

**IMPACT OF MGNREGA ON LIVING STANDARD AND MIGRATION IN CHHATTISGARH: A CASE STUDY OF BILASPUR DISTRICT****Rambabu Gupta*, Prof. (Dr.) Prabhakar Pandey*** Research Scholar (Commerce), Dr. C.V. Raman University, Kargiroad, Kota, Bilaspur (C.G), India
Head, Department of Commerce, Dr. C.V. Raman University, Kargiroad, Kota, Bilaspur (C.G), India**DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.61148****KEYWORDS:** Employment, Livelihood, Rural, Programme, Migration.**ABSTRACT**

In development studies, livelihood is the social and cultural means of an individual, family or other social groups over an income or bundles of resources or both that can be used or exchanged to satisfy needs. Migration refers to the transfer of population from one place to another in search of livelihood. Government of India has initiated several programs and policies to uplift the conditions of livelihood sources of its citizens. MGNREGA which was legislated in 2005 by the Parliament of India is also such kind of initiatives. The Act ensures 100 days of employment to rural households under the employment guarantee scheme to uplift livelihood condition in rural India. The major objective of the programme is to provide livelihood to the poor people and to stop the migration. In Chhattisgarh also MGNREGA tries to uplift livelihood opportunities. But, how far the Act has uplifted the livelihood opportunities of the rural people of Chhattisgarh? This research will try to highlight the success and failure the program in Chhattisgarh by assessing its impact on the people. It will perceive implementation and outcomes of the program and will also investigate how the Act has contributed towards improvement of livelihood conditions in Chhattisgarh.

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is considered as a "Silver Bullet" for 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 during the last few decades. There is a growing incidence of illiteracy, blind faith, hungry people, mal-nourished children, anaemic pregnant women, farmer suicides, starvation deaths, migration resulting from inadequate employment, poverty, and the failure of subsistence production during droughts. In order to make solution of these problems and to provide livelihood security to rural unemployed, Government of India (GOI) enacted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 2005. It is the biggest poverty alleviation programme in the world which is started with an initial outlay of Rs. 11,300 crore in year 2006-07 and now it is Rs. 40,000 crore (2010-11). This Act is now called as Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. The Act provides a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of any rural household will to do public work related unskilled manual work at the statutory minimum wage. Thus it is a universal programme. This minimum wage varies from state to state, in some states it is Rs. 80 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.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the scheme of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Act (MGNREGA).
- To evaluate the impact of MGNREGA on the rural upliftment and migration for work in Bilaspur district.
- To make suggestions for strengthening the implementation strategy of MGNREGA in Bilaspur district.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

To know the impact of MGNREGA on livelihood status and migration of people a survey is conducted among the people. All the seven blocks of Bilaspur district were taken under for the study. A sample of 50 respondents was selected from every block to constitute the sample for this research using convenience sampling technique.



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A structured questionnaire was prepared under the guidance of supervisor adopting already reliable and valid scale from handbook of scales. The initial questionnaire was prepared in Hindi so that respondents would easily understand the questions. A defined set of questions was prepared to know the condition of respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities to easily assess the impact. Reliability of the questionnaire was checked by conducting the pilot study and biased questions were removed. Secondary data was collected from various sources like web sites (www.nrega.nic.in), different reports of government, published and unpublished sources like books, journals, reports, publications, unpublished doctoral dissertation.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT (MGNREGA)

MGNREGA, since its inception in year 2005, is one of the biggest poverty alleviation programme in the world. The act provides a **legal guarantee for 100 days of wage employment in every financial year to every rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual labour at the statutory minimum wage rate**. The programme also aims at providing of livelihood security for the poor through creation of durable assets. However, the main objective of MGNREGA is **to augment wage employment with a secondary objective of strengthening**, “natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like drought, deforestation and soil erosion” & thereby encourages sustainable development (Ministry of Rural Development, 2010). In special case such of the works which are not included in the permissible work list, state government by making use of Section 1(ix) of schedule 1 of MGNREGA act may add new categories of works on the basis of consultation between state and central government.

