

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF MGNREGA-2005 IN RURAL AREAS: A
STUDY IN NUH DISTRICT OF HARYANA, INDIA**

Deepak Moda*; Meenu**

*Research Scholar,
Department of Geography,
Maharshi Dayanand University,
Rohtak, Haryana, INDIA
Email id: deepakmoda2017@gmail.com

**Independent Scholar,
Bhiwani, Haryana, INDIA
Email id: meenugoyal9498@gmail.com

DOI: 10.5958/2249-7315.2022.00358.6

ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to assess the impacts of implementation of MGNREGA-2005 in Nuh district of Haryana employing the secondary sources of data. Lying in the south-eastern bulge of the Indian state of Haryana, Nuh is one of the most backward districts in the country. Lack of resources, poor climatic conditions and limited means of livelihoods have pushed 63.18% population below the poverty line. In terms of literacy, access to health care facilities, infrastructure development etc. the district lags far behind as compared to other districts of the state. In this context, MGNREGA is not less than a boon to the natives as it legally provides for at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in rural areas of the country, thereby, ensuring their livelihood security. Outcomes of the study reveal that MGNREGA not only generated huge scale employment in the district but also empowered the women economically as well as promoted gender equality. The finding of the study also reveals that the act generated various community assets and increased the flow of money in the rural economy by providing money directly to the participating labors. In other words, we can say that MGNREGA benefitted the poor households as well strengthened the district's rural economy.

KEYWORDS: *Livelihood, MGNREGA, Poverty line, Rural economy, Wage Employment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Passed by the Indian Parliament on 23rd August, 2005, The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (popularly known as the MGNREGA-2005) is the world's biggest social security measure to strengthen the rural India. The act came into force on 2nd February, 2006 and implemented in three phases covering the whole country with the exception of districts that have a hundred per cent urban population. The act legally provides for minimum 100 days of guaranteed employment in a fiscal year to every adult member of the households who is willing to do such works that don't require any specialized skills or abilities at a given wage rate. Thus, the act aims at safeguarding rural poor's livelihood security. Besides, the act aims at promoting social inclusion, strengthening democracy at the grass-root level and building durable rural assets, thereby, ensuring all round development of the rural areas.

MGNREGA was implemented in Nuh district w.e.f. 1st April, 2007 under the name of Haryana Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (HREGS, 2007). Till the FY 2021-22, the act has completed 15 years of its successful implementation, and, hence, it becomes inevitable to see its

impacts in Nuh district as it is regarded as one of the most backward, resource deficient, poorly serviced and socio-economically vulnerable districts in the country. This research paper attempts to examine impacts of MGNREGA implementation in Nuh district of Haryana.

2. Profile of the Study Area

Bupinder Hooda led Congress administration created Mewat district (20th district of Haryana) on 4th April, 2005 and renamed it as Nuh in 2016. The district lies in the south-eastern bulge of the Haryana state and forms a part of National Capital Region (NCR). The district spreads over 1,507 sq km and comprises of 441 villages, 8 towns, 7 blocks, 2 sub-tehsils and 4 tehsils/sub-divisions. Nuh town is Nuh districts headquarter. The district has semi-arid climate and average rainfall varies from 336 mm to 440 mm. The district lacks perennial rivers. Aravali ranges, locally known as 'Kala Pahar', run along the south-western and western part of the district. According to Census of India, 2011, the total population of the district is 10, 89,263 persons of which 88.61% are rural. Thus, Nuh is predominantly rural in nature. SC populations make 6.91% of the district's total population and there is no ST population. The literacy rate and general sex ratio are 54.08% and 907 females per thousand males respectively and the density of population is 723 persons per sq km. There are a total of 1, 60,280 households (Census, 2011) in the district. Agriculture and allied activities constitute the major occupation of the district's people while animal husbandry constitutes the secondary occupation.

3. Literature Review

Choudhary Rekha (2020) analyzed the impacts of MGNREGA on purchasing power, out-migration and quality of life of its beneficiaries in the Jodhpur district of desert state of Rajasthan employing the secondary sources of data as well as a sample survey of 240 households and brought forward that increase in employment lead to further increase in purchasing power (food items, domestic purchase, healthcare facilities, renovation of house, etc.) of the households. After MGNREGA implementation, a majority of the beneficiaries reported no migration. The study, further, highlighted that income from the MGNREGA improved the standard of living and accelerated the village economy by 'trickle up effect'.

