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Role of MGNREGA in poverty alleviation in Himachal Pradesh: A comprehensive analysis

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Abstract

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and its impact on poverty alleviation in Himachal Pradesh, India, are the subject of this thorough examination. A major social security initiative called MGNREGA seeks for bettering the livelihood security of rural families by offering pay employment for at least 100 days every financial year to any family whose adult members agree to perform repetitive tasks that is not skilled. In the mostly rural state of Himachal Pradesh, where a sizable section of the populace is employed in agriculture, MGNREGA has proven to be an invaluable intervention. The impact of MGNREGA on several kinds of socioeconomic factors, including as job prospects, migration patterns, and income levels, is examined in this research. It looks at how the program has helped rural communities create assets, build their infrastructure, and protect the environment. Employing a mixed-methods strategy that combines qualitative field research with quantitative data analysis.

Keywords: MGNREGA, rural employment, poverty alleviation, livelihood security, wage employment, economic impact, sustainable development, poverty reduction

Introduction

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), which was first implemented in 2005, is a significant socioeconomic program in India that attempts to solve the long-standing issues of unemployment and poverty in rural areas. MGNREGA is an innovative method to reduce inequality and rural development. It is designed to give every family whose adult members volunteer to perform unskilled manual labor at least 100 days of guaranteed paid employment. Himachal Pradesh, with its predominantly rural and hilly terrain, presents unique challenges and opportunities for the implementation of MGNREGA. The state's economy is largely agrarian, with a significant portion of its population dependent on agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood. In this context, MGNREGA not only serves as a vital safety net for vulnerable households but also plays a crucial role in enhancing rural infrastructure and promoting sustainable development. This comprehensive analysis delves into the multifaceted impacts of MGNREGA on poverty alleviation in Himachal Pradesh. By examining employment patterns, income levels, and the creation of durable assets, the study aims to shed light on the program's effectiveness in improving the socio-economic conditions of rural communities. Furthermore, it explores the implementation challenges and administrative hurdles that impede the optimal functioning of MGNREGA, providing a nuanced understanding of its successes and areas needing improvement.

This research tries to add to the current discussion on rural development policy by combining quantitative data analysis with qualitative responses from field surveys and interviews. The study aims to augment the effectiveness of MGNREGA and guarantee its sustained use as a resilient tool for inclusive growth and poverty eradication in Himachal Pradesh by emphasising its tangible benefits and proposing feasible policy measures.

Review of Literature

Khan and Saluja (2007) ^[1] studied that most of the rural poor depend upon wage employment for their livelihood at large scale. In this regard MGNREGA is obviously an attractive scheme for poverty alleviation and income generation which helps to provide livelihood

security for rural poor by providing them 100 days employment in a financial year under MGNREGA. The authors reported that earlier programme like NREP(1980), JRY(1989), EAS(1993), JGSY(1999),and SGRY(2001) etc. which were launched to provide employment to rural poor so that they might be able to obtain livelihood security. They also suggested that the work under MGNREGA should be expended or completely decentralized so that Panchayats can be free to spread the scheme to the more vulnerable remained areas. Raj (2007) in his article "Antodaya" (the programme in which the poor family is identified as a concrete human reality) has given four features of the Anthodia approach to rural development which deserve special emphasis i.e. under the approach poverty did not remain a statistical abstraction. The poor families were identified as a concrete human reality. Emphasis was given to the delivery of productive assets so that the poor family begins to get regular income from self-employment. Third the administration should go out, identified and assists the poor people instead of waiting for people to come for assistance. The criterion of identification was strictly economic (whose income is below the poverty line) finally, he concluded that all these features are commendable and represent important departures from. Siwach and Kumar (2009) [3] in their study "implementing NREG's in Haryana"; A case of social audit performance of Integrated Rural Development Programme schemes such as the Jawahar Rozgar Yojna (JRY), Jawahar Gram SmridhiYojna (JGSY), the Work For Food Programme (WFFP) the Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojna (SGSY) etc. they have finally revealed the NREGA (National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005) Act by and large, has the potentials not only to strengthen social security in India, but also strengthens community's mobilization to ensure the better performance of local government to community's needs and priorities. Uma and Rupa (2013) emphasised the relevance of SHGs in financial inclusion in their research paper entitled "The Role of SHGs in Financial Inclusion: A Case Study". It was discovered that SHGs had a beneficial influence on financial inclusion. According to the report, SHG participation resulted in an 82.7 percent rise in the number of bank accounts held by members. As a result, the members' credit use and yearly loan payback exhibited a favourable trend. As a result, SHGs have proven to be beneficial to the poor. Munish (2013) [10] examined the impact of MGNREGA on women empowerment in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. He reported that before the MGNREGA in Mandi district the rural poor people and women had limited sources of self-income. But after the inception of MGNREGA in the district, scheme had opened employment avenues in the village for rural women and their purchasing had increased. It was further reported that 93000 women worker were facilitated to open Bank account, among them more than 95% women had entered the Bank premises first time The author also reported that a total of Rs. 130 crore was spend under MGNREGA during the financial year 2011-12 in Mandi and Women participation remained 75% in the district against 48% at national level. The district has been awarded with MGNREGA national award for its outstanding achievement in ensuring maximum rural participation in various MGNREGA works being executed in the district in the year 2012. Shiva Kumar (2013) [6] indicated that the advent of

