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## **Impact Of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme In India - A Case Study On Gourangachak Of Hooghly In West Bengal**

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***Abstract:***

*Over the last seven years the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has delivered the largest employment programmed in human history. It has two category of objectives, primary objective is augmenting wage employment and auxiliary objectives is strengthening natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like flood, drought, soil erosion and encourage sustainable development. In this study the researcher tried to find out impact of the scheme on a village.*

### **1.Introduction**

Over the last seven years the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) has delivered the largest employment programmed in human history. It has two category of objectives, primary objective is augmenting wage employment and auxiliary objectives is strengthening natural resource management through works that address causes of chronic poverty like flood, drought, soil erosion and encourage sustainable development. In this study the researcher tried to find out impact of the scheme on a village.

### **2.Background Of The Study**

National Rural Employment Guarantee Act was enacted on 5th September, 2005 and came into force w.e.f. 2nd February, 2006. On 31st December, 2009, the Act was renamed by an Amendment as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005. It is now commonly referred to as Mahatma Gandhi NREGA. In its first year 200 districts were covered. This was followed by extension to 130 districts in the following year. Finally, in the 3rd year of its operation i.e. 2008-09, it was extended to 285 districts. In the meantime several new districts were created by division of older districts. Thus the coverage of districts under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA currently stands at 619. The Act made supplementary livelihood in rural areas through unskilled manual work a legal right. Any rural household seeking unskilled manual work could register its family in the Gram Panchayat and obtain a job card. With the possession of a job card, the registered rural household could apply for work for at least 100 days in the Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat was entrusted with the legal duty of providing work to such applicant within 15 days of the receipt of the application, failing which unemployment allowance would become payable to the rural household. The law prescribes payment of wages every week and not later than a fortnight of the work done. In the event of delay in payment of wages, workers were entitled to compensation under Payment of Wages Act, 1938.

The study area (Gourangachak village) is located at the eastern side of Khanakul-II block (Hooghly District). Latitudinal and longitudinal extends are  $22^{\circ}41'22''\text{N}$  and  $87^{\circ}54'32''\text{E}$  respectively. The village is surrounded by Howrah district in eastern side, Balaichak village in southern side, Malancha and Solasta is western side and Par 24-pur in northern side. In this village total population is 3200. Total numbers of family are 680. Basically three category of caste population are present like general (53%), other

backward class (1%) and schedule caste (46%). The most of the SC population are belong in BPL. They are maximum landless people, and doing as agricultural or constructional labour. This area is agriculturally dominated. Double to four crops can be cultivated in most of the agricultural land. The study area has been moderate to highly flood frequented by the river of Damodor and Mundeshary.

### **3. Significance Of The Study**

The regime of right to livelihood was to be financially supported by the Central and State Governments. State Governments were made responsible for ensuring the guarantee of livelihood and timely payment of wages. State would provide the necessary technical and administrative support through the Districts and the Blocks to ensure proper implementation of the Act. Separate provisions have been made for incurring administrative expenses by empowering the Central Government to fix a proportion of total cost of the scheme to be used for administration of the Act. The Act permits certain categories of work to be taken up for providing employment to the job seeking rural households. These categories are generic in nature such as water conservation, drought proofing, irrigation, land development, rejuvenation of traditional water bodies, flood control and drainage work, rural connectivity and work on the land of SC/ST/BPL/IAY beneficiaries/land reform beneficiaries/ individual small and marginal farmers.

### **4. Objectives Of The Study**

- To enumerate the degree of eradication of seasonal unemployment by the scheme.
- To narrate the status of improvement of rural connectivity.
- To find out the developmental condition of water conservation.
- To explain the arrangement for reducing the flood condition.
- To describe the implementation of social forestry.
- To explain the arrangement of micro-irrigation project.
- To analyze other aspects in rural area.

### **5. Methodology**

During the survey, following methodology has been adopted.

### *5.1. Selection Of The Study Site*

Initially, Gourangachak village, under Chingra panchayat and Khanakul-II block has been selected as a study site with the purpose of locating implementation of MGNREGS. It's a remote, economically backward as well as flood affecting area.

### *5.2. Sampling & Sampling Techniques*

One round of field survey was conducted for the study. A total of fifty samples MGNREGS worker families were interviewed. Household surveys of beneficiaries enable to establish a linkage between objectives and outcomes. And another survey was also conducted to supervisors of the village for collecting necessary documents related the study. The sampling technique is non-probability, purposive. An observation technique also was the most effective in this study.

