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**IMPACT OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT
ON SOCIO-ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT OF HADOTI REGION IN THE STATE OF
RAJASTHAN**

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ABSTRACT

This study reveals the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the Hadoti region of Rajasthan. With the help of this study, author wants to portray whether there is any significant association in the response of jobseekers and official executives in the matter of several impacts of the MGNREGA. The present study also focuses the aftermath of the MGNREGA whether jobseekers are being self reliant or being depended on the scheme by which, it may cleared that if scheme will have discontinued in future, It would create many hardships like migration, food security, poverty, unemployment and encumbrance. The study also presents and infers about the notable outcomes of MGNREGA and its impacts on the households or jobseekers in term reduction in forced migration, enhancement the food and livelihood security, protection against extreme poverty, improvement in standard of living of villagers, generation of purchasing power in the local economy, free from encumbrance of poor or destitute villagers, enhancement of slothfulness of labourers, deficiency of labourers, greater economic independence and empowerment to women in the region.

KEYWORDS: MGNREGA, MGNREGS, Migration, Poverty, Food security, Employment.

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INTRODUCTION

Central and State Governments implemented plethora of schemes of employment and made huge expenditure to eliminate the poverty since the independence of India but today the situation is not still satisfactory in India and many villagers migrate in search of employment. In continuation to achieve these objectives, India's parliament passed the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) which provides right to works and guarantees 100 days of manual employment in a financial year at statutory minimum wage rate to every rural household whose adult members willing to do unskilled manual work. Initially, it was called National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) but it was renamed on 2nd October 2009 namely Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). It is the first ever law internationally that

provides the guarantee of 100 days wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work to enhance livelihood security of households in rural areas. The objectives of Act are to supplement wage employment opportunities, to empower rural poor through the processes of right based law and strengthening rural governance through decentralization and processes of transparency and accountability. Other auxiliary objectives of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) are to protecting the environment, reducing rural migration, empowering rural women, fostering social equity and creating durable assets in rural areas. It envisages strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions by bringing real democracy to the grassroots. Hadoti region is one of significant region of the state of Rajasthan that covers the four districts Baran, Bundi, Jhalawar, and Kota.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To study the impact of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the Hadoti region of Rajasthan.
- To identify the effectiveness of implementation of scheme under the area of study.
- To understand the perception of stakeholders by making inter comparison of their opinion about the scheme in the region
- To examine the level of significance about aftermath of the scheme.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Desai (1) in his voluminous book, Rural Development (1988, pp.148-151, Vol.II) inferred some results based on the study conducted by National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in 15 states to scan the performance of DRDA. His study found that DRDA and other concerned departments did not play any effective role in ensuring the supply of the right quality of assets to the programme participants. He (Vol. vi, 633) found that out of 868 sample beneficiary households initially having an annual income of less than Rs.3500, per annum, 49.42 per cent were able to achieve an annual income level of Rs.3500 and above after their coverage under the IRDP. Srivastava and Singh(2) have come to the conclusion based upon the Proceedings of Dialogical Session, 1985 that asset creation under NREP and RLEGP should have a long-term income-employment generation effort rather than taking up only short-term projects at *ad hoc* basis. Sharma and Malhotra (3) are convinced that Rural Development as a concept and a reality has suffered intellectual importations, heavily biased by philosophical-methodological assumptions quite unrelated to the actual configuration of problem-situation. Over the years, it has created ambivalence and equivocation among those who regard rural reconstruction as a faith and a mission to the soil. Sharma (4) in his study concludes that the experiences gained so far has shown that IRDP could not be organically interlinked with other on-going activities/programmes of the government and it has become clear that the benefits from other programmes, particularly social services, could not reach the targeted households. Rao (5) presented an overview of the rural employment situation and pointed out that through prosperity is positively related to agriculture, poverty is found to be higher even among states with a better resource endowment position. He further mentioned that re-orientation of the present strategies would be necessary to improve the productive efficiency in the agriculture sector so that surplus is generated for the promotion of the non-farm sector in rural areas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Scope of the study: The scope of the study is limited to the Hadoti geographical region only which constitutes by the districts of Baran, Bundi, Jhalawar and Kota. Hadoti region is also known as a Kota division of the state of Rajasthan. There are 23 Blocks and 809 Gram Panchyats (GP) in the division. The study was designed in such a way that maximum possible diversity including adequate women participation within the district could be captured.

