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EFFECT OF MGNREGA ON IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL LIVELIHOOD IN PAURI GARHWAL DISTRICT, UTTARAKHAND, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Examine the effect of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), a wage for employments plan of the Indian Government, on rural poor the pathways through which MGNREGA affects their poverty. The objective of the paper is MGNREGA could reduce poverty through positive effects on living standard, Poverty and income. The present study is data is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the five village of Jahrikhal Block, Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand. 120 respondents were asked in total selected through purposely-random sampling. The results revealed that MGNREGA plays a key role in order to reduce the poverty of rural poor people. On the further hand it enlarge the community and economic facility by providing the employment opportunity and development of Asset creation. In this way, MGNREGA has steadily raised the standard of rural livelihood as it provides the proper wage disbursement and authentic wok facilities.

Keywords: MGNREG,NREGA, MHNREGA, wage-employment, rural livelihood etc.

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a “Magic Bullet” in eradicating rural poverty and unemployment by way of generating demand for productive labour force in villages. Rural poverty and unemployment in India have grown in an unprecedented manner since independence (Pani and Iyer 2011). There is growing incidence of illiteracy, hungry people, malnourished children, farmer suicides, starvation deaths, resulting from inadequate employment and poverty and the failure of subsistence production during droughts (De and Dasgupta 2009). In this backdrop, Government of India (GOI) enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in the year 2005. It is the biggest poverty alleviation programme in the world which is started (MoRD, 2006-2007).

Initial outlay of Rs. 11,300 crores in year 2006-07.

This Act is now called as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. It provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage (Prasanna and Leelavathi 2014). The Act covered 200 districts in its first phase implemented on February 2, 2006 and have been extended to 130 additional districts in 2007-2008 (Roy & Samanta, 2010). All the remaining rural areas have been notified with effect from April 1, 2008. This minimum wage varies from state to state. It is Rs. 80 in some states whereas in other it is Rs 125 or Rs 120. According to the Act, the minimum wage cannot be less than Rs. 60. The 100 days of work figure was estimated because the agricultural season is only supposed to last roughly around 250 days and unskilled workers have no alternative source of income in the remaining parts of the year. Table 1 shows a brief profile of MGNREGA.

Table1: Profile of MGNREGA

Year	Particulars
August 2005	Parliament passed an act called as NREGA
February 2006	Came into force in 200 districts
April 2007	130 more districts included
April 2008	Universalization of the scheme
October 2008	Wage transaction through banks/post offices
February 2009	MOU with the postal department
2nd October 2009	Name changed to MGNREGA

Source: Research Paper

Uttarakhand, the MGNREGA was initially launched in 3 districts i.e., Chamoli, Champawat and Tehri in 2006-07 (Phase 1). Two additional districts, i.e., Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar were adopted in phase II (2007-08) (Ruwali 2014). In the last phase, all the remaining districts have been notified under the NREGA. (Sahal & Bhatt 2016, Singh and Nauriyal 2009 and Singh *et al.*, 2016). MGNREGA was applied to district Pauri Garhwal in the third phase and the implementation of MGNREGA scheme in the district commenced on April 1, 2008. (Singh *et al.* 2015 and Negi *et al.* 2015).

Objectives of MGNREGA

- Providing 100 days of wage employment in rural areas during a financial year to every registered household.
- Creating productive assets
- Reducing urban migration
- Empowering rural women and the poor through the provision of a right-based law.
- To create strong social safety net for the vulnerable groups by providing employment source, when other alternative are inadequate

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is descriptive in nature and is based on both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from the five village of

Jahrikhal Block, Pauri Garhwal district of Uttarakhand with the following objectives.

1. To analyse the socio-economic conditions of the respondents.
2. To examine the impact on the income before and after MGNREGA and upliftment of the respondents.
3. To evaluate the role of MGNREGA in reducing the rural poverty.

For collection of data from the sample households, a well-structured questionnaire. 120 respondents were asked in total selected through purposely-random sampling. A scaling technique has been used in an interview schedule in order to measure the opinion of the respondents regarding the functions, benefits and development of MGNREGA. This data was collected from five-gram panchayats (GPs) of Jahrikhal blocks. We have used simple statistic frequency and percentage analysis to find the determinants of participation of the households in MGNREGA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the collected data, the information has been classified, tabulated, and interpreted in simple frequency distribution and percentages in a way to know the initiatives taken by the MGNREGA to diminish the rural poverty in the study area. The thorough examination, discussion and findings are given below:

From the study it is obvious to the preponderance (56.7 percent) of the respondents are females, (30.8 percent) of the respondents belong to the age group of 30-40 years and MGNREGA and agriculture work is their main occupation. Concerning the educational qualification of the respondents the table shows that the majority (37.5 percent) of them are educated up to the eight standard level and (20.8%) of the respondents are illiterate and rest of them are educated up to primary intermediate and Technical/ graduate level.

