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Mapping Effectiveness of MGNREGA Scheme: A Geospatial Study of Inter-District Variations in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

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Abstract

MGNREGA, also known as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, is a progressive social welfare program introduced by the Central Government of India. It represents a transformative effort to address poverty and unemployment by providing paid employment opportunities in rural areas. This study analyzes the performance of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme across different districts of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, using secondary data from the official MGNREGA website. Key performance indicators include number of households provided employment, average days of employment per household, work completion rate, women participation rate, and employment of SC/ST households. The findings reveal significant inter-district variations, with districts like Doda, Poonch and Anantnag emerging as high performers due to their large rural populations and more effective scheme implementation. These variations highlight the need for targeted interventions to ensure equitable development across all districts.

Keywords: MGNREGA; Interdistrict variations; Women participation rate; Average days of employment

1 Introduction

India has consistently achieved substantial and stable economic growth since the 1990s, with an average annual growth rate of 7% between 1990 and 2000. However, this overall economic progress did not result in improved living conditions for households in the lowest income quintiles and vulnerable groups⁽¹⁾. In contrast, economic growth is believed to be the catalyst for exacerbating both inter-state and intra-state inequality as well as chronic poverty^(2,3).

The Government of India implemented the 'National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)' in 2005, which aimed to tackle poverty and prolonged joblessness at the household level in rural areas. This act was eventually renamed as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act⁽⁴⁾. MGNREGA is a comprehensive initiative that ensures 100 days of employment annually for all adult men and women in rural families who are willing to participate in unskilled manual labor at the minimum

salary set by the program⁽⁵⁾. The legislation's legal framework and rights-based approach set it apart from traditional charity programs, marking a significant milestone in India's efforts to tackle poverty⁽⁶⁾.

The primary goals of the legislation are to establish protective measures for marginalized populations, serve as a catalyst for the sustainable growth of the agricultural sector, uplift impoverished rural communities, and generate employment opportunities for individuals lacking specialized skills⁽⁷⁾. Government interventions, such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), are crucial for the well-being of rural India. In these areas, temporary and unskilled workers often face low job security and, as a result, have less ability to negotiate for improved working conditions with their employers⁽⁸⁾.

The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir is predominantly an agrarian region, with around 75% of its inhabitants living in rural areas and relying on this sector for their income, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, MGNREGA played a crucial role in offering job prospects to the unskilled population of the area⁽⁹⁾.

1.1 Study Area

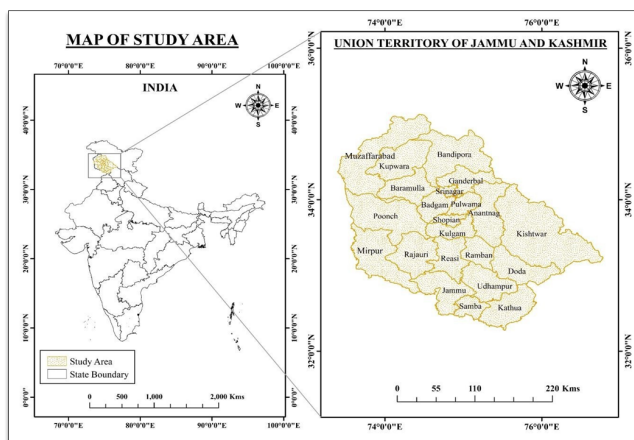


Fig. 1. Map of Study Area

The region of Jammu and Kashmir is administered by India as a Union Territory. It is located in the Northern India, has a diverse and rich historical as well as political background. Back then, during the British colonial period, it was one of the 565 princely states of India that existed before attaining independence from British rule in the year 1947. The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir officially came into existence on 31st October 2019 under the Jammu and Kashmir Re-Organisation Act⁽⁹⁾. The total geographical area of Jammu and Kashmir is 101387 sq. kilometres. It lies between latitudinal extent of 32° 17' and 37° 05' North and longitudinal extent is 72° 31' and 80° 20' East. The

Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is located in the northernmost part of India adjacently sharing borders with Pakistan, the Pakistan administered Kashmir, the Union Territory of Ladakh and States of Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. The region boasts a variety of geological features and a rich historical background, making it a prominent area with significant artistic, cultural and historical importance. This is reflected in its numerous archaeological and historical sites that highlight its distinguished heritage. As per the 2011 census, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir had a population of 12,541,302, reflecting an increase from the 10,143,700 recorded in the 2001 census. The demographic composition of the Union Territory is notably diverse, with 68.32% Muslims, 28.44% Hindus, 1.87% Sikhs, 0.90% Buddhists, 0.28% Christians and 0.01% belonging to other groups. The overall literacy rate in the region is 68.74%, with male literacy at 78.26% and female literacy at 58.01%⁽¹⁰⁾.

1.2 Objectives

The study aims to analyse spatial variations of the performance of MGNREGA scheme among various districts of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

1.3 Limitations

There are certain limitations of the study as this study is not able to correlate the performance of the MGNREGA scheme in a particular district with its socio-economic conditions due to lack of availability of updated data on these indicators. The last available data on these parameters belong to Census, 2011 which is quite obsolete to attempt any sort of correlation or association.

2 Database and Methodology

For this study, secondary data was obtained from the official national MGNREGA website, by Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India for the year 2022-2023 focusing on the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir (Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-2023)⁽¹¹⁾. The analysis covers the financial year 2022-23 and considers various district-level factors for a reliable and comprehensive understanding.

1. Number of Households Provided Employment
2. Number of Women Provided Employment
3. Average Days Employment Provided Per Household
4. Work Completion Rate
5. SCs and STs Households Provided Employment

The methodology used to calculate the MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI) mirrors the approach of UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI). The MPI was derived by considering four key indicators or dimensions:

To compute the MPI for each district, an index was calculated for each dimension. This involved assessing each underlying dimension by considering the maximum and minimum values for each district. The performance in each dimension was then determined using a specific mathematical formula.

$$\text{Dimension Index} = \frac{\text{original value} - \text{minimum value}}{\text{maximum value} - \text{minimum value}}$$

The value for the dimension index ranges between 0 to 1.

The indices calculated for each of the four dimensions/indicators are as follows:

- **EGI:** Employment Generation Index (measuring the number of people provided employment)
- **WPEI:** Women Provided Employment Index (measuring the number of women provided employment)
- **ADEPI:** Average Days Employment Provided Index (measuring the average number of days employment provided per household)
- **WPI:** Work Performance Index (measuring the work completion rate)
- **SCSTI:** Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Households Provided Employment (measuring the number of SCs and ST Households Provided Employment)

Calculating the MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI)

- **Composite Score:** The composite score for the given dimensions is calculated by taking the simple average of all the dimension indices. The MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI) - Composite Score is derived by averaging the five-dimension indices. Mathematically, this is represented as:

$$\text{MPI} = \frac{1}{5}(\text{EGI}) + \frac{1}{5}(\text{WPEI}) + \frac{1}{5}(\text{ADEPI}) + \frac{1}{5}(\text{WPI}) + \frac{1}{5}(\text{SCSTI})^{(12)}$$

Where:

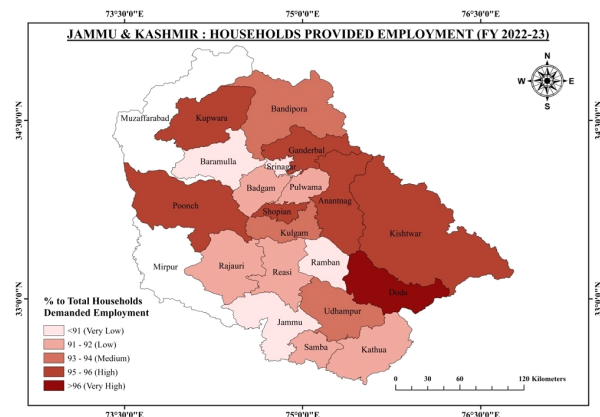
- **EGI:** Employment Generation Index
- **WPEI:** Women Provided Employment Index
- **ADEPI:** Average Days Employment Provided Index
- **WPI:** Work Performance Index
- **SCSTI:** Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Households Provided Employment Index