Type of research study: This study is an empirical research based on experiences of stakeholders. In the study, the stakeholders were divided in to two categories, first were the beneficiaries of wage seekers of households or Jobseekers of Hadoti region. These beneficiaries of wage seekers are the primary stakeholders of the MGNREGA. Second were the official executives at village, GPs, blocks, and districts level of Hadoti region including Mates, Rozgar Sahayak, Data Entry Operators, Village Secretaries, Patwaris, Sarpanchs, Ward Members, Accounts Clerks, Accountants, Programme Officers, District Programme Coordinator and other officials involve in MGNREGA activities in the region.

Sampling: Unit of analysis was a job card holder from a household and an official executive of MGNREGA in the field of Hadoti region. Random sampling without replacement was used in choosing the beneficiaries of jobseekers from a household having the job card and official executives engaged in MGNREGA's activities. The samples were collected at two different levels, first at beneficiaries of household having a job card and second level at official executives of MGNREGA. At first level, 15 households were chosen randomly from a GP of every 23 blocks with totally 345 samples of jobseekers of four districts and at the second level 50 official executives who engaged in MGNREGA's activities at the level of GPs, blocks within four sample districts were selected with totally 200 samples of officials in the region.

Collection of Data: The structured questionnaires were framed in two types of sets, first set for wage seekers having a job card of MGNREGA called as questionnaire for the beneficiaries of jobseekers and second set of structured questionnaire for official executive personals of MGNREGA of Hadoti region called as official executive's questionnaire. Primary data were collected through these questionnaires from 345 jobseekers and 200 official executives.

Statistical tools and techniques used: The data so collected were suitably tabulated with frequency, percentage and analyzed and interpreted to draw the conclusions through Chi square test.

HYPOTHESIS:

The present study is based on the formation of the following null hypothesis.

H1₀: There is no significant relationship between sex of the respondents and sample respondents of stakeholders.

H2₀: There is no significant difference between the opinion of the jobseekers and official executives that they are depend upon the MGNREGS.

H3₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of the sample respondent of the jobseekers and officials that MGNREGS checked or reduced the distress migration for employment.

H4₀: There is no significant variance between the perception of the sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives in the matter of enhancing the food and livelihood securities.

H5₀: There is no major variance in the opinion of jobseekers and officials in the Hadoti region in the matter of protecting the villagers against poverty.

H6₀: There is no significant difference in the aspect of the jobseekers and official executives that standard of living of villagers has been improved after the inception of MGNREGS in the region.

H7₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS reduce encumbrance of poor villagers in the region.

H8₀: There is no significant variance in the perception of sample respondents of the jobseekers and official executives in the matter of improving the purchasing power of villagers after inception of MGNREGS in the region.

H9₀: There is no significant variance between the perception of the respondents of jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS increased the propensity of lethargic labourers.

H10₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of both types of samples respondents that MGNREGS created the short supply of labourers in the rural and urban area in the region.

H11₀: There is no difference between the perception of the respondents of jobseekers and officials in the matter of providing greater economic independence and empowerment to women through MGNREGA in the region.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS:

1. Gender-wise distribution of the respondents:

The following table 1 indicates the gender-wise distribution of the respondents.

Table 1: Gender-wise distribution of the respondents

Stakeholders	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	Frequency
Jobseekers	244 (71%)	101 (29%)	345 (100%)
Official Executives	134 (67%)	66 (33%)	200 (100%)
Total	378 (69.36%)	167 (30.64%)	545 (100)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 71% of the jobseekers respondents are male and 29% of the jobseekers respondents are female while two third of the executives respondents are male and one third of the executives respondents are female.

H1₀: There is no significant relationship between sex of the respondents and sample respondents of stakeholders.

Degree of freedom = 1
 Level of significance = 0.05
 Calculated value of χ^2 = 0.826
 Table Value of χ^2 = 3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.826 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at five percent level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between sex of the respondents and sample respondents of the jobseekers and official executives i.e. considered to have arisen as a result of chance.

2. Dependent upon MGNREGA vs. self reliant:

The main object of the act is to enhance livelihood security in rural sectors by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work and to achieve the object, beneficiaries of the scheme should be own depend. The following table 2 shows the situation of dependent upon MGNREGS versus self dependent.

