



## Evaluating the Effectiveness of MGNREGA in Haryana and Rajasthan: A Comparative Study

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**Abstract:** On February 2nd, 2006, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was put into effect. It was the first act of its type anywhere in the world to grant the right to labour to about two thirds of the people as a means of economic security. It has been delivered on a staggeringly large scale, involving roughly 1/ 10th of the world's population. It was the second in a line of right-based policies that the Indian government has implemented during the past ten years. The MGNREGA, a self-targeting initiative, aims to increase outreach to the underprivileged and disadvantaged sections of society by supporting their efforts to achieve economic and financial inclusion. The present paper is devoted to assessing the success of the MGNREGA in Rajasthan and Haryana, two Indian states.

**Keywords:** MGNREGA; Effectiveness, Wage Distribution, Rural Employment, Women Employment

### 1. Introduction

Workfare programmes have been more important as anti-poverty methods during the past 10 to 15 years. The narrative surrounding these programmes has peaked recently, possibly as a result of an increased global reliance on them as a strategy to combat poverty and unemployment (Devereux, S., & Vincent, K. 2010; Subbarao, K. et al., 2013; Barrientos, A. & Hulme, D. (Eds.), 2016). The computerization in anti-poverty programmes, in all of their stages has particularly increased over the past ten years (Masiero, S., & Maiorano, D. 2018).

The unemployment rate, which is particularly high in rural areas, is one of the biggest issues facing the Indian economy. Over the years, the government has carried out a number of programmes to address issues. One of the biggest public employment programmes ever seen in human history is MGNREGA (Esteves, T. et al., 2013). The notification date was September 7, 2005. It became effective in India's most underdeveloped districts on February 2, 2006. MGNREGA became the new name as on October 20, 2009. The purpose of this law is to improve rural livelihood security by guaranteeing at least 100 days of paid employment in a financial year to all households with adult members who consent to unskilled manual labor. As a result, the programme objectives to symbolize a paradigm shift from all preceding pay employment programmes (Bhargava, R. 2013). It is the largest employment-creating initiative ever launched in a nation to advance rural areas. Compared to prior employment initiatives put out by the Indian government, this Scheme is unique. This programme treats employment as a right of rural households while being demand-driven on the one hand. Thus, the programme directly pays money to unskilled people in rural areas (Ahuja et al., 2011). The law represented a paradigm change toward a right-based approach and was intended to promote inclusive growth, which is important when considering concerns like environmental quality and rural-urban mobility. 200 districts around the nation participated in the first phase of the act's



implementation in the fiscal year 2006–07. Later, by the fiscal year 2008–09, all of the nation's districts were subject to the act's provisions. Through the issuance of Job Cards to eligible rural residents, MGNREGA guarantees 100 days of employment (Saikia, A., & Borah, A. J. 2017). Since its inception, MGNREGA has given the vast majority of the country's uneducated and unskilled rural residents a stable source of income. It lessened the severity of the problem of covert and seasonal unemployment and converted a sizable number of rural residents from farming activities to nonfarm occupations (Gogoi, N., & Hussain, S. 2021).

Evaluations of public programmes typically concentrate on whether or not policies have been successful in achieving their intended objectives and the processes by which such change takes place. For instance, Desai, S. et al. (2015) examine the various ways in which the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has affected outcomes in the labour market, in terms of education and health, as well as overall outcomes in terms of development. The impact of such schemes on social capital in the community, however, is a crucial point that is rarely raised as programmes become more community-driven and participatory (Bhuwania, P. et al., 2016).

### **1.1 Earlier studies regarding MGNREGA:**

Numerous researches on employment programmes have been done in India. The authors have also addressed MGNREGA and examined its many facets (Bhargava, R. 2013).

The districts of Bikaner and Ludhiana in the respective provinces of Rajasthan and Punjab were the sites of the Sitaram, B., and Rampal, V. K. (2015) study. 60 female beneficiaries from each district made up the sample of 120 respondents who were chosen at random. Data was gathered through the use of personal interviews. According to survey results, respondents in both districts are not particularly knowledgeable of MGNREGA's requirements. Similar to this, the respondents encountered numerous issues when working under this Act, including a delay in the issuance of their job cards, a delay in their payments, a lack of childcare options, harassment on the job site, etc.

Researchers Singh, H. M., and Benjwal, G. C. (2013) observed that while the percentage of household employment has been steadily declining from the start of this programme, the percentage of unskilled wage spending relative to total expenditure has been rising in ascending order (data given). The research's findings indicate that the decrease in households with employed people and the rise in the cost of paying unskilled wages each fiscal year (f.y.) do not paint a very positive picture of the implementation of this scheme. This implies that rather than being given for specific works covered by this programme, the allowance for unemployment is calculated by subtracting the cost of unskilled wages from the overall real expenditure.