MGNREGA has resulted in a significant structural break in rural wage increases. He reported that pre-MGNREGA (1999-2005), the nominal wage in the rural economy grew at an average annual rate of 2.7%, whereas post MGNREGA, the rate of average wage increase almost quadrupled to 9.7% between 2006-2009 and between January 2010 to May 2011, annual wage growth averaged almost 18.8%. He further reported that during 2011-12 nearly five crore families were provided over 211 crore persondays of work under the programme. The key findings of the study include an increase in the agriculture wage and enhanced bargaining power of the rural poor. There has been improvement in the ground water level, agriculture productivity and cropping intensity. Arora, Kulshreshta and Upadhyay (2013) [7] evaluated the relevance of MGNREGA for women empowerment in Rohtak district of Haryana on 250 respondents. The author found that 78 percent of women were able to save money only because of earning from MGNREGA. They concluded that MGNREGA can reshape Indian democracy by providing livelihood opportunities for rural poor. MGNREGA has emerged as a powerful tool for women empowerment. Das S. (2013) [8] measured the performance of MGNREGA since its implementation in Hoogly district of West Bengal. Author reported that increase in persondays, participation by SC, ST and women has also increased with highest increase in women participation. He further reported that renovation of traditional water bodies comprise maximum percentage (42 percent) of total works undertaken in the scheme. He concluded that MGNREGA is the best solution for sustainable development in rural areas. Arunrao, Chinchmalpure & Vitthal (2019) through their study entitled "Constraints Facing the Beneficiaries in Participating Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)" demonstrated that recipients' attitudes about the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act were strongly influenced by caste, social engagement, yearly income, occupation, and economic incentive (MGNREGA). 120 recipients were selected for the research from ten villages, each with 12 beneficiaries. The author suggests that the government should make more efforts to reduce the size of such limitations.

Need of the study

In Himachal Pradesh, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has a lot of opportunity to reduce unemployment and poverty in rural areas. A focused analysis has to be conducted to comprehensively investigate the impact of the program and efficacy in its specific socioeconomic and geographic circumstances of Himachal Pradesh, despite its broad scope and ambitious targets.

Objective of the study

1. To analyze the role of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in alleviating poverty in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To identify the factor responsible in MGNREGA for poverty in Himachal Pradesh.

The role of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in alleviating

poverty in Himachal Pradesh, it's important to evaluate the program's objectives, implementation, outcomes, and specific challenges faced within the state. This involves both qualitative and quantitative assessments.

MGNREGA aims to

1. Provide a legal guarantee for 100 days of employment in every financial year to adult members of rural households willing to do unskilled manual work.
2. Create durable assets and strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor.
3. Enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by generating wage employment.
4. Reduce poverty by providing an additional source of income to rural households.

Impact of MGNREGA on food security

The goal of MGNREGA is to give families whose adult members volunteer to perform manual labor that is not competent enough to provide for them. The presence of physically, socially, and nutritionally suitable nourishment that satisfies dietary demands is a sign of food security. Discussing this, it is noted that 58.5 percent of respondents completely consumed their harvests, compared to 39.5% who said they only ingested inadequate food grains from their own crops. In accordance to the table, 80% of

respondents were dependent on farmers for their food grains prior to MGNREGA, but this number dropped to 52.5% during the program, indicating a -34.537% decline in growth rate. Accordingly, it can be concluded that 66% of respondent's market shop to ensure their food security and 83.5% of respondents seek FPS following MGNREGA. In order to obtain food grains, 28.5% of low-income families had to borrow money.

