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**A STUDY OF EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAMME FOR INDIA'S
RURALS MAHATMA GANDHI**

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ABSTRACT

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a landmark employment guarantee program designed to provide livelihood security to rural households across India. Launched in 2005, MGNREGA guarantees at least 100 days of wage employment per financial year to adult members of rural households who are willing to engage in unskilled manual labor. The program aims to curb rural poverty by ensuring a minimum income, reducing distress migration, and empowering marginalized communities. By focusing on labor-intensive projects, such as water conservation, afforestation, and rural infrastructure development, MGNREGA not only provides employment but also enhances the sustainability of rural livelihoods. Importantly, MGNREGA places a special emphasis on the inclusion of women, ensuring that at least one-third of the workdays are allocated to them. This has significantly contributed to women's empowerment by increasing their financial independence and social participation. However, the program faces challenges, including issues of delayed payments, corruption, and inadequate implementation in certain regions. Despite these obstacles, MGNREGA remains a critical safety net for millions of rural households, fostering economic resilience and promoting social equity in India's vast and diverse rural landscape.