In an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the MGNREGA within the Uttar Pradesh districts of Merut and Varanasi, Singh Atvir and Nidhi (2011) got here to the realization that the expenditures and sustainable assets created beneath the scheme nearly near the earnings for rural households and that increased income will also increase demand significantly in rural India. The findings of Akhtar Jawed SN & Azer A., (2011), depict that MGNREGA is not the only solution of the problem of unemployment between the poor in Kerala, A huge majority of the unemployed poor wish to be self - employed or wage employed in formal sector rather than go for manual labour. Rao, K. H., & Durgaprasad, P. 2008 examine MGNREGA programme in the district of Pauri Garhwal in the state of Uttarakhand as a case study of poverty alleviation, where rural poverty decreased by 49.70% and the economic circumstances of women workers improved.

The government's initiatives for rural development and poverty reduction were in-depthly reviewed in "Rural Employment Programme in India" by Sharma, R., and Didwania, M. in 2013. In this direction, thorough studies of the "National Rural Employment Programme (1980)"



were done. In their article "Women, Labor, and Employment Outcome in Rural India," Kaur, T. (2021), emphasised the significance of work in women's lives. The impact of TRYSEM, IRDP, and DPAP, among other programmes, in reducing rural poverty was highlighted in "Rural Sociology" by Sharma Singh, T., and Sharma, K. C. (2018). In his article "Human Development Strategy of MGNREGA," Puthenkalam, J. J. (2013) focused on the economic well-being of rural people. Borah, K., & Bordoloi, R. (2014) conducted a case study to evaluate the effects of MGNREGA on women's lives of Sonitpur district of Assam. N. Tiwari (2015) emphasised the MGNREGA's importance in promoting gender equality. A case study was undertaken in by Rajalakshmi, V., and Selvam, V. (2017) to determine the impact of MGNREGA on lives of women. Vyas (2018) performed a thorough examination of the MGNREGA's operation and results, including the work profile, salary structure, gender sensitivity, and effect on rural livelihood.

According to Kaur, T.'s report; 2021, MGNREGA has become, in large part, a remedy for rural poverty. Financial projections for the State of Haryana during the last five years, from 2016–17 to 2020–21, demonstrate an increasing interest on the part of the central and state governments for development of rural areas through employment.

The study on the "Mahatma Gandhi NREGA" conducted in few districts of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Haryana, CRRID (2010) pay thanks to programme. Economic circumstances of wage earners have improved and they are no longer required to leave their villages in order to make a living. Additionally, Singh, A. K. (2015) notes that the cash received from MGNREGA has allowed them to buy more pulses, vegetables, and other products for their households. This has enhanced people's trust in panchayats and increased agricultural output in these areas. In three districts of Uttarakhand, Singh, S. P., and Nauriyal, D. K. (2009) evaluated the effects of MGNREGS and concluded that NREGS activities supplement household's income up to 10–20%, leading to no appreciable improvement in their income and employment levels. Additionally, there was a slight improvement in the control of migration and debt. Savings and spending levels increased just a little bit among the sample households. The report claims that the sample districts' poor MGNREGS performance was caused by a lack of protocols, a lack of knowledge, weak PRIs, etc., According to Jha, R. et al. (2008), the success of legislation on average annual working days per household was almost a quarter of the required 100 working days. Das, S. K. (2013) NREGA can empower the poor and lower overall levels of poverty. If carefully designed, it can have long-term, highly beneficial multiplier impacts on the local economy in terms of output, income, and employment. These projects can also increase the multiplier coefficient and speed up the development process as a result.

## 1.2 Research Gap:

A thorough review of the literature reveals the significant research done on the MGNREGA's efficacy. On the other hand, there are not many studies on efficacy assessment. The most important studies focused on the MGNREGA's implementation in urban areas (Salian, P. V., & Leelavathi, D. S. 2014; Maske, S. 2015; Roy, I. 2015; Carswell, G., & De Neve, G. 2014; Bhargava, R. 2013); in rural areas (Kumar, A. 2022; Reddy, D. N. et al., 2014; Nagaraj, N et (Sarkar, P., & Kumar, J. 2011; Ahuja, U. R. et al., 2011; Xavier, G., & Mari, G. 2014; Pamecha, S., & Sharma, I. 2015). Since MGNREGA's introduction, Numerous studies have examined various facets of its execution, including its finances, its democratic administration, wage creation in rural labour markets, and law implementation (Ambasta, P. et al., 2008; Bardhan, K. 2011; Ezeala-Harrison, F. 2011; Khera, R., & Nayak, N. 2009; Shah, M. 2007). A few studies were concentrated on its social and economic effects, such as the reduction of rural poverty, reduction in migration, gender issues, livelihood and food security, self-esteem (Haberfeld, Y. et al., 1999; Kamala, S. 2011; Tiwari, R. et al., 2011); however, no study has compared the



effectiveness of the MGNREGA with the two districts of Rajasthan and Haryana. This paper compares the average workdays of workers in two states together with respective MGNREGA benefit and facility systems and wage distribution practices.