Aug. 2005	Feb. 2006	Apr. 2007	Apr. 2008	Oct. 2008	16 Feb. 2009	Oct. 2009	Till the date
NREGA legalised	Came into force in 200 districts	130 more districts included	Universalization of the scheme	Wage transaction through bank/post offices	MOU with the postal department	Name changed to MGNREGA	No change in nomenclature

Since the legalisation of MGNREGA in the year 2005, the programme was implemented in 200 most backward districts of the country in February 2006. In the year 2007, 130 more districts were brought under MGNREGA and within a year the act got universalized by bringing the entire country under its horizon. The programme was renamed as MGNREGA in October 2009.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE ACT

The salient features of the MGNREGA (MGNREGA SAMEEKSHA 2006-2012) include:

- i) **Registration:** People who are willing to do unskilled work under MGNREGA have to apply for the registration either in written form or orally to the Gram Panchayat (GP).
- ii) **Job Card:** After proper verification of the registered household, job card has to be issued.
- iii) **Application for work:** A written application for work is to be given to the Gram Panchayat or Block office which states the time & duration of work.
- iv) **Unemployment allowance:** If the work is not provided according to the scheduled time i, e. within 15 days, unemployment allowance needs to be paid to the beneficiary.
- v) **Provision of work:** Act envisages that (i) work is to be provided within 5 kmsradius of the village, (ii) extra wages of 10% has to be paid for meeting additional cost on transport etc, (iii) worksite facilities such as crèche, drinking water and shade need to be provided, particularly to women.
- vi) **Wages:** Wages to be paid on weekly basis (not beyond a fortnight) mandatorily through the individual/joint bank/post office account. Besides there is a special provision for payment of equal wages to men and women. It is mandatory according to the guidelines of MGNREGA that at least 1/3rd of the beneficiary should be women.



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- vii) **Planning:** The shelf of projects need to be prepared by the Gram Sabha. At least 50 percent of the works should be allotted to Gram Panchayats for execution. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have a major role in planning & implementation.
- viii) **Cost sharing:** The Government of India (GoI) bears the 100 per cent wage cost of unskilled manual labour and 75 percent of the material cost, including wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers.
- ix) **Worksite management:** A 60:40 wage & material ratio has to be maintained. Contractors & labour displacing machinery is strictly prohibited.
- x) **Transparency & accountability:** It is desirable according to act that (a) all accounts & records are to be made available to any person who desires to have a copy of such records on demand after paying a specified fee, (b) social audit has to be done & (c) grievances redressal mechanism have to be put in place for ensuring a responsive implementation process.

MGNREGA has a five-tier structure of implementation starting from Gram Panchayat (GP) at the bottom to the Central Government at the top with such intermediary bodies viz, Block panchayat, District Panchayat and State Government. The MGNREGA marked a paradigm shift from previous wage employment programmes in the history of our country because (i) it employs integrated management approach for generation of livelihood in the rural areas & (ii) it has transparency & accountability mechanism towards all stake holders.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MGNREGA

MGNREGA aims to achieve the objective as enunciated in the Article: 41 of the Indian Constitution- "giving citizens the right to work". The Act is significant due to the following reasons:

- While the earlier wage employment programmes did not provide any guarantee of job, this Act provided guaranteed job. This guarantee for wage employment is now uniformed all over the country like never before.
- It is a development initiative, chipping in with essential public investment for creation of durable assets, without which the growth process can't be possible in the most backward regions of rural India.
- Almost all the previous programmes were allocation based rather than demand based. NREGA, which was launched in 2006, is considered to be unique from this stand point.
- The key element of MGNREGA is the provision of employment by the state to those people who are unable to find alternative employment, which provides a form of social safety net to the rural unemployment people.
- In other wage employment programmes, anyone can be engaged as labour while in MGNREGA only job card holders that apply for employment can be engaged as laborers.
- There is no time frame in other wage employment programmes but in MGNREGA, employment will be given within 15 days of demand, payment also within 15 days of work.
- In other wage employment programme the duration of employment is dependent on duration of work by implementing agency while in MGNREGA, a job card holder applies for maximum 100 days.
- The other key attributes of this Act are labour-intensive work, decentralized participatory planning, women's empowerment, work-site facilities and above all transparency and accountability through the provision of social audits and right to information. The use of information technology in this programme is considered to bring about greater transparency through intensive monitoring and faster execution. The payment of wages through bank and post office accounts is other innovative step that is likely to reduce fudging of muster rolls on the part of the implementing agencies since the actual payments are beyond their reach.

Thus MGNREGA is not only a welfare initiative but also a development effort that can take the Indian economy to a new prosperity.

IMPACT OF MGNREGA

Cross tabulation and paired T-test is performed to assess the impact of MGNREGA on living standard and migration tendency of the people in study area.


Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 How much wage you used to earn (Family Monthly Income) Before MGNREGA - How much wage you used to earn (Family Monthly Income) After MGNREGA	-.65143	.47720	.02551	-.70160	-.60126	-25.539	349	.000

Paired t-test was carried out on the earning aspect of the respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities and the table above clearly indicates that there is a significant average mean differences in the earnings ($t=25.539$) and strong correlation exists among the variables (.710) which indicates a rise in earnings after working in MGNREGA activities.

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Where do you normally visit for medical treatment (Before MGNREGA) - Where do you normally visit for medical treatment (After MGNREGA)	-.73429	.44235	.02364	-.78079	-.68778	-31.055	349	.000

Paired t-test was carried out on the health aspect of the respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities and the table above clearly indicates that there is a significant average mean differences with respect to health care ($t=31.055$) and strong correlation exists among the variables (.740) which indicates a change in health priorities after working in MGNREGA activities.

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Where are they studying (Before MGNREGA) - Where are they studying (After MGNREGA)	-.37681	.48576	.03376	-.44338	-.31025	-11.161	206	.000

Paired t-test was carried out on the education aspect of the respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities and the above given table clearly indicates that there is a significant average mean differences with respect to health care ($t=11.161$) and a positive correlation exists among the variables (.309) which indicates a change in educational priorities of children's after working in MGNREGA activities.



		Paired Samples Test							
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Electronic goods possessed (Radio) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (Radio) After MGNREGA	.02286	14968	00000	00712	03658	2.657	349	.005
Pair 2	Electronic goods possessed (TV) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (TV) After MGNREGA	.22957	42051	02248	18436	37278	10.169	349	.000
Pair 3	Electronic goods possessed (DVD Player) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (DVD Player) After MGNREGA	.05420	47098	02580	30393	40464	13.038	349	.000
Pair 4	Electronic goods possessed (Mobile Phone) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (Mobile Phone) After MGNREGA	1.10000	22543	01739	08579	15421	6.999	349	.000
Pair 5	Electronic goods possessed (Dish Connection) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (Dish Connection) After MGNREGA	.30286	48018	02480	28448	36128	12.313	349	.000
Pair 6	Electronic goods possessed (Scooter/Motorcycle) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (Scooter/Motorcycle) After MGNREGA	.33143	47140	02920	28187	38098	13.153	349	.000
Pair 7	Electronic goods possessed (L.P.G) Before MGNREGA - Electronic goods possessed (L.P.G) After MGNREGA	.43420	49637	02653	39210	48647	16.368	349	.000

Paired t-test was carried out on the possession of electronic goods aspect of the respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities and the above given table clearly indicates that there is a significant average mean differences with respect to change in the possession of various electronic goods item after working in MGNREGA activities.

Block	Count	Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)					Total	Block	Count	Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)					Total
		About a Month	1 to 2 Months	2 to 3 Months	3 to 4 Months	4 to 6 Months				About a Month	1 to 2 Months	2 to 3 Months	3 to 4 Months	4 to 6 Months	
Balha	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	13.0%	16.9%	15.9%	8.4%	16.7%	14.3%	Balha	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	0.0%	19.0%	12.3%	7.7%	19.2%	13.3%
	Count	1	9	23	7	10	50		Count	0	4	8	3	8	23
Gauraha-1	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	4.3%	15.3%	20.4%	8.4%	13.9%	14.3%	Gauraha-1	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	0.0%	9.5%	20.3%	7.1%	19.5%	14.2%
	Count	2	10	17	12	9	50		Count	0	3	13	2	8	26
Gauraha-2	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	8.7%	16.9%	15.0%	14.2%	12.5%	14.3%	Gauraha-2	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	9.7%	14.9%	17.2%	13.8%	17.1%	15.3%
	Count	5	9	17	11	8	50		Count	4	6	12	8	9	39
Kosa	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	21.7%	15.3%	15.0%	13.9%	11.1%	14.3%	Kosa	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	36.4%	28.6%	18.8%	20.5%	7.3%	18.8%
	Count	5	9	12	14	10	50		Count	2	4	5	7	5	23
Mazuri	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	21.7%	15.3%	10.8%	16.9%	13.9%	14.3%	Mazuri	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	18.2%	19.0%	7.8%	17.9%	12.2%	13.3%
	Count	5	7	14	16	10	50		Count	3	3	8	7	7	24
Marwahi	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	13.0%	11.9%	12.4%	19.3%	13.9%	14.3%	Marwahi	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	9.3%	4.8%	12.5%	17.9%	17.0%	13.8%
	Count	4	3	12	18	13	50		Count	3	1	7	7	8	21
Thakhatpur	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	17.4%	8.5%	10.8%	19.3%	18.1%	14.3%	Thakhatpur	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	27.3%	4.8%	10.3%	17.9%	7.3%	11.5%
	Count	23	59	113	83	72	350		Count	11	21	64	39	41	176
Total	% within Duration of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	Total	% within Duration of Migration (After MGNREGA)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Count	23	59	113	83	72	350		Count	11	21	64	39	41	176