Based on the calculated MPI Score, districts are then categorized into five equal interval classes: Very Low, Low, Medium, High and Very High⁽¹²⁾. Data related to Muzaffrabad and Mirpur have not been considered due to lack of availability of data of these two districts.

Geospatial techniques were utilized to map the spatial patterns of the analysed data. Various maps were created to illustrate the spatial variations of factors such as households provided employment, women provided employment, average days of employment per household, work completion rate and the MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI) - Composite Score using ARC GIS software.

3 Results and Discussions

3.1 Households Provided Employment



Source – Values calculated by Author (based on data of Ministry of Rural development, 2022-23)

Fig. 2. Households Provided Employment

The data presented in Figure 2 reflects the percentage of households provided employment under the MGNREGA scheme across various districts in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This scheme, which is aimed at enhancing livelihood security in rural areas by guaranteeing at least 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work, shows varying degrees of effectiveness across the districts.

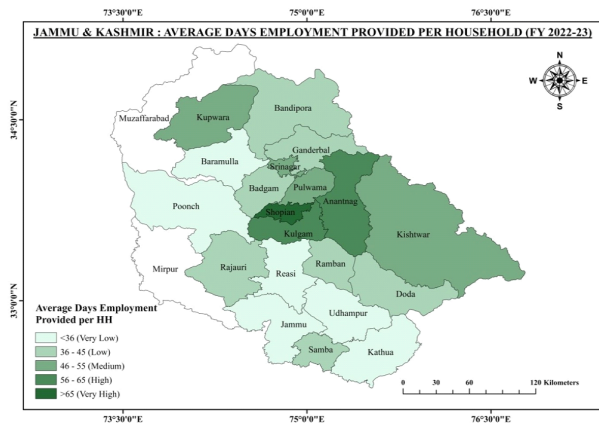
The district of Doda stands out with the highest percentage of households provided employment, reaching an impressive 97.15% as shown in Figure 2. This suggests a strong implementation of the scheme in Doda, possibly indicating effective local governance and a high demand for employment under MGNREGA. Close behind Doda are the districts of Kishtwar and Poonch, with 96.48% and 96.38% of households provided employment, respectively. These high percentages reflect a similar trend of successful implementation.

On the other hand, Srinagar records the lowest percentage of households provided employment under the scheme, with only 87.89%. This relatively lower figure might indicate challenges in either the demand for such employment or the efficiency of the scheme's implementation in this urban district. Other districts such as Baramulla and Ramban also report lower percentages, 89.42% and 89.41% respectively.

Most of the districts show a fairly high percentage of households provided employment, generally above 90%, suggesting that MGNREGA is widely accessed and utilized across the region. However, the variation across districts could reflect differences in economic conditions, the level of rural distress, or the administrative capacity to implement the

scheme effectively.

3.2 Average Days of Employment Provided Per Households



Source – values calculated by Author (Based on data of Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-23)

Fig. 3. Average Days of Employment Provided Per Households

The data provided in Figure 3 shows the average number of days of employment provided per household under the MGNREGA scheme across various districts in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This indicator is crucial in understanding the extent to which the scheme is fulfilling its promise of providing a minimum of 100 days of employment to rural households.

From the data, it is evident that there is significant variation in the number of days of employment provided across the districts. Shopian district stands out with the highest average of 66.49 days per household, followed closely by Kulgam with 59.07 days and Anantnag with 56.61 days as shown in Figure 3. This figure suggests that in these districts, households are receiving relatively more employment days, which could be indicative of a higher demand for work or better implementation of the scheme.