### *5.3. Tools*

For the purpose of the research work questionnaires were used as tools. One questionnaire was developed for the household survey, and another one was for survey to supervisors.

### *5.4. Analytical Procedure Of Study*

Analysis of this paper is divided into seven sections on the basis of objectives of the study. Collected data were tabulated and compiled by different statistical techniques, and finally represented for empirical analysis of the performance of the MGNREGS in the village. The last section attempts to draw conclusion and offers recommendations for streamlining processes of implementation for maximizing effectiveness.

## **6. Results**

### *6.1. Degree Of Eradication Of Seasonal Unemployment By MGNREGS.*

The primary objective of the scheme is augmenting wage employment which also related with eradication of seasonal unemployment. In agricultural based villages main problem is seasonal unemployment. After implementation of the programmed (100 day's job in a year) has been reducing of seasonal unemployment in village area. Agricultural worker only got job in highly agricultural season, and about half of the year they were unemployed; but now its nature has changed, Labour class people also get job in

agricultural leisure season. The following table helps to identify the time period of seasonal unemployment that is moderate to deficient agricultural season.

Highly Agricultural Season	Moderate Agricultural season	Deficient agricultural Season
Middle of November to last of December	February to middle of March	Last December to End of January
Middle of April to Middle of June	-	Middle March to Middle of April
Middle of July to end of August	-	Middle of June to end of July
-	September to middle of October	Middle of October to Middle of November

Table 1: Concentration nature of agricultural season a year

Source: Primary Survey, 2012

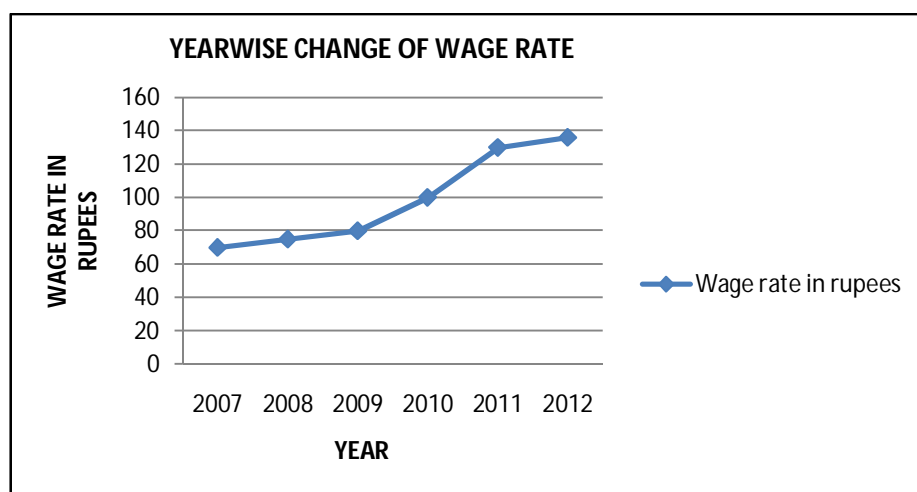


Figure 1: Yearwise Change of Wage

### 6.2.Improvement of rural connectivity in village

After implementation of the scheme many unmetalled road were already constructed. Those are given below:

From	To
Near Bidhan kanrar land	Near Adak land(700m)
Goluipara	Temuni(250m)
Krishna Roy's house	Nemai Samanta's cottage(920m)
Manasatala	Gorumara khal(500m)
Kartik's bag house	Manasatala(800m)
Rabin Golui's home	Mohan Pranamick's house(500m)
Adhikari para bridge	Soumen Adhikari's home(250m)

*Table 2: Construction of village road by the scheme*

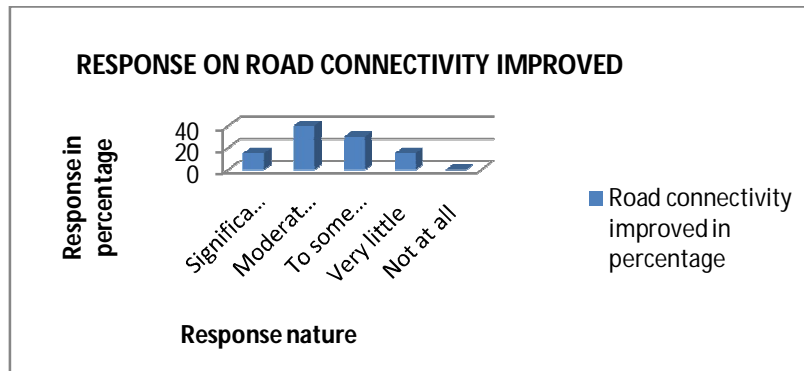
*Source: Primary data-2012*



*Figure 2: New Constructed Road*

From the above table (no.02) reveals that near about four kilometer rural road was constructed. It was helped to connect different important nodal point entire of the village. By the improvement of this type of connectivity people can communicate with their nearest market place (24-pur) and agricultural field.

