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## Analysing the block-wise patterns of households issued job cards, provided employment and unskilled wages paid under MGNREGA, 2005: A case study in Nuh district of Haryana

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### Abstract

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 is a demand driven employment generation program enacted by government of India with a view to strengthen rural India. The act provides a legal guarantee of 100 days of wage employment in a year to members of the household who are more than 18 years of age and are willing to do unskilled work. In this article, an attempt has been made to examine the block-wise patterns of cumulative and new households issued MGNREGA job cards, households demanded and provided employment and unskilled wages provided to labourers under the MGNREGA, 2005 in Nuh district of Haryana employing the secondary data for the fiscal year 2020-2021. Nuh is an extremely poverty-stricken district. In this context, MGNREGA is a 'silver bullet' to the natives. The outcomes of the study revealed that a significantly large number of households (96.96%) possess MGNREGA job cards in the district and there is a huge demand of employment, especially, in blocks such as Nagina, Punhana and Taoru. MGNREGA jobs provided substantial employment to district's households and a total sum of Rs. 143.26 crore was paid to them during the study year, thereby, contributing to increase in household's income and lowering their levels of poverty to some extent.

**Keywords:** demand-driven, employment, MGNREGA, poverty, wages

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### Introduction

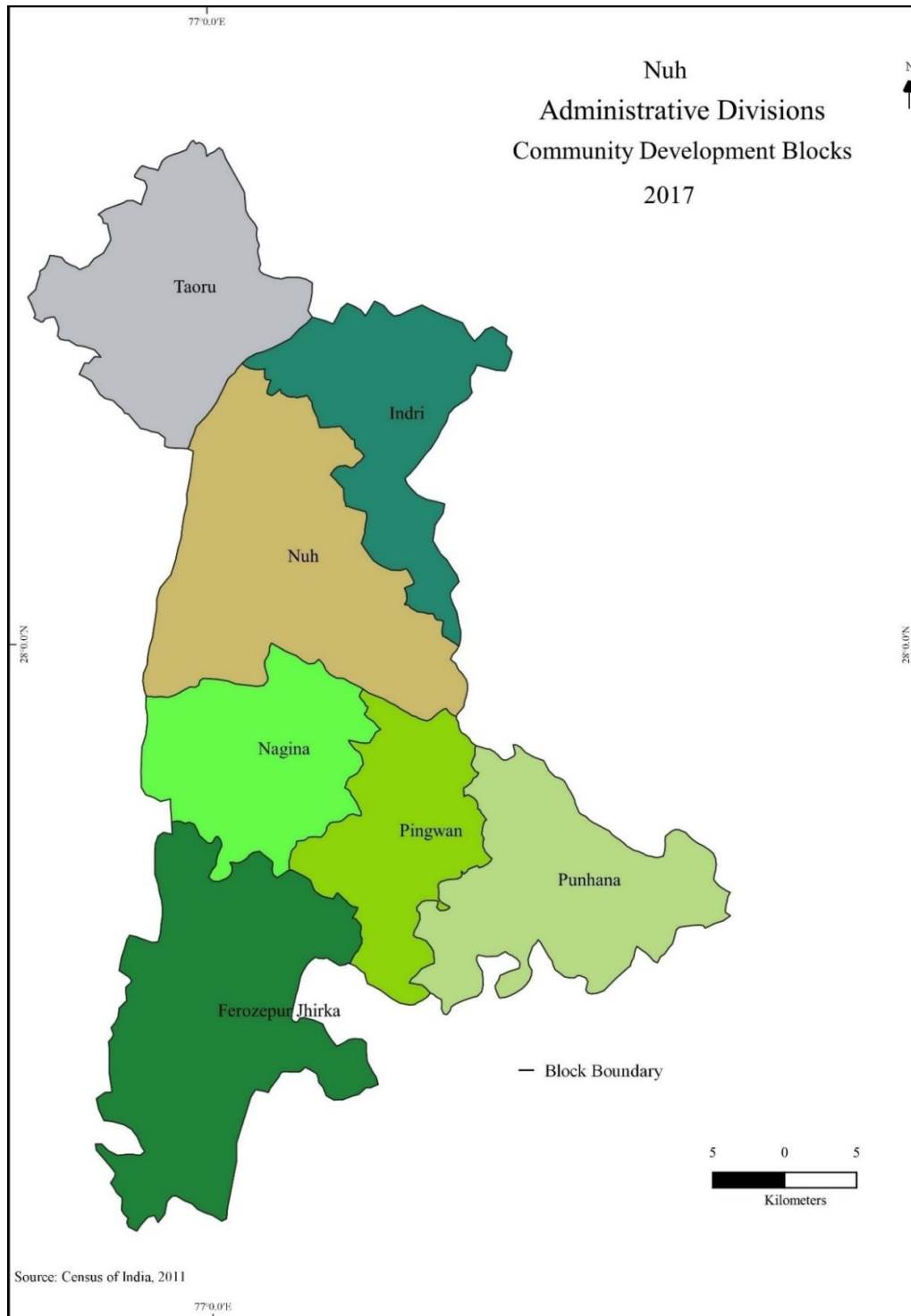
Haryana is considered as one of the most developed states in India and it comprises of 22 districts including Nuh, formerly known as Mewat. The district is located between 26° 39' 00" N and 28° 32' 25" N latitudes and between 76° 39' 30" E and 77° 20' 45" E longitudes (Figure 1) and it comprises of 7 blocks viz., Taoru, Nuh, Ferozpur Jhirka, Punhana, Nagina, Indri and Pingwan.