In advance of MGNREGA, respondents were provided with access to the essential grain commodities, such as wheat (71.5% respondents), rice (81% respondents), maize (78% respondents), and pulses (71.5% respondents). However, since the program's launch, respondents' access to these products has significantly grown, reaching 86.5%, 91%, 90.5%, and 91%, respectively. Therefore, it can be demonstrated that the program positively affects respondents' utilization of food security. In comparison, respondents' access to food grain items such as fruits (33% to 63%), milk (46% to 60.5% respondents), spices (56.5% to 77% respondents), refined oil (83% to 97% respondents), and ghee (35.5% to 57.5% respondents) has increased significantly from pre-MGNREGA to post-MGNREGA. Thus, it can be said that MGNREGA plays a major role of ensuring that households in the rural study districts of the study districts have food security.

Table 1: Response Analysis on the Availability of Food N=200

Particular		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Consume own crop's food grain?	Fully	117	58.5
	Average	79	39.5
	Partial	4	2
	Total	200	100

S. N.	Meal (per member)	Before (MGNREGA)				After (MGNREGA)				Percentage Change
		Yes		No		Yes		No		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	Grains from farmers	160	80.0	40	20.0	105	52.5	95	47.5	-34.37
2.	Grains from Borrowing	99	49.5	101	50.5	48	24	152	76	-51.51
3.	Grains from begging	51	25.5	149	79.5	50	25	150	75	-1.96
4.	Grains from FPS	167	83.5	33	16.5	167	83.5	33	16.5	0
5.	Grains from market	146	73	54	27	132	66	68	34	-9.58
6.	Wheat/ k.g	143	71.5	57	28.5	173	86.5	27	13.5	20.97
7.	Rice/ k.g	162	81	38	19	182	91	18	9	12.34
8.	Maize/k.g	156	78	44	22	181	90.5	19	9.5	26.57
9.	Pulses/k.g	143	71.5	57	28.5	182	91	18	9	27.27
10.	Refined/ ltr	166	83	34	17	194	97	6	3	16.86
11.	Spices/100g	113	56.5	87	43.5	154	77	46	23	36.28
12.	Ghee/k.g	71	35.5	129	64.5	115	57.5	85	42.5	61.97
13.	Milk/ ltr	90	45	110	55	121	60.5	79	39.5	34.44
14.	Meat/k.g	136	68	64	32	158	79	42	21	16.17
15.	Fruits	66	33	134	67	126	63	74	37	90.90
16.	Vegetables	42	21	158	79	142	71	58	29	238.09

Source: Primary Data

Impact on expenditure

The expenditure patterns of households in the area of study region are shown in Table 2. To determine how MGNREGA income affects the key spending categories-food grains, education, entertainment, social events, cosmetics, health, etc.-an analysis of these categories was conducted. A majority of the households said they were using their MGNREGA revenue to pay for basic necessities. In this sense, almost all of them acknowledged that their

money from the program made it easier for them to pay their everyday home expenses.

A review of the scheme's effect on the recipients' expenditures on food grain goods was made. Prior to the MGNREGA, 90% of respondents bought their rice from the market, whereas 96.5% of respondents obtained their rice from fair pricing shops (FPS). Beneficiaries now spend 98.5% and 94% of their income on these products after MGNREGA. Prior to the implementation of this program,

49% of respondents reported spending money on their children's education. However, following the plan's inauguration, this ratio rapidly jumped reached 79%, indicating a 61.22 percent growth rate rise. Following this program, 72% of respondents are able to buy stationery for their children who are in school. The next area for worker families is social events and festivals, for which 91% and 98 participants, respectively, said they used their MGNREGA money. During the implementation of this program, respondents' access to veggies (62-62%), personal clothing (85-90%), and children's clothing (85-90%) has risen.

The conclusion is that users spend money on amusement in addition to their essential requirements. It has been noted that 61.5% of respondents are now spending income on entertainment, compared to 54% of respondents who additionally could afford to spend money on other forms of

amusement prior to this initiative. This suggests that, as their quality of living rises, many families are now emerging from the grip of poverty.

Primarily, it is noted that prior to this program, only 49% of those taking part were paying for LPG connections, 59% for electricity, and 12.5% for recharging mobile phones, among other expenses. However, since the start of MGNREGA, the expenditure-to-income ratio has risen significantly, standing at 69%, 94.5%, and 71%, respectively. Other significant uses of MGNREGA revenue included transportation, medication, cosmetics, sweets, and oil and soap, which went to 68%, 90%, 92%, 84%, and 62.5% of families, respectively. Thus, we can come to a conclusion that because of the scheme's introduction, households' spending levels have considerably grown. The living standards of the indigent have improved as a result.