**1.3 Research limitations**– This study, unlike any other sample-based empirical research study, has certain clear drawbacks. Even though some respondents in Rajasthan and Haryana did have employment cards, not a single one was discovered to be updated. The interviewed families were also unable to present their job cards. Therefore, it was challenging to get accurate data/information from recipient respondents. However, the study was based on whatever data the respondents provided based on their memories (which are subject to exaggerations or discrepancies).

**1.4 Future implications** - The study offers further potential to conduct empirical research comparing public information (i.e., secondary data) and original data (that is collected from the survey).

### 1.5 Research Objectives

#### Hypothesis:

**H<sub>0</sub>** = Mean person days of workers in MGNREGA have not consistently increased in Haryana and Rajasthan.

**H<sub>1</sub>** = Mean person days of workers in MGNREGA have consistently increased in Haryana and Rajasthan.

**H<sub>0</sub>** = MGNREGA did not facilitate selective benefits in Rajasthan and Haryana

**H<sub>1</sub>** = MGNREGA facilitated selective benefits in Rajasthan and Haryana

**H<sub>0</sub>** = Wages distribution system of MGNREGA is not effective in Rajasthan and Haryana

**H<sub>1</sub>** = Wages distribution system of MGNREGA is effective in Rajasthan and Haryana

**H<sub>0</sub>** = MGNREGA does not provide minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana

**H<sub>1</sub>** = MGNREGA provide minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana

## 2. Methodology Design

A field survey of one district in each of the two states under consideration was used to gather main data used to evaluate performance. Both the Haryana state's Mahendergarh district and the Rajasthan state's Udaipur district have been chosen. Thirteen different metrics, covering all facets of MGNREGA implementation and its effects on recipients' life, are used in the performance review.

“The study has purposive and multi stage stratified sampling. To test hypothesis Friedman test statistic  $FR$  is calculated as

$$FR = \frac{12}{nk(k+1)} \sum_{i=1}^k \left\{ t_i - \frac{1}{2}n(k+1) \right\}^2$$

The significance level is compared to the  $\chi^2$  distribution with  $k - 1$  degrees of freedom, where  $k$  is the total number of comparisons (variables).

**k = number of Variables**

**n= number of cases**

**$\chi^2$  = Chi-Square = FR**

The significance level is from the  $\chi^2$  distribution with  $k-1$  degrees of freedom”. (Sharma, S. 2021).

## 3. Results and Discussion

This section is devoted towards evaluation of MGNREGA's performance in two states of India

viz. Haryana and Rajasthan. The evaluation of performance has been done on the basis of



primary data collected through a field survey of one district each of the two states in consideration. Mahendergarh district has been selected from Haryana state and Udaipur district has been selected from Rajasthan state. The performance evaluation involves use of thirteen different indicators that cover all the aspects of implementation and aftermath of MGNREGA on the lives of its beneficiaries. The results of these indicators are derived on the basis of responses of the workers who are MGNREGA beneficiaries. The tally of thirteen indicators includes both economic as well as social aspects of workers' lives.

### 3.1 Mean Person Days of Workers

This indicator depicts the average number of days a worker gets employment through MGNREGA over the years. This indicator reveals whether the target of providing minimum 100 days of employment to job card holders is being achieved or not.

Table 1 presents average person days of employment per worker in Mahendergarh district of Haryana and Udaipur district of Rajasthan over the years.

**Table 1.** District - wise mean person days of workers

Districts	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
	Mean	Sum	Mean	Sum	Mean	Sum	Mean	Sum	Mean	Sum	Mean	Sum
Mahendergarh	8	1980	14	3621	24	6090	23	5758	29	7332	39	9658
Udaipur	11	2869	43	10668	65	16325	52	12987	49	12276	69	17139

**Source: Data collected through field survey.**

The average number of days employed in the two districts fluctuates, but is on the rise year by year. However, the average man-hours of Haryana workers remained lower than the average man-hours of Rajasthan workers for many years. From this we can conclude that Rajasthan is much better than Haryana in this regard.