During heavy rains and low flood height condition it was not possible to communicate with the market and another villages, now it is very much possible. It is also mentionable more road will be develop in upcoming years which are already sanctioned (Annual Action plan) by the respective authority.



*Figure 3: Response on Road Connectivity Improved*

### *6.3. Development Of Water Conservation In The Village*

For the supply of needable water like house holder use and irrigation purpose also it's necessary to conserve the water from rainy season. So MGNREGS also excavate and re-excavate of pond. After the implementation of the programmed two big pond re-excavate (khanrar para pond and shee para pond). It's a rule that any private pond re-excavated by the government scheme, owner of the pond allow to give water in deficient water season to his neighbour people for irrigation purpose. By the way this scheme also helps to develop a good cooperative village society. It's a good sign for sustainable development in many aspects.

### *6.4. Arrangement For Reducing Flood Level In The Village*

Flood is main natural constrain in this area. In every year low to very high flood has been occurred by damaged of embankment or over flow of Damodar and Mundeshary River. Now it's impossible to manage high level of flood due to many causes particularly lower Damodar and Mundeshary basin but it is possible to control low to moderate inundation stage. By the reconstruct of the embankment besides the khals (canal) it can prevent over flow. With the implement of the scheme two embankments is reconstructed to control flood (Netai Khanra house to Mondal para and Kishlay Sangha to Kole para). It also important fact that part of the embankment was concretized by boulder and two are now under construction.



*Figure 4: Arrangement for Flood Reduction*

#### *6.5.Implementation of social forestry*

Social forestry is an important part of environmental and social issue. This forestry system is also auxiliary objective of MGNREGS. By the scheme many vacant space as well as besides the newly constructed road have been beautified with near rapidly growth plant (eucalyptus etc.), and also a food-garden was implemented besides primary school (Gourangachak Primary School).



*Figure 5: New Plantation*

#### *6.6.Arrangement of micro-irrigation project*

In the deficient water season many acre of land remain uncultivated. By the scheme so many culvert installed under the road to use boro-water (in deficient period which supplied by reservoir).Many sluice gate also constructed to control the irrigation system. In Annual Action Plan (AAP) were sanctioned two river pump irrigations projects which



known as micro-irrigation project. By implementation of the projects will be helped to farmers of the village.

## 7.Others Impact On The Rural Area

### 7.1.Impact On Household Income

After the implementation of MGNREGS house hold income is gradually increasing, specially within the landless or agricultural workers families. This scheme has not influenced to increase income directly within rich families. About 49% income has been earning from the scheme entire poor villagers,43% income comes from agricultural labour and allied activities and rest of 8% earn comes from non agricultural wages (construction labour, money-lender's labour etc.)