(Chi-square 62.17, p<.000)

df=4

(Chi-square 47.29, p<.000)

Cross tabulation was carried out between Blocks and duration of migration before and after MGNREGA activities and a significant change was seen in the duration of migration in all blocks before and after working in MGNREGA activities. The table shows that before MGNREGA duration of migration and districts were significantly associated at chi-square value of 62.17 with 4 degree of freedom which is significant at 0.000 level. The significant association between duration of migration after MGNREGA and blocks is at chi-square value of 47.29 with 4 degree of freedom which is significant at 0.000 level.



Block		Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)			Total	Block		Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)			Total
		Village to Village	Village to Towns	Village to Cities				Village to Village	Village to Towns	Village to Cities	
Belha	Count	5	11	34	50	Belha	Count	2	4	17	23
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	18.5%	11.3%	15.0%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	25.0%	8.2%	14.3%	13.1%
Gaurella-1	Count	5	11	34	50	Gaurella-1	Count	2	5	18	25
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	18.5%	11.3%	15.0%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	25.0%	10.2%	15.1%	14.2%
Gaurella-2	Count	4	15	31	50	Gaurella-2	Count	2	7	18	27
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	14.8%	15.5%	13.7%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	25.0%	14.3%	15.1%	15.3%
Kota	Count	3	16	31	50	Kota	Count	1	10	22	33
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	11.1%	16.5%	13.7%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	12.5%	20.4%	18.5%	18.8%
Masturi	Count	3	17	30	50	Masturi	Count	1	7	15	23
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	11.1%	17.5%	13.3%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	12.5%	14.3%	12.6%	13.1%
Marwahi	Count	4	16	30	50	Marwahi	Count	0	8	16	24
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	14.8%	16.5%	13.3%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	0.0%	16.3%	13.4%	13.6%
Thakhatpur	Count	3	11	36	50	Thakhatpur	Count	0	8	13	21
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	11.1%	11.3%	15.9%	14.3%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	0.0%	16.3%	10.9%	11.9%
Total	Count	27	97	226	350	Total	Count	8	49	119	176
	% within Nature of Migration (Before MGNREGA)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		% within Nature of Migration (After MGNREGA)	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

(Chi-square 174.69, $p < .000$)

$df=2$

(Chi-square 107.38, $p < .000$)

Cross tabulation was carried out between Blocks and nature of migration before and after MGNREGA activities. The table shows that before MGNREGA nature of migration and districts were significantly associated at chi-square value of 174.69 with 2 degree of freedom which is significant at 0.000 level. The significant association between nature of migration after MGNREGA and blocks is at chi-square value of 107.38 with 2 degree of freedom which is significant at 0.000 level.

Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 How much is your savings (Yearly) Before MGNREGA - How much is your savings (Yearly) After MGNREGA	-1.38286	.77330	.04133	-1.46415	-1.30156	-33.455	349	.000

Paired t-test was carried out on the savings aspect of the respondents before and after working in MGNREGA activities and the above given table clearly indicates that there is a significant average mean differences with respect to yearly savings from income ($t=33.455$) and a positive correlation exists among the variables (.689) which indicates a change in savings from income after working in MGNREGA activities.



CONCLUSION

MGNREGA is started as poverty alleviation programme aims to provide livelihood to the poor people. It was assumed that it will remove the poverty and improve the standard of living of the people living in the rural areas of the country. This study aims to assess the impact of MGNREGA on the standard of living and migration of the people in the study area. On the whole it was found that there is a considerable change in standard of living of the people with respect to earnings, health care, education and possession of electronic goods like radio, TV, Dish connection, Motorcycle and LPG connection. A drastic change in the number of migration is also noted in the study area which clearly shows the positive impact of the programme. At last, it was concluded that MGNREGA creates positive impact on the living standard and migration of the people. But early study reveals the poor implementation procedure of the programme, hence it is suggested to improve the mechanism of implementation which further creates positive impact in the state.

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