### 3.2 Work Site Facilities

This indicator points out whether basic facilities like drinking water, shades, group insurance, crutch and any other facilities are being provided at the work site or not. Only providing employment is not the objective of MGNREGA. Such employment should be provided that takes care of convenience of male and female workers. The following Table 2 contains responses from MGNREGA workers in Mahendergarh district, Haryana and Udaipur district, Rajasthan regarding the work site facilities provided to them. In this table the responses are classified into two categories, one depicting the presence of only drinking water facility available to the workers and other depicting the availability of all the facilities including Drinking Water, Shades, Group insurance and Crutch on the work site.

**Table 2.** Responses of workers regarding Work Site Facilities available to them

Work Site Facilities	State		Total
	Haryana	Rajasthan	
Only Drinking Water		150 (30)	150 (30)
All Facilities	250 (50)	100 (20)	350 (70)
Total	250 (50)	250 (50)	500 (100)

**Source: - Data collected through Survey. All facilities mean basic facilities like Drinking Water, Shades, Group insurance and Crutch. Percentages are given in the brackets.**

The figures in the above table inferred that workers in Mahendergarh (Haryana) have all the facilities available to them, but in Udaipur (Rajasthan) workers did not have all the facilities at



the work site. In Mahendergarh, all the workers accepted that they are getting all the facilities at the work site. On the other hand, the workers of Sarara, Gogunda and Bhinder blocks of Udaipur district of Rajasthan affirmed that they are getting only drinking water facility at the work site. This highlights the poor working conditions of workers in Rajasthan.

### 3.3 Source of Disbursement of Wages

This indicator depicts the source of disbursement of wages under MGNREGA. This tells us about the status of financial inclusion of workers. If the workers get their wages through bank account or post office account then the objective of financial inclusion is achieved and also it ensures transparency in the system. The following Table 3 shows workers' responses regarding the source of wage payment under MGNREGA in two districts, Mahendargarh in Haryana and Udaipur in Rajasthan.

**Table 3.** Source of Disbursement of Wages

Name of the district	State	Post office or bank account		Total
		Yes	No	
Mahendergarh	Haryana	250	0	250
Udaipur	Rajasthan	250	0	250
	Total	500	0	500

**Source: - Data collected through Survey**

The result is that all workers in both states have their post office or bank account and they were getting their wages through that account which means the dispersal of wages to workers is being done as per the guidelines of MGNREGA.

### 3.4. Hypothesis Testing:

#### i.) Hypothesis

This Hypothesis checks whether MGNREGA has played a significant role in consistently increasing the average person days of employment over the years or not. Whether MGNREGA provides guaranteed employment to workers or Unemployment Allowance in place of that. The hypothesis confirms whether mean person days per worker under MGNREGA have increased or significant amount is being paid as unemployment allowance. The Null and Alternate Hypotheses are as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub> = Mean person days of workers in MGNREGA have not consistently increased in Haryana and Rajasthan.**

**H<sub>1</sub> = Mean person days of workers in MGNREGA have consistently increased in Haryana and Rajasthan.**

#### Ranks

Person days in MGNREGA in 2007-08	1.86
Person days in MGNREGA in 2008-09	2.96
Person days in MGNREGA in 2009-10	4.08
Person days in MGNREGA in 2010-11	3.80
Person days in MGNREGA in 2011-12	3.94
Person days in MGNREGA in 2012-13	4.36

#### Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

N	500
Chi-Square	630.021
df	5
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Friedman test



The SPSS-derived output above shows the values of the test statistics. The value of the test statistic is 630.021 and its degrees of freedom (K-1) are 6-1=5. The value representing the significance level is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (at the 95% confidence level). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that MGNREGA plays an important role in increasing the average working day, Rajasthan and Haryana.

**ii). Hypothesis**

This Hypothesis checks whether MGNREGA has played a significant role in facilitating selective benefits to MGNREGA workers or not. MGNREGA mandate is to provide guaranteed employment to rural poor for minimum 100 days of the year. Along with the employment opportunities, workers require a set of facilities that should be provided to them like work site facilities, leave from work once in a week, accidental benefits, appropriate distance of work location from residential area and extra wages for more distance. This Hypothesis confirms whether MGNREGA workers are being provided with these facilities or not. The Null and Alternate Hypotheses are as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub> = MGNREGA did not facilitate selective benefits in Rajasthan and Haryana**