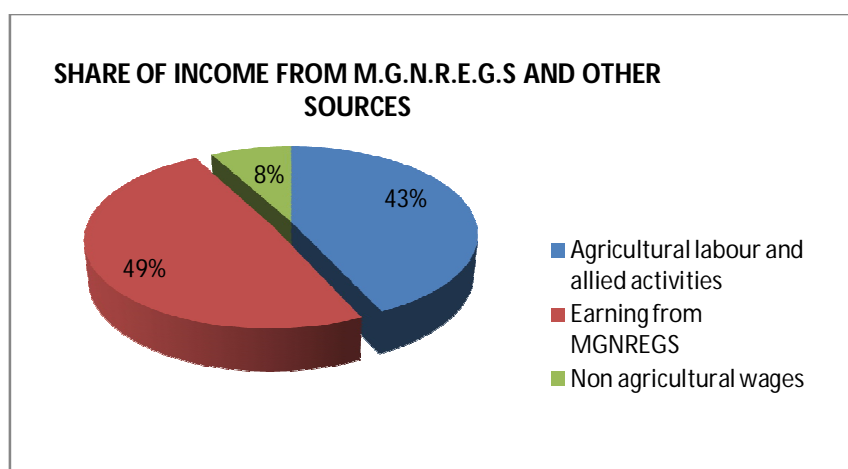


Figure 6: Source of Income

### 7.2.Impact on household expenditure

The impact of MGNREGS as supplementary income source, adding to total household income was seen to result in increased expenditure of the household. Household spent part of their total income on other consumption such as marketing of green vegetable, sufficient rice, clothes, developing to house environment (more clean than before condition, other physical minimum equipments etc.),clothes and also notably to some extent on health and education, besides in some instances on festivals and ceremonies and also repaying some past debt.

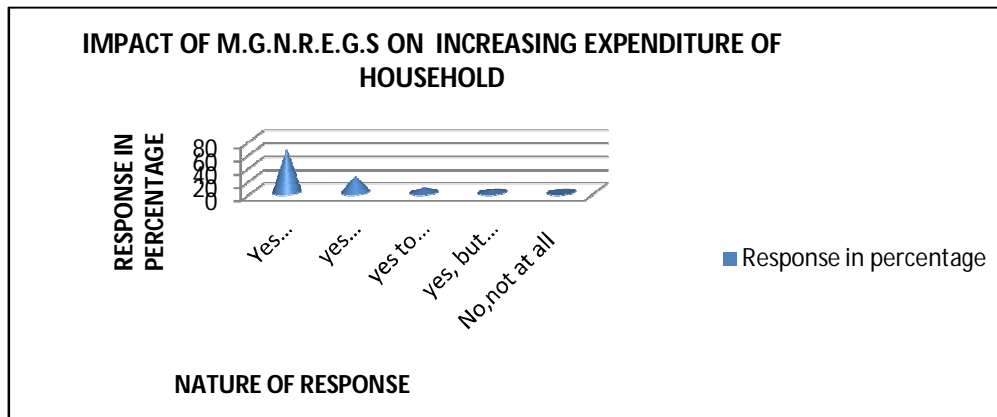


Figure 7: Actual Condition of Expenditure in Village

## 8. Major Findings And Sugestions

Following findings can include from the study:-

### 8.1. Positive Findings

- The scheme contributes to eradicate of seasonal unemployment in to some extent.
- It has been improving rural connectivity than prior situation.
- It has developed water conservation and allied activities (fishing etc.) of the village.
- By the scheme has been improved to control low to moderate level of flood.
- It guided to villagers for implementation of social forestry.
- By the scheme micro-irrigation projects which already sanctioned in Annual Action Plan (APP) will improve.
- The scheme has been helping household income as well as expenditure in the rural area.

### 8.2. Negative Findings

- It has been creating labour crisis in agricultural field, as result labour cost has been increasing and simultaneously agricultural production cost also augmenting.
- Lack of effectiveness of supervisor to implement of a sanctioned scheme with in a time.

### 8.3.Suggestions

- Stress should be given to increase working days in deficient agricultural season for fulfillment 100 days in a year.
- Need to more connectivity improvement with main road (24-Pur to Tarakeswar Road) which help to direct access with Hooghly's different agricultural growth centers (Chapdanga, Arambag, Tarakeswar etc.).
- Need to more attention on re-excavation of ponds to store rainy water because many ponds become dry in summer season due to their lack of depth.
- To set up more calvert (a concretized hole under a road) by which excess water can easily drain out from the low land in rainy season and after flood.
- Thrust should be given on the development of social and agricultural forestry to increase level of income and also to have green environment. Local people and local government have to be involved to protect, observe and implement the forestry purpose.
- Need for more comprehensive training to supervisor and authority should be taken some effective steps to aware the local people.
- Local government (Gramshova, panchayat ) should be taken some necessary steps to manage labour crisis in highly agricultural season.

### 9.Conclusion

Any local people related Governmental scheme will be going properly by the help of effective higher to local administration and local people awareness. In this scheme every higher as well local (gram panchayat and gramsova) administrators have been working as per their norm but still local people have not aware about the scheme. After implementation of the scheme maximum rural area gradually developing in many kinds entire India, like rural road improvement, water conservation, emergence of social forestry, development of irrigation, improvement of land condition, over all household income as well expenditure in positive way etc. At the end, it stated that implementation of the scheme in Indian rural area has been progressing in sustainable development.

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