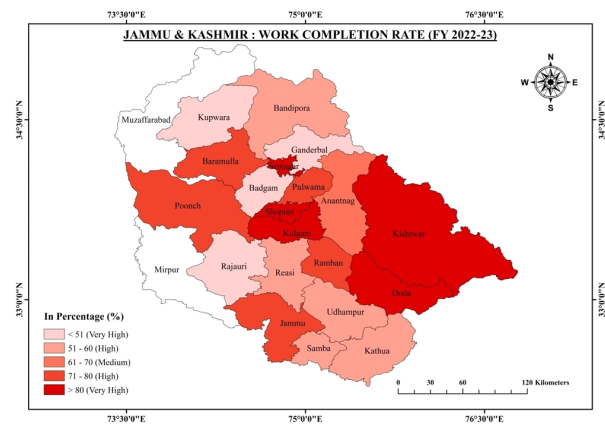
On the other end of the spectrum, Baramulla records the lowest average with just 29.63 days of employment per household. This is considerably below the scheme's goal, signaling potential issues such as low demand for work, poor implementation, or other socio-economic factors that limit the effectiveness of the scheme in this district. Other districts like Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur and Reasi also show lower averages, hovering around 32 to 33 days per household. This trend might require attention from policymakers to ensure that the intended benefits of the scheme reach these areas more effectively.

Most districts show an average of 30 to 50 days of employment per household, which is far below the 100-day

target. This shortfall could be due to various factors including limited budget allocations, insufficient job opportunities or inefficiencies in the administrative process. The variation in the number of days provided also suggests that there may be disparities in how the scheme is managed and accessed across different regions.

Overall, while some districts like Shopian and Kulgam appear to be performing relatively well in terms of providing employment days under MGNREGA, many others fall short of the scheme's objectives. Addressing these disparities could involve improving the demand for work, streamlining administrative processes and ensuring that all eligible households are aware of and can access their entitlements under the scheme. This data underscores the need for targeted interventions in districts with lower averages to enhance the overall impact of MGNREGA in Jammu & Kashmir.

3.3 Work Completion Rate



Source – Values calculated by Author (Based on data of Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-23)

Fig. 4. Work Completion Rate

The data presented in Figure 4 reflects the work completion rate percentage under the MGNREGA scheme across various districts in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This indicator is vital as it showcases the efficiency and effectiveness of the scheme's implementation in terms of completing the sanctioned works, which directly impacts the quality and sustainability of the assets created through MGNREGA.

The district of Kulgam stands out with the highest work completion rate at 88.15%, followed closely by Doda with 86.76% and Shopian with 84.45%. These high percentages indicate a strong execution of projects within these districts, suggesting robust planning, monitoring and implementation mechanisms. A high work completion rate often reflects effective management of resources and a strong commitment to the successful realization of planned activities under the

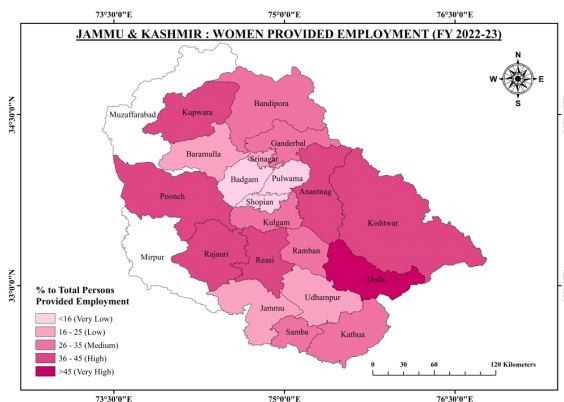
scheme.

On the other hand, Badgam records the lowest work completion rate at just 21.35%. This significantly low rate raises concerns about the challenges faced in the district regarding the execution and completion of works. Such a low completion rate might be indicative of various issues, including delays in project execution, lack of adequate resources, poor planning, or other administrative bottlenecks. Other districts with low completion rates include Ganderbal (39.01%) and Rajauri (38.01%), which also suggests the need for targeted interventions to improve the completion of sanctioned works.