Table-2: Socio-Economic status of the Respondents

S.No.	Variable		Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	18-30	4	3.3
		31-40	13	10.8
		41-50	37	30.8
		51-60	35	29.2
		Above 60	31	25.8
2	Gender	Male	52	43.3
		Female	68	56.7
3	Educational status	Illiterate	25	20.8
		Primary	22	18.3
		Secondary	45	37.5
		Intermediate	27	22.5
		Graduate/Technical Course	01	0.8
4	Marital Status	Married	101	84.2
		Unmarried	2	1.7
		Window	17	14.2
5	House Type	Pacca	46	38.3
		Kacca	71	59.2
		Kacca/Pacca	3	2.5
6	Toilet Facility	Yes	98	81.66
		No	22	18.34
7	Electricity	Yes	120	100
		No	0	0

In the study area, it has been found that most of the respondents (84.2%) working under MGNREGA are married. The above Table 2 states the infrastructure amenities, majority (59.2 percent) of the respondents live in the kacca houses, which are constructed by mud and stones and 38.2 percent, are living in the concrete houses, which are constructed by cement and solid bricks and stone and rest of them (2.5 percent) are living in the kacca/pacca houses. The above Table 2 shows the facilities available at home. It has been found that the electricity is

available at the all the respondent's home. The table also states that the majority (81.34 percent) of the respondents are having the toilet facility in there house and the rest of the respondents are (18.34 percent) have no toilet facility in there house. This finding is similar to the observations made by Singh et al., 2017 and Guha and Mazumder (2015) and Mohanraj and Karthikeyan (2012) and Nair *et al.* (2009) also support the present finding reporting that MGNREGA also improved the economic status of the beneficiaries in the study area.

Table 3: Monthly Income Status of the respondents before and after MGNREGA

Variable		Before MGNREGA		After MGNREGA	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Monthly Income	Below 1000	38	31.67	14	11.67
	1001-2000	27	22.5	40	33.33
	2001 – 3000	20	16.67	26	21.67
	3001 – 4000	16	13.33	21	17.50
	4001 – 5000	10	8.33	10	8.33
	Above 5000	09	7.50	09	7.50
		120	100	120	100

The above table 3 provides the distribution of the respondents based on their monthly income before and after MGNREGA. The table 3 infers that the majority (31.67 percent) of the respondents have the monthly income of Rs below 1000 below before MBNREGA and the minority (22.5 percent) of the respondents earn income between Rs 1001-2000 and rest of them earn monthly income of Rs 3001-4000, Rs 4001-5000 and above 5000 per month. While after the MGNREGA, the majority (33.33 percent) of the respondents have the monthly income Rs 1001-2000 and 21.67 percent earn monthly income of Rs 2001-3000. This variation in the monthly income of the respondents depends upon their possession of agricultural land and the availability of work provided by MGNREGA. This finding is similar to the observations made by Singh et al., 2017.

Table 4: MGNREGA Improved the Life Standard of the Rural Poor

Sn	Life Standard	Frequency	Percentage
1	Improved	87	72.5
2	Not Improved	33	27.5
	Total	120	100

Table 4 indicates the perception of the respondents regarding their life standard while working under MGNREGA. The table clearly depicts that the majority (72.5 percent) of the respondents are of the opinion that their standard of life improved by working under MGNREGA. The rest percentage of the respondents are of opposite opinion, they think that MGNREGA failed to improve their life standard as the Act is providing low wages which are not sufficient to live a life in comfort.

Table 5: MGNREGA performance to Eradicate Rural Poverty

S.No.	Development	Frequency	Percentage
1	Helped to eradicate Rural Poverty	75	62.5
2	Not helped to eradicate Rural Poverty	45	37.5
	Total	120	100

From the above table 5 it could be seen that a good number of the respondents (62.5 percent) accept that the MGNREGA is functioning for the eradication of rural poverty and it curbs the poverty to some extent as per the past worrying life are concerned. While the rest percentage of the respondents is of the opinion that MGNREGA provides only 100 days of work in a year which are not sufficient for a rural poor to come out from the curse of poverty.

Table-6: Developmental Activities Done by MGNREGA

Sn	Development	Frequency	Percentage
1	Asset Creation	40	33.34
2	Employment Generation	80	66.66
	Total	120	100

Table 6 reveals the developmental activities done by MGNREGA. The table describes that the majority (66.66 percent) of the respondents believe that MGNREGA remain successful in employment generation activity in the area and the less percentage of the respondents are of the view that MGNREGA works for the development of assets.

Major Findings

From the study, it is evident that the majority (56.7percent) are female respondents and (37.5 percent) are educated up to secondary level and (20.8%) of the respondents are illiterate. Most of the respondents (84.2%) working under MGNREGA are married Most (59.2 percent) of the respondents live in the kacca houses. All the respondents are having electricity connection system. Majority (81.34 percent) are having toilet facility and (18.34 percentage) do not have toilet facility their houses.

Majority (72.5 percent) believed that MGNREGA helps to improve their life standard. In terms of functioning of MGNREGA mainly (62.5%) believes that the Act is working for the eradication of rural poverty and generally (66.66%) are of the opinion that the Act is functioning to create employment among the rural poor people.

CONCLUSION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a pioneering wellbeing programme in order to improve the rural livelihood. MGNREGA plays a key role in order to reduce the poverty of rural poor. On the further hand, it enlarges the community and economic facility by providing the employment opportunity and

development of Asset creation. It means there is a significant impact of MGNREGA in living standard and an increase in income of the selected respondents in selected blocks of the district Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand after implementation of MGNREGA. In addition, the Act is working for the betterment of rural poor and there is a good awareness among the people regarding the performance of MGNREGA

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