Yasmin Karishma and B. K. Srinivas (2020) assessed the impacts of MGNREGA on the livelihood security of its beneficiaries employing a sample study of 140 individuals in Kalahandi district of Odisha and concluded that the act dramatically enhanced livelihood security of the locals. Their study also highlighted that the act not only elevated food security but also improved purchasing power as well as standard of living of people. Besides, the works carried out under MGNREGA such as road construction, digging of ponds, various water conservation measures (drought proofing, exploring irrigation sources) and other allied activities improved the economic well-being of the locals.

Raghuwanshi Anand and Sangya Shrivastav (2018) studied the impacts of MGNREGA in Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh utilizing the secondary sources of data and concluded that MGNREGA positively impacted the rural economy. MGNREGA raised the income of the rural poor and hence their livelihoods. Improved means of livelihoods raised the standard of living. The scheme also played a vital role in reducing the poverty levels of the participating households.

Singh Santosh (2017) explored the effects of MGNREGA in Pauri Garhwal district of Himalayan state of Uttarakhand utilizing the secondary as well as primary sources of data (120 respondents) and highlighted that 72.5% of the respondents accepted improvements in their standard of life, 62.5% accepted eradication of their poverty to some extent and 66.66% agreed to employment generation while only 33.34% respondents agreed that MGNREGA created assets in the area.

Using the secondary data sources, **Sahu Kishor Ch. (2017)** analyzed the impacts of MGNREGA

in the Bolangir district of Odisha and indicated mismatch between the households demanded employment and provided employment. The act also couldn't provide more than 20% of the households legally guaranteed at least 100 days of employment. In fact, the percentage of households provided 100 days of employment came down from 18.37% during the FY 2013-14 to merely 3.14% during the FY 2016-17.

4. Research Objective

The main objective of the present research paper is to assess the impacts of MGNREGA implementation in Nuh district of Haryana during the fiscal year 2021-22.

5. Material and Methods

The present research study is entirely based on the secondary sources of data. Data pertaining to MGNREGA implementation were collected from the official website of MGNREGA (FY 2020-21) and the demographic and other socio-economic information pertaining to the district was collected from the statistical abstract of Haryana (2018-19) and Census of India (2011) website. For the analysis purpose, tabulation, average, and percentage methods have been used.

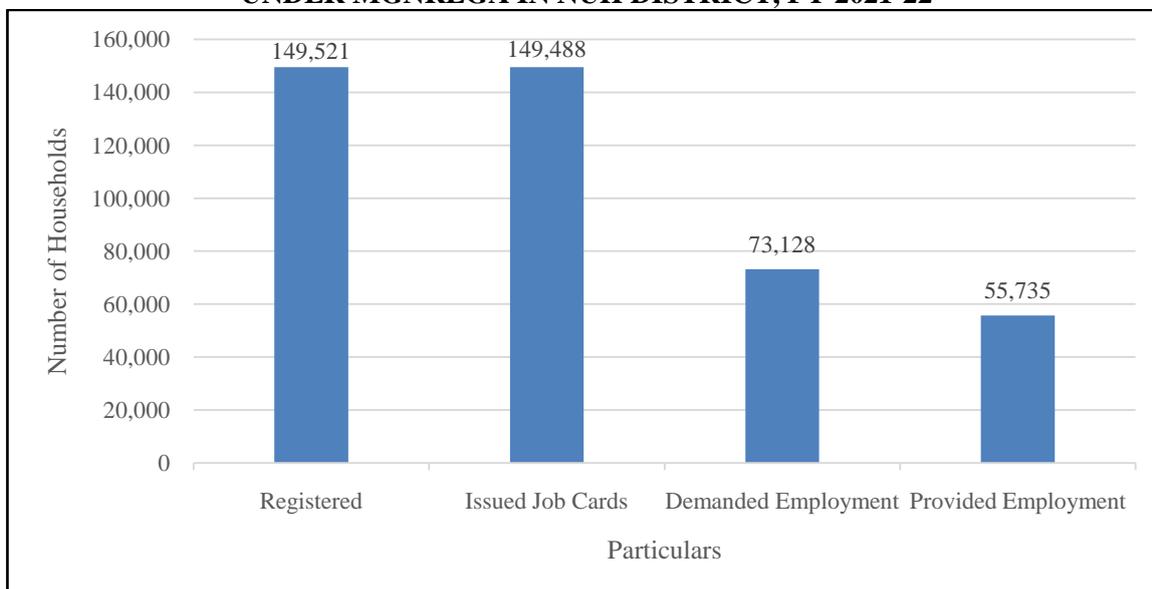
6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The impacts of MGNREGA in Nuh district of Haryana may be analyzed as follows:

6.1 Employment Generation and Livelihood Security

MGNREGA, basically, aims at generating employment in rural areas of the country so that poor rural households can earn their livelihoods and lead a better standard of life.