Most districts show a work completion rate ranging from 50% to 80%, indicating a moderate level of efficiency in project execution. Districts like Srinagar, Kishtwar and Baramulla, with completion rates above 79%, seem to be performing well, but there is still room for improvement to reach near 100% completion.

The variation in work completion rates across the districts highlights the disparities in the implementation of MGNREGA within Jammu & Kashmir. Districts with lower completion rates might be facing specific challenges that need to be addressed through better planning, capacity building and resource allocation. On the other hand, districts with higher completion rates can serve as models for best practices that can be replicated in other areas.

3.4 Women Provided Employment



Source - Values calculated by Author (Based on data of Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-23)

Fig. 5. Women Provided Employment

The data provided in Figure 5 represents the percentage of women who were provided employment under the MGNREGA scheme across various districts in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This indicator is crucial for understanding the gender inclusivity of the scheme and how effectively it is reaching women in the region, particularly in rural areas

where employment opportunities for women are often limited.

The district of Doda leads in terms of female employment under MGNREGA, with 46.09% of the total beneficiaries being women. This suggests that Doda has been relatively successful in ensuring that women have access to employment opportunities through the scheme. Other districts with a high percentage of women employed include Kishtwar (40.56%), Rajauri (39.72%) and Poonch (39.67%). These figures indicate that these districts are making significant strides in promoting gender equality by providing employment to women.

On the other hand, several districts show alarmingly low percentages of women employed under MGNREGA. Shopian, with only 12.10% of the beneficiaries being women, records the lowest percentage, indicating significant barriers to female participation in the scheme. Other districts with low female employment percentages include Pulwama (14.21%), Badgam (14.58%) and Baramulla (17.52%). These low percentages suggest that women in these districts face considerable challenges in accessing employment under MGNREGA, which could be due to various factors such as cultural constraints, lack of awareness, or inadequate support systems.

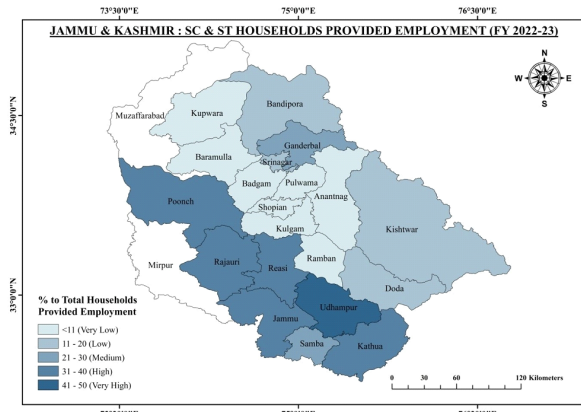
Most districts show female employment percentages ranging from 20% to 40%. While this indicates some level of participation by women, it also highlights that there is still considerable room for improvement to achieve more balanced gender representation. Districts like Anantnag (38.08%) and Kupwara (37.52%) are on the higher end of this range, suggesting relatively better access for women, but even here, there is potential to increase these figures further.

The variation in the percentage of women provided employment across the districts underscores the need for targeted interventions to ensure that the MGNREGA scheme is more inclusive of women. This might involve addressing specific barriers that prevent women from participating, such as cultural norms, lack of childcare facilities, or transportation issues. Additionally, raising awareness about the scheme's benefits and ensuring that women are actively encouraged to participate could help improve these figures.

3.5 SC and ST Households Provided Employment

The data presented in Figure 6 shows the percentage of Scheduled Caste (SCs) and Scheduled Tribe (STs) households provided employment under the MGNREGA scheme across various districts in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. This indicator is significant for understanding the scheme's reach and impact on marginalized communities, particularly SCs and STs, who often face socio-economic disadvantages.