According to 2011 Census, Nuh district has a total population of 10,89,263 persons and is predominantly rural in nature with 88.61% population living in rural areas. The literacy rate is just 54.08% and sex ratio is 907 females per thousand males. In the year 2018, India's premier think tank NITI-Aayog (erstwhile Planning Commission) named Nuh district as the most underdeveloped district of India. Nuh is an extremely poverty-stricken district. In this context, MGNREGA is a boon to the natives. MGNREGA was started in Nuh district along w.e.f. April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007. The act provides for at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every rural household irrespective of their socio-economic characteristics. MGNREGA is the world's first-ever law that guarantee wage employment at an unprecedented scale. The present paper attempts to examine the block-wise pattern of cumulative and new households issued MGNREGA job cards, households demanded and provided employment and unskilled wages provided to labourers under MGNREGA, 2005.

### Review of Literatures

Kumar Sanjeev (2021) <sup>[5]</sup> in his study on Himachal Pradesh found that not only the number of households issued job cards have been increasing but also the number of households demanded and provided employment have been increasing over the years. Patra Mamata (2021) in his study in selected villages of Kankadahad block of Dhenkanal district of Odisha highlighted that the act not only improved the livelihood conditions of the rural poor but also improved the local infrastructure and lowered poverty. Sunitha S. et al. (2021) <sup>[9]</sup> declared MGNREGA as India's superstar of the year 2020 as it successfully provided the work to demanding villagers who returned to villages from cities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Choudhary Rekha (2020) highlighted that income from the MGNREGA improved the standard of living and accelerated the village economy by 'trickle up effect'. Kumar Pradeep and Mukesh Chahal (2020) <sup>[4]</sup> in their study on Haryana observed that the number of households seeking employment and women participation is increasing over the years and MGNREGA has been

successful in providing supplementary employment to rural households in the state. Vasudevan Gayathri et al. (2020) in their study revealed that works undertaken under the act had a very less rate of completion and the act has not provided as assured minimum 100 days of unskilled manual work to the rural households. Yasmin Karishma and B. K. Srinivas (2020) <sup>[12]</sup> in their study in Kalahandi district of Odisha and concluded that the act not only enhanced livelihood security of the locals but also improved their economic well-being. Mishra Anil Kumar and Madhulika Singh (2018) <sup>[6]</sup> brought forward that the act played a significant role in employment generation in rural India. It not only provided food security but also promoted rural development. From this review of literature, it is absolutely clear that the act has contributed a lot to poor rural households.



**Fig 1:** Study Area

### Objectives of the research study

The main objectives of the present research study are as follows:

1. To understand the block-wise pattern of cumulative and new households issued MGNREGA job cards in the district.

2. To examine the block-wise pattern of households demanded and provided employment in the district.
3. To study the block-wise pattern of unskilled wages provided to labourers in the study area.

### Research Methodology

The present research study is based on the secondary sources of data collected from the official website of MGNREGA during the FY 2020-21. For the analysis purpose statistical tools such as tabulation, average, and percentage have been employed.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

#### Block-wise Patterns of Cumulative and New Households Issued MGNREGA Job Cards

In order to get the work under MGNREGA, adult members of rural households are required to give their photo, name, age and address to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat, then, registers households after making enquiry and issue a job card (valid for a period of 5 years) containing the details of adult members enrolled with their photographs.

**Table 1:** Households Issued Cumulative and New MGNREGA Job Cards, FY 2020-2021

District/Blocks		Households Issued Job Cards	
		C	N
Blocks	Ferozpur Jhirka	23,756 (17.50)	9,580 (17.24)
	Indri	8,682 (6.40)	3,747 (6.74)
	Nagina	30,901 (22.77)	12,760 (22.97)
	Nuh	15,381 (11.33)	3,563 (6.41)
	Pingwan	15,199 (11.20)	7,167 (12.90)
	Punhana	26,427 (19.47)	9,799 (17.64)
	Taoru	15,375 (11.33)	8,940 (16.09)
Nuh District		1,35,721	55,556
Haryana		11,55,331	1,71,907

**Source:** MGNREGA Website, Accessed in August, 2021

Note 1: C represents cumulative households issued job cards and N represents new households issued job cards

Note 2: Data in parenthesis represents percentage as against district's total

Note 3: Percentage may not tally to 100 due to rounding off

According to 2011 Census of India, there are 1,39,975 rural households in the district of which 1,35,721 households (i.e., 96.96%) have been issued job cards. Thus, we see that Nuh district alone accounts for 11.75% of the total households issued job cards issued in the state (Table 1). Households in the Nagina block have been issued the maximum number of job cards (22.77%) followed by Punhana (19.47%) and Ferozpur Jhirka (17.50%) blocks. On the other side, Indri block accounted for the lowest number of households (6.40%) issued job cards in the district followed by Pingwan (11.20%), Taoru (11.33%) and Nuh (11.33%) blocks.