Table 2: Dependent upon MGNREGS versus self dependent

Stakeholders	Are beneficiaries being self reliant or being dependent upon scheme		Total
	Depend upon MGNREGS	Self reliant	Frequency
Jobseekers	242 (70.15%)	103 (29.85%)	345 (100%)
Official Executives	140 (70%)	60 (30%)	200 (100%)
Total	382 (70.09%)	163 (29.91%)	545 (100%)

Source: Primary Data

When the researcher asked to job seekers whether "they are being self reliant or being dependent upon MGNREGS." Majority of the respondents (70.09%) admitted that villagers are not being own depend but they are being the dependent upon MGNREGS. Same situation is depicted by the respondents of job seekers and official executives thus it can be said that the scheme will not run in future it would arise difficulty in front of beneficiaries of rural area in Hadoti region that's why they are depend upon MGNREGS.

H2₀: There is no significant difference between the opinion of the jobseekers and official executives that they are depend upon the MGNREGS.

Degree of freedom = 1
 Level of significance = 0.05
 Calculated value of χ^2 = 0.001
 Table Value of χ^2 = 3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.001 is less than the table value χ^2 3.84146 at five percent level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no significance difference between the opinion of the jobseekers and official executives that they are depend on the MGNREGS.

3. Reduce or check distress migration:

MGNREGS provides additional opportunities of employment to rural people and main impact of its consequence to reduce or check distress migration through additional opportunities of employment in the Hadoti region. In this regard, the following table 3 shows that MGNREGS checks or reduces the distress migration.

Table 3: MGNREGS reduced or checked distress migration

Stakeholders	MGNREGS reduced or checked distress migration		Total
	Yes	No	Frequency
Jobseekers	272 (78.84%)	73 (21.16%)	345 (100%)
Official Executives	160 (80.00%)	40 (20.00%)	200 (100%)

Total	432	(79.27%)	113	(20.73%)	545	(100%)
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Source: Primary Data

Majority of respondents from the jobseekers (78.84%) and 80% of the official executive in the Hadoti region claimed that MGNREGS reduces or checks the migration of villagers. Overall 79.27% of the sample respondents perceived that there is a positive impact of the MGNREGS on employment generation and it had arrested migration.

H3₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of the sample respondent of the jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS checked or reduced the distress migration for employment.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.104
Table Value of χ^2	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.104 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at 5 per cent level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be concluded that both type of respondents does not influence their perception that MGNREGS checks or reduces the distress migration for employment.

4. Food and livelihood security enhanced:

The following table 4 presents that Mahatma Gandhi NREGA enhanced the food and livelihood security in the Hadoti region.

Table 4: MGNREGS enhanced food and livelihood security

Stakeholders	MGNREGS enhanced food and livelihood security		Total			
	Yes	No	Frequency			
Jobseekers	235	(68.12%)	110	(31.88%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	140	(70.00%)	60	(30.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	375	(68.81%)	170	(31.19%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

Majority of the respondents (68.12%) from the sample of jobseekers supported the perception about the enhancement of food and livelihood security after the inception of the MGNREGS. On the other hand 70% of the official executive respondents claimed the same perception while remaining of the respondents reported that MGNREGA does not affect the food and livelihood security in the Hadoti region.

H4₀: There is no significant variance between the perception of the sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives in the matter of enhancing the food and livelihood securities.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.209
Table Value of χ^2	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.209 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at 5 per cent level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be concluded that there is no significant variance between the both types of sample respondents i.e. jobseekers and official executives and their perception that MGNREGS enhances the food and livelihood securities of villagers.

5. Protection against Poverty:

The following table 5 indicates the situation of protection against poverty in the region.

Table 5: MGNREGS protected against poverty

Stakeholders	MGNREGS protected against poverty		Total			
	Yes	No	Frequency			
Jobseekers	266	(77.10%)	79	(22.90%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	150	(75.00%)	50	(25.00%)	200	(36.70%)
Total	416	(76.33%)	129	(23.67%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that out of 345 respondents of jobseekers, 77.10% of the respondents perceived protection against poverty through MGNREGS and now they have better financial position in comparison

before inception of the scheme, while 22.90% of the respondents reported that they are still in poor condition and the scheme did not provide them as the protection against the poverty. Almost same perception is reported by the official executives. Thus overall 76.33% of sample respondents revealed that villagers are protected against poverty by MGNREGS.