Udhampur district emerges as the leader in terms of SC and ST households benefiting from MGNREGA, with a substantial 40.71% of the employed households belonging to these communities. This suggests that the implementation of



Source – Values calculated by Author (Based on data of Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-23)

Fig. 6. SC and ST Households Provided Employment

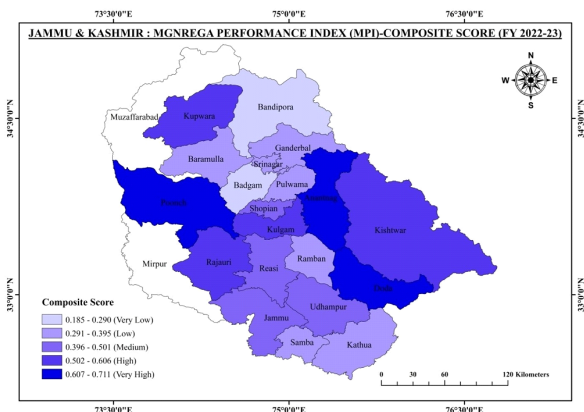
MGNREGA in Udhampur is particularly effective in reaching marginalized groups, potentially providing them with much-needed employment opportunities. Other districts with high percentages of SCs and STs households benefiting from the scheme include Jammu (37.24%), Reasi (36.91%), Rajauri (32.90%) and Poonch (31.93%). These figures reflect a strong commitment to inclusive development in these districts, ensuring that vulnerable communities are prioritized in the allocation of employment under MGNREGA.

On the other end of the spectrum, districts like Badgam (1.69%), Kulgam (2.05%), Shopian (2.90%), Baramulla (3.06%) and Kupwara (3.21%) show very low percentages of SCs and STs households benefiting from the scheme. These low figures raise concerns about the inclusivity of MGNREGA in these areas and suggest that SCs and STs might not be receiving adequate attention in these districts. This could be due to various factors, including demographic distribution, lack of awareness among these communities, or potential administrative challenges in targeting and reaching SC and ST households.

Most districts fall within a broad range of 10% to 20% of SC and ST households benefiting from the scheme, indicating a moderate level of inclusion. Districts like Kishtwar (16.60%) and Doda (15.57%) show a relatively balanced reach, though there is still room for improvement to ensure that these marginalized communities are adequately served by the scheme.

3.6 MPI-Index

The data presented in Table 1 and Figure 7 outlines various dimension indices for different indicators under the MGNREGA scheme in Jammu & Kashmir for the financial year 2022-23. Each district is evaluated based on specific indices, including Employment Generation Index (EGI), Women Par-



Source – values calculated by Author (Based on data of Ministry of Rural Development, 2022-23)

Fig. 7. MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI) Composite Index

ticipation Employment Index (WPEI), SC/ST Employment Inclusion Index (SCSTEII), Average Days Employment Provided Index (ADEPI) and Work Performance Index (WPI) as shown in Table 1. These indices are then combined to generate an overall MGNREGA Performance Index-Composite Score (MPI) for each district as presented in Figure 7. This composite score provides a holistic view of how well MGNREGA is being implemented across the district.

3.7 Very High and High Performing Districts

Doda, Poonch and Anantnag fall in the category of very high performance in terms of MGNREGA scheme. Doda emerges as the top-performing district with an MPI of 0.711 as shown in Figure 7. This district scores the highest on WPEI (1.000), indicating exceptional performance in women's participation in employment under MGNREGA. Doda also excels in EGI (0.853) and WPI (0.979), reflecting strong employment generation and work performance. The district's balanced performance across multiple indices suggests that MGNREGA is effectively meeting its objectives in Doda. With a literacy rate of 64%, Doda district faces educational challenges that limit access to formal employment, thus encouraging people to participate in unskilled employment. Poonch scores highly on SCSTEII (0.775) and WPEI (0.792), indicating a focus on inclusivity and gender participation. The MGNREGA scheme has proven particularly effective here, providing essential employment opportunities and enhancing economic stability for the population, especially in areas with lower literacy levels. In its initial phase, MGNREGA was launched in 2006 in the three most underdeveloped districts of the state: Doda, Kupwara, and Poonch. The program was subsequently expanded to two additional districts, Anantnag and Jammu, in the second phase, and eventually extended to the entire state during the third phase in 2008-09⁽⁹⁾.