Table 2: Response Analysis on the Expenditure Pattern of Beneficiaries N=200

S. N.	Particulars	Before (MGNREGA)				After (MGNREGA)				Percentage Change
		Yes		No		Yes		No		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	Rice from PDS	193	96.5	7	3.5	197	98.5	3	1.5	2.07
2.	Rice from market	180	90	20	10	188	94	12	6	4.44
3.	Wheat/kg	160	80	40	20	176	88	24	12	4.44
4.	Maize	138	69	62	31	165	82.5	35	17.5	19.56
5.	Refined	171	85.5	29	14.5	187	93.5	13	6.5	9.35
6.	Ghee/k.g	118	59	82	41	188	94	12	6	59.32
7.	Milk/Ltr	73	36.5	127	63.5	166	83	34	17	127.39
8.	School fees of children	98	49	102	51	158	79	42	21	61.22
9.	Spices/100g	145	72.5	55	28.5	152	76	48	24	4.82
10.	Social occasions	158	79	42	21	182	91	18	9	15.18
11.	Liquor/wine	108	54	92	46	133	66.5	33	33.5	23.14
12.	Vegetable/Fruits	120	60	80	40	124	62	76	38	3.33
13.	Meat	126	63	74	37	156	78	44	22	23.80
14.	Stationary	121	60	79	40	144	72	56	28	19.00
15.	T.V/ Entertainment	108	54	92	46	123	61.5	77	38.5	13.88
16.	Clothes for own use	174	87	26	13	193	96.5	7	3.5	10.91
17.	Festival expenditures	173	86.5	27	13.5	189	94.5	11	5.5	9.24
18.	Clothes for children	170	85	30	15	180	90	10		5.88
19.	Cylinder(LPG)	98	49	102	51	138	69	62	31	28.98
20.	Carocine	144	72	56	28	150	75	50	25	4.16
21.	Electricity	118	59	82	41	189	94.5	11	5.5	60.16
22.	Mobile recharge	25	12.5	175	87.5	142	71	58	29	468
23.	Sweets	91	45.5	109	54.5	136	68	64	32	49.45
24.	Cosmetics	167	83.5	33	16.5	180	90	20	10	7.78
25.	Soap/Oil	165	82.5	35	17.5	168	84	32	16	1.81
26.	Expenditure on interest of borrowing	107	53.5	93	46.5	127	63.5	73	36.5	18.69
27.	Expenditure on insurance policies	94	47	106	53	96	48	104	52	2.12
28.	Transportation	112	56	88	44	130	65	70	35	46.07
29.	Medicine expenses	46	23	154	77	125	62.5	75	37.5	173.73
30.	- Cancer	8	4	192	96	10	5	190	95	25
31.	- HIV/AIDS	-	-	200	100	-	-	200	100	-
32.	- T.V	3	1.5	197	98.5	5	2.5	195	97.5	40
33.	- Leprosy	-	-	200	100	-	-	200	100	-
34.	- Accidence	6	3	194	97	25	12.5	175	87.5	316

Source: Primary Data

Impact of MGNREGA on migration

The beneficiaries' migration status is indicated in Table 3. The primary goal of MGNREGA is to ensure the rural poor have an adequate source of existence by creating jobs during lean agricultural seasons when there is a shortage of labor, thus minimizing the amount of people who migrate in search of work.

According to data on this issue, as the table makes clear,

75.5 percent of respondents used the process in search of work before to MGNREGA, but that number dropped to 82% resulting from MGNREGA. In addition, 17% of respondents said they didn't plan to relocate to other locations in pursuit of work or employment following the MGNREGA. However, because MGNREGA only offers 100 days of employment, 83% of families who are currently moving claimed that just 1-2 family members (in the event

of a joint or big family size) were traveling. According to survey data, 90% of respondents said that the primary cause of relocation was a lack of economic opportunities nearby, which was followed by the village's unexpected rains. 7.5% of respondents said that unpredictable rains have an impact on agricultural productivity; therefore in order to meet their needs, they require more revenue, which can only be obtained through migration.