H5₀: There is no major variance in the opinion of jobseekers and officials in the Hadoti region in the matter of protecting the villagers against poverty.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.309
Table Value of χ^2	=	3.84146

The proposed null hypothesis is accepted, where the calculated value 0.309 is less than the chi square table value 3.84146 at 5% level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no major variance in the opinion of sample respondents of jobseekers and officials in the Hadoti region that MGNREGS protects the villagers against poverty.

6: Improvement in standard of living of villagers

The following table 6 indicates the improvement in standard of living of villagers in the region.

Table 6: MGNREGS improved the standard of living of villagers

Stakeholders	MGNREGS improved the standard of living of villagers		Total	
	Yes	No	Frequency	
Jobseekers	238 (68.99%)	107 (31.01%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	132 (66.00%)	68 (34.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	370 (67.89%)	175 (32.11%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

The above table explains that MGNREGS has improved the standard of living of villagers of Hadoti region reported by more than two-third of the respondents in the Hadoti region. Out of 345 sample respondents of jobseekers, 68.99% claimed that their standard of living has been improved after the inception of MGNREGS. The same perception was reported by the 66% sample respondents of official executives about the standard of living of villagers in the region.

H6₀: There is no significant difference in the aspect of the jobseekers and official executives that standard of living of villagers has been improved after the inception of MGNREGS in the region.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.518
Table Value of χ^2 0.05	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.518 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at 5% level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, I can be concluded that there is no significant difference in the aspect of the jobseekers and official executives that the standard of living of villagers has been improved after the inception of MGNREGS in the region.

7. Reduction indebtedness or encumbrance of poor villagers:

The following table 7 shows the distribution of the respondents about the reduction in indebtedness or indebtedness of poor villagers in Hadoti region

Table 7: MGNREGS reduced encumbrance of poor villagers in the region.

Stakeholders	MGNREGS reduced encumbrance of poor villagers.		Total	
	Yes	No	Frequency	
Jobseekers	224 (64.93%)	121 (35.07%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	134 (67.00%)	66 (33.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	358 (65.69%)	187 (34.31%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows, about two third of respondents reported that MGNREGA's workers became free from indebtedness from local money lenders thus MGNREGS reduces encumbrance of poor villagers in the region.

H7₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS reduce encumbrance of poor villagers in the region.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.241
Table Value of χ^2 0.05	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.241 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at 5% level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the perception of sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS reduce encumbrance of poor villagers in the region after execution of scheme.

8. Improvement in purchasing power of villagers:

The following table 8 represents about the improvement of purchasing power due to proper implementation of MGNREGS in the local economy of the Hadoti region.

Table 8: MGNREGS improved the purchasing power of villagers in the region.

Stakeholders	MGNREGS improved the purchasing power.				Total	
	Yes		No		Frequency	
Jobseekers	245	(71.01%)	100	(28.99%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	150	(75.00%)	50	(25.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	395	(72.48%)	150	(27.52%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows, 71.01% of the jobseekers respondents of the Hadoti region reported that MGNREGS improved the purchasing power of villagers in the region while 75% of the respondents of official executives perceived that MGNREGS improved the purchasing power of villagers. On an average 72.48% respondents claimed about the improvement of purchasing power after inception of scheme thus the situation is satisfactory in the sample districts of the Hadoti region in the state of Rajasthan.

H8₀: There is no significant variance in the perception of sample respondents of the jobseekers and official executives in the matter of improving the purchasing power of villagers after inception of MGNREGS in the region.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	1.008
Table Value of χ^2	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 1.008 is less than the table value of χ^2 at five per cent level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that there is no significance difference in the opinion of both type of respondents that MGNREGS improved the purchasing power of villagers in the region.

9. Increased in propensity of slothful or lethargic labourers

The following table 9 indicates the increment in propensity of lethargic or slothful labourers after inception of MGNREGA in Hadoti region.