FIGURE 1: EMPLOYMENT DEMAND AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATION SCENARIO UNDER MGNREGA IN NUH DISTRICT, FY 2021-22



Source: <https://mnregaweb2.nic.in>, June, 2022

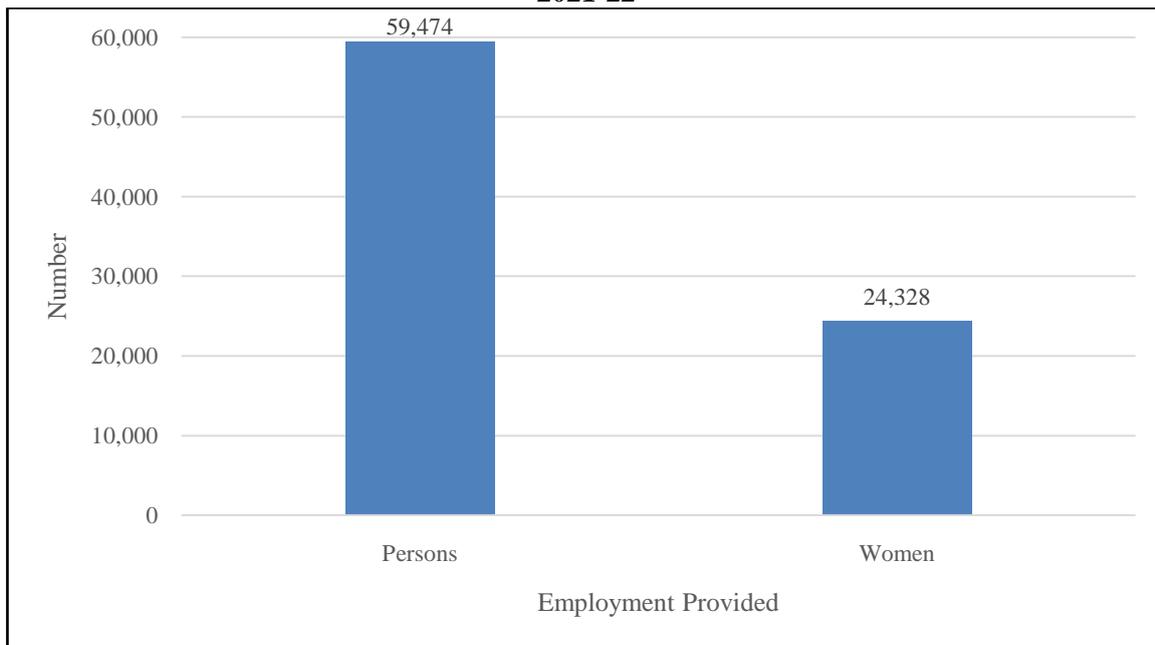
Figure 1 highlights that a total of 1, 49,521 households registered themselves for the MGNREGA jobs and of which 1, 49,488 households (99.98%) were issued the job cards after making due verifications. Of the total households issued job cards slightly less than one-half households (48.92%) demanded the employment. Further, figure 1 highlight that of the total households demanded employment slightly more than three-fourth households (76.22%) were provided the employment. Of the total households provided employment SC category households made 0.98% while others category households made 99.02%. Thus, we see that MGNREGA generated substantial employment in the district, thereby, securing the livelihoods of the local people

especially in time when there is a decline in rural job markets. This is one of the most remarkable impacts of the act in Nuh district.

6.2 Economic Empowerment of Women and Promotion of Gender Equality

MGNREGA-2005 clearly provides for at least one third reservations of jobs for women and equality of wages for both the genders. Thus, the act not only aims at generating employment but also ensuring women empowerment and promoting gender equality in rural areas.