An additional reason for migration has been determined to

be the low salary rates offered under MGNREGA. In the case of 69.5% of respondents, the market wage rate is greater than the MGNREGA wage rate. However, following the program's introduction, 52% of respondents concurred that migration is decreasing as a result of MGNREGA since 55.5% of those surveyed are obtaining local jobs. Given that individuals are finding work in their own villages, it can be said that MGNREGA has grown to be a crucial instrument in the fight against migration.

Table 3: Response Analysis on Impact of MGNREGA on Migration N=200

S. N.	Particular	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Is presently any member working in other District or state?	Yes	166	83
		No	34	17
		Total	200	100
2.	If Yes than how many?	1-2	164	82
		3-4	2	1
		Nil	34	17
		Total	200	100
3.	Any members from your family migrated earlier or recently in search of work?	Yes	151	75.5
		No	49	24.5
		Total	200	100
4.	If Yes than give particular	Erratic rain	15	7.5
		Excess rain	5	2.5
		Lack of employment opportunity in the village	180	90
		Total	200	100
5.	How much wage/day do you get in migrated place? (Men)	0-150	0	0
		151-300	139	69.5
		More than 300	61	30.5
		Total	200	100
6.	How much wage/day (in Rs.) do you get in migrated place? (Women)	0-150	0	0
		151-300	150	75
		More than 300	50	25
		Total	200	100
7.	Season of migration.	Winter	21	10.5
		Summer	74	37
		Other	105	52.5
		Total	200	100
8.	What are the types of migration?	Through Contractor	21	10.5
		On their on	74	37
		Other	105	52.5
		Total	200	100
9.	Is MGNREGA reducing migration?	Yes	104	52
		No	18	9
		Can't say	78	28
		Total	200	100
10.	Are you getting employment locally through MGNREGA?	Yes	111	55.5
		No	11	5.5
		Can't say	78	39
		Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

Impact on sources of household's income/livelihood

The primary sources of income for low-income households in the districts of Kangra and Chamba are shown in Table 4. The findings of the report, 95.5% of families rely on the MGNREGA system as their primary source of income or livelihood. But in the Kangra and Chamba districts, agriculture is the main source of income for a majority of families (85% of Beneficiaries), followed by livestock (milch animals) which includes cows (83.5% of Beneficiaries), goats (85% of Beneficiaries), and sheep (34.5% of Beneficiaries). This is predominantly due to land development activities, irrigation facility improvements, and irrigation tank recuperation. The table additionally shows

that 86.5% of respondents were dependent on agriculture before to MGNREGA, but their percentage decreased to - 1.75% over time following the scheme's adoption. Similarly, prior to MGNREGA, the primary sources of income for low-income households were livestock (83%) and market wage work (62.5%).

In addition, conclusions have been drawn that 40% of respondents earn their income from private employment, 94% of respondents are enrolled in the IAY initiative, the 74.5% of families receive an old age pension, and 57% of beneficiary households run independently owned businesses following MGNREGA. As a result, it can be observed that for 94% of respondents who are receiving work under

MGNREGA, the program has turned into a lifeline. The table below includes particular data regarding the sources of household income.

Table 4: Response Analysis on Source of Income before and After MGNREGA, N=200

S. N.	Sources of Income	Before (MGNREGA)				After (MGNREGA)				Percentage Change
		Yes		No		Yes		No		
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1.	Private Job	25	12.5	175	87.5	80	40	120	60	220
2.	MGNREG scheme	7	3.5	193	96.5	191	95.5	9	4.5	2628.57
3.	IAY	67	33.5	133	66.5	188	94	12	6	180.59
4.	PMGSY scheme	17	8.5	183	91.5	160	80	40	20	841.17
5.	Agriculture	173	86.5	27	13.5	170	85	30	15	-1.73
6.	Horticulture	14	7	186	93	47	23.5	153	76.5	235.71
7.	Fishing	9	4.5	171	85.5	4	2	196	98	-55.56
8.	Market Wage labour	125	62.5	75	37.5	144	72	56	28	15.2
9.	Rental Income	10	10	190	90	34	17	166	83	240
10.	Pension	8	4	192	96	149	74.5	51	25.5	1762
11.	Begging	0	0	200	100	34	17	166	83	-
12.	Private Business	0	0	200	100	114	57	86	43	-
13.	Dairy	18	9	182	91	87	43.5	113	56.5	383.33
14.	Artisan	45	22.5	155	77.5	157	78.5	43	21.5	248.88
15.	Kariana shop	17	8.5	183	91.5	54	27	146	73	217.64
16.	Livestock: Cow/ Buffalo	166	83	34	17	167	83.5	33	16.5	0.60
17.	Goat	157	78.5	43	21.5	170	85	30	15	8.28
18.	Sheep	46	23	143	71.5	69	34.5	331	65.5	50
19.	Horse	10	5	190	95	20	10	180	90	100
20.	Poultry	9	4.5	191	95.5	99	49.5	101	50.5	1000

