noney	5	2	7	8.07	78.47
8	Thoubal/Kakching	4	2	6	1.65	13.15
9	Ukhrul/Kamjong	7	3	10	30.00	48.87
Total		28	30	58	59.46	296.84

Source: Manipur State Rural Roads Development Agency.

The total number of 28 roads and a total number of 30 bridges have been completed in the year 2023-2024. The road length completed in KM is 59.46. The total expenditure in crore is 296.84.

In Ukhrul district of Manipur, 7 roads and 3 bridges with total length 30.00 KM and total expenditure of 48.87 crore has been completed.

Figure 1: Road built under PMGSY Scheme in Ukhrul District, Manipur.



Ukhrul District| Chingai T.D. Block Package No. MN09179 L028-Huishu to Khamasom Phungrei| Sanction Cost Rs. 1262.94 lakhs | 22.00 km.

Source: Rural Development & Panchayati Raj.

The picture in figure 1 shows the road constructed under the PMGSY scheme in Chingai Block between Huishu to Khamasom Village, Ukhrul district, Manipur.

Challenges in the implementation of PMGSY Scheme in the State.

The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) has made a remarkable revolution in the rural roads and connectivity, although the project faces many challenges of its own. They are the following:

1. High cost of construction and poor funds provided by the government,

2. Inefficiency of road builders/contractors/planners,
3. Inadequate implementation of road construction,
4. Inconsistent working season and tough terrains,
5. Non inclusion of the villagers in the development process,
6. Security concerns in the hill areas,
7. Accountability Concerns,
8. Monsoon Vulnerability and Lack of Maintenance.
9. Contractual and Tender Stagnation.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study the following suggestions are made:

1. The state governments must provide adequate financial support to PMGSY program.
2. With proper guidance and appropriate facilities, the state should motivate the road builders to work with efficiency.
1. 3.Considering of the climate, regionality and population of the area the road projects have to be adequately implemented.
3. It is essential to secure the timely delivery of materials and personnel for the construction.

CONCLUSION

The PMGSY is a significant instrument which has help in the overall development of the country by reducing the gap of regional disparities. PMGSY holds immense promise for reshaping rural livelihoods, particularly in a border state like Manipur. The initiative is helping in the progress of neglected and under developed regions of the country and make them connected to the larger areas for their development. Good connectivity amidst different clusters in and around villages and then their further connectivity with other rural and urban centres is a necessary condition for overall inclusive development process. (Saikia, 2019) The PMGSY addresses this very concern. It is imperative to tackle the challenges hindering the effective execution of the initiative to ensure that underdeveloped and isolated regions of the nation can engage in the advancement process. A shift towards inclusive, participatory, and regionally adaptive planning is not just desirable, it is essential for the success of rural development in the state of Manipur.

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