**H<sub>1</sub> = MGNREGA facilitated selective benefits in Rajasthan and Haryana**

<b>Ranks</b>	
	Mean Rank
Work site facilities	5.00
Leave in a week	2.50
Awareness about accidental benefits under MGNREGA	3.99
Distance of working	2.50
If more than 5 kms then extra wages	1.00

<b>Test Statistics<sup>a</sup></b>	
N	500
Chi-Square	1998.115
Df	4
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. Friedman Test

**iii). Hypothesis**

This Hypothesis checks whether MGNREGA has an effective system of Wage distribution or not. MGNREGA attempts to expand financial inclusion of workers along with providing employment assurance to them. This is done by an elaborate system of wages distribution under MGNREGA which necessitates the distribution of wages only through Bank accounts or Post-Office accounts. This Hypothesis confirms whether this system of wages distribution under MGNREGA is effective or not. The Null and Alternate Hypotheses are as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub> = Wages distribution system of MGNREGA is not effective in Rajasthan and Haryana**

**H<sub>1</sub> = Wages distribution system of MGNREGA is effective in Rajasthan and Haryana**



### Ranks

	Mean Rank
No of days wages have been distributed	2.95
Wages are distributed through bank and post office	2.05
If more than 5 kms then extra wages	1.00

### Test Statistics<sup>a</sup>

N	500
Chi-Square	976.504
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. Friedman Test

The output derived from SPSS above shows the values of the test statistics. The value of the test statistic is 976.502 and its degrees of freedom (K-1) are 3-1=2. The value representing the significance level is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (95% confidence level). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be concluded that MGNREGA has an effective system of distributing wages to workers in Rajasthan and Haryana legislation.

#### iv). Hypothesis

This Hypothesis checks whether MGNREGA has a significant participation of women in employment or not. MGNREGA provides guaranteed employment of 100 days to rural poor. But, generally we observe that women are often considered second choice for any work involving hard labor. MGNREGA has a provision of reservation of 33% of jobs for women. This Hypothesis confirms whether this provision has been taken care of or not in both states Haryana and Rajasthan. The Null and Alternate Hypotheses are as follows:

**H<sub>0</sub> = MGNREGA does not provide minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana**

**H<sub>1</sub> = MGNREGA provide minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana**

Name of the block	Sex of worker		Total
	Male	Female	
Mahendergarh	44 (58.7)	31 (41.3)	75 (100)
Nangal Chaudhary	34 (68)	16 (32)	50 (100)
Narnaul	31 (62)	19 (38)	50 (100)
AteliNangal	10 (40)	15 (60)	25 (100)
Kanina	28 (56)	22 (44)	50 (100)
Girva	17 (34)	33(66)	50 (100)
Sarara	34 (68)	16 (32)	50 (100)
Gogunda	37 (74)	13 (26)	50 (100)
Bhinder	19 (38)	31 (62)	50 (100)
Mavli	21 (42)	29 (58)	50 (100)
Total (Haryana)	147 (29.4)	103 (20.6)	250 (50)
Total (Rajasthan)	128 (25.6)	122 (24.4)	250 (50)
Grand Total	275 (55)	225 (45)	500 (100)

Source: - Data collected through Survey. Figure in brackets are percentages.





The above table shows that participation of women in employment opportunities in MGNREGA is more than 33% in both the states of Haryana and Rajasthan. Also, to overall participation of women in aggregate is 45% which highlights active role of women in MGNREGA. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and conclusions can be drawn MGNREGA provides minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana.

The following Table 4 presents the conclusions of above tested four sets of Hypotheses.

**Table 4: Summary of conclusions of Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Tests	Result (Null Hypothesis)
H <sub>1</sub>	MGNREGA helps to increase the employment in Rajasthan and Haryana	Friedman test Rejected
H <sub>2</sub>	MGNREGA facilitate selective benefits in Rajasthan and Haryana	Friedman test Rejected
H <sub>3</sub>	Wages distribution system is effective in Rajasthan and Haryana	Friedman test Rejected
H <sub>4</sub>	MGNREGA has important role to empower the women worker in Rajasthan and Haryana	Descriptive Statistics Proved

#### 4. Conclusion

Outcome produced using a rigorous analytical framework. Whereas Average man-hours for workers in Rajasthan are increasing year by year, but remain low in Haryana. Conclusion: Rajasthan outperformed Haryana in this area by a wide margin. Compared to Rajasthan, Haryana has better workplace amenities. The findings indicate that all employees in both states have a post office or bank account, and they get their pay through those accounts, proving that MGNREGA's rules for wage distribution are being followed. MGNREGA also provides minimum 33% of jobs to women in Rajasthan and Haryana.

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