Source: Primary Data

Here are some key factors to consider Implementation and Governance Issues

- **Delays in Wage Payments:** Delays in disbursing wages can undermine the program's effectiveness and discourage participation.
- **Corruption and Leakages:** Corruption at various levels can divert funds away from the intended beneficiaries.
- **Awareness and Accessibility:** Limited awareness about the program's provisions among potential beneficiaries can result in underutilization.

Nature of Employment Provided

- **Type and Quality of Work:** The nature of work provided might not always align with the skills and needs of the local population, leading to inefficiency.
- **Sustainability of Assets Created:** If the assets created through MGNREGA are not sustainable or beneficial in the long term, they may not contribute significantly to poverty alleviation.

Socio-economic Factors

- **Local Economic Conditions:** The overall economic conditions in Himachal Pradesh, including agricultural productivity and local employment opportunities, play a crucial role.
- **Migration Patterns:** Migration for better employment opportunities can impact the local workforce available for MGNREGA.

Geographical and Demographic Challenges

- **Terrain and Accessibility:** Himachal Pradesh's mountainous terrain can pose challenges for the implementation and monitoring of the program.
- **Demographic Factors:** Age, gender, and educational

levels of the rural population can influence the effectiveness of MGNREGA.

Impact on Local Economy

- **Multiplier Effect:** The extent to which MGNREGA wages stimulate local economic activity and create secondary employment opportunities.
- **Dependency vs. Empowerment:** Whether the program is creating a dependency on government employment or empowering individuals with skills and assets to seek sustainable livelihoods.

Policy and Administrative Support

- **State Government Policies:** The alignment of state policies with MGNREGA objectives and the efficiency of administrative mechanisms.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Robust systems for monitoring and evaluating the program's impact can help identify and rectify issues in implementation.

Conclusion and Suggestions

This study examines the many strategies used by the government of Himachal Pradesh to reduce poverty. As a result, it is evident that the program has a favorable impact on respondents' use of food security. On the other hand, from pre-MGNREGA to post-MGNREGA, respondents' access to food grain items such fruits (33 to 63%), milk (46 to 60.5%), spices (56.5% to 77%), refined oil (83% to 97%), and ghee (35.5% to 57.5%) has grown dramatically. Therefore, it can be concluded that MGNREGA significantly contributes to the food security of households in the rural study districts of the research districts. It should be mentioned that, among other costs, only 49% of participants in the previous program paid for LPG connections, 59% for electricity, and 12.5% for mobile

phone recharging. But since MGNREGA began, the ratio of spending to income has increased dramatically, to 69%, 94.5%, and 71%, respectively. Transportation, medication, cosmetics, sweets, oil and soap, and other major uses of MGNREGA earnings went to 68%, 90%, 92%, 84%, and 62.5% of households, respectively. Thus, we may conclude that household spending levels have increased significantly since the scheme's inception. The outcome has been an improvement in the impoverisher's level of living. The low rates of compensation provided by MGNREGA have been recognized as a further factor contributing to migration. The market wage rate is higher than the MGNREGA wage rate in the cases of 69.5% of respondents. But after the program was introduced, 52% of respondents said that MGNREGA is causing migration to decline because 55.5% of those questioned are finding work in the area. It may be claimed that MGNREGA has developed into an essential tool in the battle against migration given that people are finding employment in their own areas. In addition, conclusions have been formed indicating that 57% of beneficiary households operate independently held enterprises pursuant with MGNREGA, 94% of respondents are engaged in the IAY project, 74.5% of families get an old age pension, and 40% of respondents obtain their income from private work. Consequently, it is evident that 94% of respondents who are employed under MGNREGA saw the program as a lifeline. The implementation of MGNREGA in Himachal Pradesh holds great potential to augment inclusive growth, foster sustainable development, and ameliorate the standard of living of rural residents. In order to deal with the distinct geographical and socioeconomic constraints of the area, MGNREGA can implement focused initiatives that are essential to the overall development of rural Himachal Pradesh.

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