Table 9: Increment in the propensity of lethargic or slothful labourers

Stakeholders	MGNREGS increased the propensity of slothful laborers.				Total	
	Yes		No		Frequency	
Jobseekers	235	(68.12%)	110	(31.88%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	134	(67.00%)	66	(33.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	369	(67.71%)	176	(32.29%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

The above table 9 shows that 68.12% of jobseekers respondents perceived that labourers had become slothful whereas 67% of officials respondents revealed that workers became lethargic. The above table shows that on an average, 67.71% of the labourers became indolence after inception of MGNREGA in the region in the Hadoti region.

H9₀: There is no significant variance between the perception of the respondents of jobseekers and official executives that MGNREGS increased the propensity of lethargic labourers.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	0.072
Table Value of χ^2 0.05	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 0.072 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at five per cent level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives have same opinion that MGNREGA increased the slothful or lethargic labourers in the region.

10. Availability of labourers in rural and urban sectors

The following table 10 indicates the classification about the creation of short supply of labourers due to MGNREGS in Hadoti region.

Table 10: MGNREGS created the Short Supply of Labourers

Stakeholders	MGNREGA created the Short Supply of Labourers.				Total	
	Yes		No		Frequency	
Jobseekers	248	(71.88%)	97	(28.12%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	132	(66.00%)	68	(34.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	380	(69.72%)	165	(30.28%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

71.88% of the respondents of jobseekers reported that the availability of labourers for the agricultural and urban sector had been reduced since the implementation of MGNREGA's works in the Hadoti region, while two-third of the respondents of officials also reported the same perception. Most of sinecure workers like to do work in MGNREGS instead of agricultural works, thus the MGNREGA creates the deficiency of labourers in agricultural and urban sectors. There is no significance difference in the aspect of of the respondents analyzed and verified by the following.

H10₀: There is no significant difference between the perception of both types of samples respondents that MGNREGS created the short supply of labourers in the rural and urban area in the region.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	2.077
Table Value of χ^2 0.05	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 2.077 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at five per cent level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives have same aspect that MGNREGA created the short supply of labourers in the region and both type of respondents have same the perception.

11. Empowerment and economic independence to women:

The following table 11 explains the empowerment and economic independence to women that increased after joining the MGNREGA.

Table 11: MGNREGA provided the empowerment and economic independence to women

Stakeholders	MGNREGA provided the empowerment and economic independence to women				Total	
	Yes		No		Frequency	
Jobseekers	225	(65.22%)	120	(34.78%)	345	(100%)
Official Executives	118	(59.00%)	82	(41.00%)	200	(100%)
Total	343	(62.94%)	202	(37.06%)	545	(100%)

Source: Primary Data

MGNREGA gave greater economic independence and empowerment to women in the region. 59% of the respondents of official executives reported that the MGNREGA provide greater economic independence and empowerment to women however there are 65.22% of the respondents from wage seekers perceived the

same perception. On an average MGNREGA boosted up the women through the economic independence and empowerment by 62.94% in the region. Perception of the both type of sample respondents is tested as below.

H11₀: There is no difference between the perception of the respondents of jobseekers and officials in the matter of providing greater economic independence and empowerment to women through MGNREGA in the region.

Degree of freedom	=	1
Level of significance	=	0.05
Calculated value of χ^2	=	2.098
Table Value of χ^2 0.05	=	3.84146

Since, the calculated value of χ^2 2.098 is less than the table value of χ^2 3.84146 at five per cent level of significance. The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that sample respondents of jobseekers and official executives have same perception that MGNREGA provided the greater economic independence and empowerment to women in the region and both type of respondents does not influence the perception each other.

CONCLUSION

There should be more social support and better public service without siphoned off the NREGA money by middlemen. Ministry of Rural Development should introspect and examine the loopholes in the scheme, which were pointed out in the performance report of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to ensure proper implementation of the scheme. Government should move the scheme effectively toward skill and self employment training and livelihood up gradation related to beauty parlor work, hairdressing, jewelry making, handloom, carpet weaving, auto repair, fashion design, dairy, fisheries, sericulture, sheep rearing, beekeeping, bio gas plant, courier and logistics so that rural people may become more self reliant consequently MGNREGS may provide full food and livelihood securities and economic independence that would aftermath to checked distress migration, protect the villagers against poverty, improve the purchasing power and standard of living of villagers.

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