Table 1. Dimension indices for different indicators under the MGNREGA scheme

S.No.	Districts	Dimension Index					MGNREGA Performance Index - Composite Score (MPI)
		EGI	WPEI	SCSTEI	ADEPI	WPI	
1	Anantnag	0.930	0.898	0.087	0.732	0.686	0.666
2	Badgam	0.382	0.136	0.000	0.408	0.000	0.185
3	Bandipora	0.175	0.123	0.283	0.229	0.551	0.272
4	Baramulla	0.493	0.215	0.035	0.000	0.868	0.322
5	Doda	0.853	1.000	0.356	0.369	0.979	0.711
6	Ganderbal	0.194	0.162	0.513	0.429	0.264	0.312
7	Jammu	0.216	0.112	0.911	0.067	0.838	0.429
8	Kathua	0.300	0.200	0.746	0.098	0.563	0.382
9	Kishtwar	0.475	0.493	0.382	0.643	0.892	0.577
10	Kulgam	0.423	0.365	0.009	0.799	1.000	0.519
11	Kupwara	1.000	0.951	0.039	0.519	0.379	0.578
12	Poonch	0.785	0.792	0.775	0.151	0.750	0.651
13	Pulwama	0.244	0.083	0.100	0.449	0.766	0.329
14	Rajauri	0.823	0.830	0.800	0.265	0.249	0.593
15	Ramban	0.245	0.201	0.220	0.181	0.813	0.332
16	Reasi	0.259	0.245	0.903	0.097	0.571	0.415
17	Samba	0.049	0.041	0.736	0.285	0.506	0.323
18	Shopian	0.221	0.062	0.031	1.000	0.945	0.452
19	Srinagar	0.000	0.000	0.305	0.577	0.891	0.355
20	Udhampur	0.231	0.128	1.000	0.065	0.577	0.400

Source- Values calculated by Author.

Doda and Poonch have emerged as the best performers in the MGNREGA scheme, which aligns with their high rural populations of 92%, and 91%, respectively. The scheme's success in these districts can be attributed to the large proportion of rural residents who rely heavily on MGNREGA for employment and income support, reflecting the scheme's crucial role in enhancing livelihoods in predominantly rural areas.

Kupwara, Kishtwar, Kulgam and Rajauri are also strong performers with MPIs ranging between 0.502 and 0.606. Kupwara, with a perfect EGI score of 1.000, shows an excellent capacity for employment generation. However, the district has moderate to low scores in other indices, indicating areas for potential improvement. Kishtwar (MPI 0.577) and Rajauri (MPI 0.593) falls in the category of high performers. Kishtwar has balanced scores across all indices, particularly in WPEI (0.493) and WPI (0.892), suggesting a well-rounded approach to MGNREGA implementation. Rajauri, with a high SCSTEII score (0.800), reflects strong inclusivity but has lower scores in ADEPI (0.265) and WPI (0.249), indicating challenges in sustaining employment and work performance. Kulgam shows a perfect score in WPI (1.000), indicating excellent work performance, but lags significantly in SCSTEII (0.009), and suggesting poor inclusion of SC/ST households. This may be because of low ST population (6.25%) and absence of

Scheduled Caste population.