FIGURE 2: WOMEN PROVIDED EMPLOYMENT UNDER MGNREGA IN NUH DISTRICT, FY 2021-22



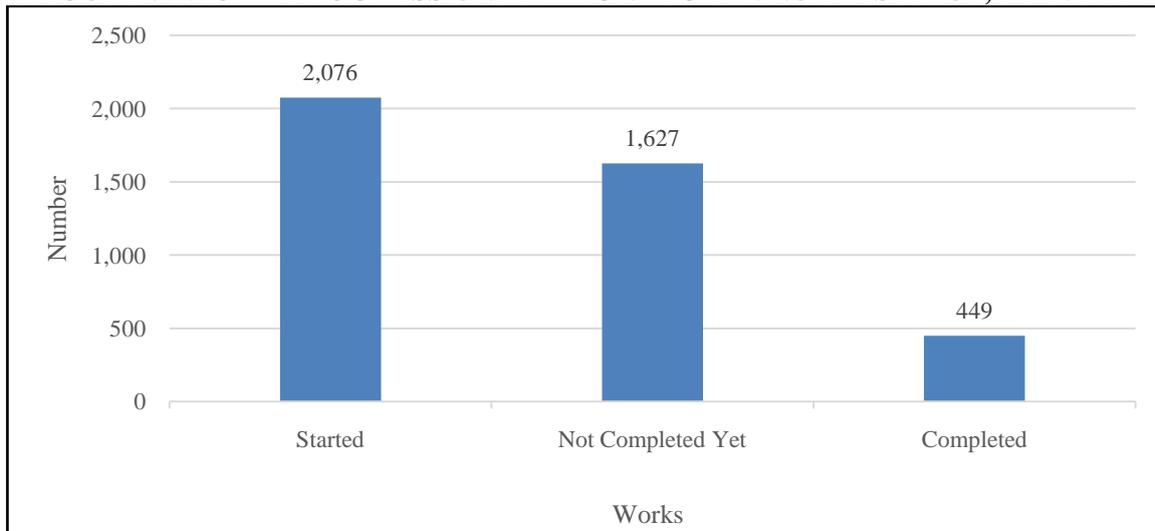
Source: <https://mnregaweb2.nic.in>, June, 2022

Figure 2 demonstrates that during the fiscal year 2021-22, a total of 59,474 persons were provided the employment under MGNREGA jobs of which 24,328 were women, thereby, constituting 40.91% of the total beneficiaries. This is one of the most noticeable achievements of the act in the Nuh district. Besides, equal wages were paid to women beneficiaries as their male counterparts. Thus, MGNREGA, in Nuh district, not only empowered women economically but also promoted gender equality.

6.3 Rural Infrastructure Development

Creation of durable assets, leading to infrastructure development in rural areas, constitutes an important objective of the act. Prioritised works include such as water conservation, drought proofing, provision of irrigation facilities to land owned by marginalised sections of the society, flood control measures among others.

FIGURE 3: WORK PROGRESS UNDER MGNREGA IN NUH DISTRICT, FY 2021-22



Source: <https://mnregaweb2.nic.in>, June, 2022

Figure 3 reveals that under the MGNREGA act a total of 2,076 infrastructure development works were taken up in the district during the fiscal year 2021-22 and of them 449 works (21.63%) have been completed till date. Thus, we see that the act has contributed to rural infrastructure development in the district.

6.4 Increased Flow of Money in Rural Economy

Funds availability is an instrumental part of any scheme aiming at welfare of the poor people.

TABLE 1: FINANCIAL STATEMENT, FY 2021-22

Particulars	District Nuh
Total available fund (crores)	170.17
Total expenditure (crores)	169.94
Fund utilization (%)	99.86
Expenditure on labour/wages (crores)	70.33

Source: <https://mnregaweb2.nic.in>, June, 2022

Table 1 reveals that during the fiscal year 2021-22, a total fund of Rs. 170.17 crore was made available under the act with a view to ensure all round development of the district's rural poor households including the infrastructure development. Of the total fund availability Rs. 169.94 crore (99.86%) were utilized to meet the act's objectives which is a very good sign. Of the total fund availability Rs. 70.33 crore were directly paid to labors as unskilled wages, thereby, increasing the flow of money in the economy and ensuring the overall development of the district's rural poor households.

7. CONCLUSIONS

MGNREGA is widely considered as a 'magical pill' to ameliorate poor socio-economic conditions in rural areas. The findings of the research study revealed that MGNREGA has had a huge impact in the district. The act generated considerable employment and successfully increased the average annual income of the participating households. The act not only contributed to economic empowerment of women but also promoted gender equality in rural areas. Besides, the act generated several durable community assets in the district and infused a sizeable amount of money in the economy, thereby, contributing to overall development of the district. However, it is also true that the rates of employment generation and work completion have been slow. Hence, it is strongly recommended that implementing agencies should provide the employment to eligible job

seeking households at the earliest. This would, ultimately, leads to creation of more jobs as well as timely completion of the works undertaken. MGNREGA seems to have a great potential to generate employment, alleviating household's poverty and ensuring overall development of the rural areas. Increase in awareness about the act among the rural people and strong government will can definitely transform the rural areas and increase the standard of living of masses.

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