Table 1 also clearly shows that Nuh district alone accounted for 32.32% of the total fresh job cards issued in the state. Nagina, Punhana and Ferozpur Jhirka blocks taken together accounted for more than one-half (57.85%) of the total fresh job cards issued in the state while Nuh (6.41%) block reported the lowest number of new job cards issued followed by Indri (6.74%) and Pingwan (12.90%) blocks.

#### Block-wise Patterns of Households Demanded and Provided Employment

Post receiving of job cards, an application demanding work needs to be submitted to Programme Officer or Gram Panchayat and then a letter having work details mentioned is issued to the job card holder.

**Table 2:** Households Demanded Employment and Provided Employment, FY 2020-2021

District/Blocks		Number of Households	
		DE	PE
Blocks	Ferozpur Jhirka	12,060 (13.76)	10,851 (14.31)
	Indri	3,334 (3.80)	2,691 (3.55)
	Nagina	22,266 (25.40)	20,246 (26.70)
	Nuh	6,460 (7.37)	5,993 (7.90)
	Pingwan	11,316 (12.91)	9,525 (12.56)
	Punhana	20,034 (22.85)	16,168 (21.32)
	Taoru	12,205 (13.92)	10,355 (13.63)
Nuh District		87,675	75,829
Haryana		5,22,630	4,56,989

**Source:** MGNREGA Website, Accessed in August, 2021

Note 1: DE represents households demanded employment and PE represents households provided employment

Note 2: Data in parenthesis under sub-heading DE represents percentage as against total households demanded employment and the data in parenthesis under sub-heading PE represents percentage as against total households provided employment in the district

Note 3: Percentage may not tally to 100 due to rounding off

During the FY 2020-21, Nuh district with 87,675 households demanding employment accounted for 16.78% of the total households demanded employment in the state and with 75,829 households provided employment accounted for 16.59% of the total households provided employment in the state. The highest demand for work was registered from Nagina block (25.40%) followed by Punhana (22.85%), Taoru (13.92%) and Ferozpur Jhirka (13.76%) blocks while the highest employment was generated in Nagina (26.70%) block followed by Punhana (21.32%), Ferozpur Jhirka (14.31%) and Taoru (13.63%) blocks (13.63%).

### Block-wise Pattern of Unskilled Wages Provided to Labourers

**Table 3:** Amount of Unskilled Wages Provided to Labourers, FY 2020-2021

District/Blocks		Wages Amount (in crores)
Blocks	Ferozpur Jhirka	21.21 (14.81)
	Indri	4.11 (2.87)
	Nagina	39.46 (27.54)
	Nuh	13.51 (9.43)
	Pingwan	16.93 (11.82)
	Punhana	29.97 (20.92)
	Taoru	18.06 (12.61)
Nuh District		143.26
Haryana		549.07

Source: MGNREGA Website, Accessed in August, 2021

Note 1: Total and percentage may not tally due to rounding off

Note 2: Data in parenthesis represents percentage as against district's total

Table 3 highlights that beneficiary households were paid a total Rs. 143.26 crore as wages under the MGNREGA and this accounted for slightly more than one-fourth (26.09%) of the total wages paid to the labourers in the state. This indicates that MGNREGA has been able to put money in the hands of the poorest of the poor at an unprecedented scale. Nagina block accounted for the maximum (27.54%) amount of wages provided to labourers followed by Punhana (20.92%) block. On the other hand, Indri block with meagre Rs. 4.11 crore accounted for the lowest (2.87%) amount of wages provided to labourers followed by Nuh block (9.43%).

### Conclusions

MGNREGA, 2005 is worldwide regarded as largest poor-friendly scheme aiming not only at employment generation but also promoting equality, strengthening the local self-government, and alleviating household's poverty. The scheme has hugely benefitted the households in the Nuh district by providing them a huge scale employment. 96.96% of the districts' households possesses valid MGNREGA job cards which shows that the act has become a lifeline of the locals. The highest demand for work was registered from Nagina block followed by Punhana and Taoru blocks while the highest employment was generated in Nagina block followed by Punhana, Ferozpur Jhirka and Taoru blocks. Beneficiary households were paid a total sum of Rs. 143.26 crore as unskilled wages and this accounted for more than one-fourth of the total unskilled wages paid to the labourers in the state. This indicates that MGNREGA has been able to put money in the hands of the poorest of the poor at an unprecedented scale.

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