3.8 Medium Performing Districts

The districts falling in this category are Jammu, Reasi, Shopian and Udhampur recording an index value ranging between 0.396 to 0.501. Shopian excels in ADEPI (1.000) and WPI (0.945) but has low scores in EGI (0.221) and SCSTEI (0.031), indicating disparities in employment generation and inclusivity. The district performs best in terms of providing average days of employment per household (66.49 days). However, it lags behind in terms of female participation (12.10%) and scheduled caste and scheduled tribe household participation (2.90%). The reason responsible for poor inclusivity is miniscule presence of Scheduled caste population (0.02%) in the district. Jammu district which is the winter capital of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir falls in medium category having an index value of 0.429. The district fares quite well in terms of WPI (0.838) and SCSTI (0.911). The district provides employment to 90% of the rural households and the average days of employment provided per household is quite less at 32.10 days. This might be due to the reason that the district has about 50% urban population which reduces the demand of the rural-based government scheme and people often migrate to urban areas to seek better employment opportunities and remuneration.

3.9 Very Low and Low-Performing Districts

Badgam and Bandipora are among the lowest-performing districts with MPIs of 0.185 and 0.272, respectively. Badgam scores very low across all indices, especially in WPEI (0.136) and SCSTEII (0.000), indicating severe issues in gender participation and inclusivity. The work completion rate is quite low in comparison to other districts. Moreover, only 1.69% of Scheduled Caste and scheduled Tribe households were provided employment under MGNREGA scheme in the financial year 2022-23. This is because the district has very low Scheduled Tribe population (3.17%) and a miniscule of Scheduled Caste population (0.05%). Bandipora is the second worst performer in terms of overall performance in MGNREGA scheme with an index value of 0.272. This district recorded a low performance in terms of average days of employment provided per household (38.07 days) as shown in Figure 3.

Sriangar, Samba, Ramban, Pulwama, Kathua and Baramulla falls in the category of low performers having a index value below 0.291 as shown in Figure 7. Srinagar scores zero in EGI and WPEI, reflecting poor employment generation and women's participation. Baramulla, Ramban and Srinagar are the only districts in the entire Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir who have provided employment to less than 90 % of the households under this scheme in the year 2022-23. One of the reasons responsible for poor performance of Srinagar is its very low rural population (1.40%) as this scheme is primarily for rural areas. Samba (MPI 0.323) and Pulwama (MPI 0.329) also show low performance. Samba has a strong SCSTEII (0.736) but scores low in EGI (0.049) and WPEI (0.041) as shown in Table 1, suggesting a lack of employment generation and female participation. One of the reasons responsible for low WPEI in Samba district might be higher female literacy (73.64%) which does not encourage female participation as MGNREGA scheme provides unskilled employment. Pulwama has moderate scores across the board but lacks strong performance in any single index, reflecting an overall weak

implementation of MGNREGA.

The variation in the composite MPI across districts highlights significant disparities in the implementation of MGNREGA in Jammu & Kashmir. High-performing districts like Doda, Poonch and Kupwara are successfully leveraging the scheme to provide employment, promote inclusivity and ensure high work performance. In contrast, low-performing districts such as Badgam and Srinagar struggle with fundamental issues like employment generation, gender participation and inclusivity.

4 Conclusion

The analysis of MGNREGA's implementation in Jammu & Kashmir reveals distinct district-wise patterns and variations. Districts like Doda, Kishtwar and Poonch exhibit high percentages of households provided employment, reflecting strong scheme implementation and high demand for work. However, most districts fall short of the 100-day employment target, with Shopian and Kulgam leading in average days of employment but still only offering around 66 days. Work completion rates vary significantly, with Kulgam, Doda and Shopian performing well, while Badgam and Ganderbal lag behind, indicating disparities in project execution. Gender participation also varies, with Doda and Kishtwar showing higher female involvement, contrasted by low rates in Shopian and Pulwama, highlighting regional challenges in promoting inclusivity. The inclusion of SC and ST households is strong in districts like Udhampur and Jammu but minimal in Badgam and Kulgam, pointing to the need for better outreach in these areas. The composite MGNREGA Performance Index (MPI) further underscores these variations, with Doda, Poonch and Anantnag as very high performers, while Badgam and Srinagar struggle, partly due to their rural-urban composition. Overall, these district-wise patterns emphasize the need for targeted interventions to address regional disparities and enhance the scheme's overall effectiveness.

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