

# Evaluating The Efficacy of The Institutions and Methods Used to Educate the Public About the Issue of Job Cards, Employment, And Registration in Baramulla District

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## Abstract

The present research offers a comprehensive insight into the significance of rural areas in India's development, focusing on the potential of rural India and the challenges faced by urban areas due to migration, particularly in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. It establishes the importance of rural regions as safety nets and showcases the rise of individuals from these areas in various fields. It delves into the definition of rural areas, their economic activities, and classifications by different organizations, while presenting historical data on poverty, unemployment, and the contribution of rural areas to India's GDP. The essence of rural development is detailed, including provision of basic necessities, respect for individuals, and sustainable employment, keeping in mind the agriculture-dependent nature of rural India. This introduction chapter further explores a plethora of government programs aimed at rural development. These include initiatives such as the Small Farmers Development Agencies (SFDA), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), the Twenty Point Program (TPP), and the Food for Work Program (FWP), all of which collectively address economic empowerment, infrastructure development, and skill enhancement in rural areas. Historical programs such as the Rural Manpower Program and the High-Yielding Variety Program (HYVP) are also discussed. The introduction chapter specifically highlights the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) as a landmark initiative providing wage employment to rural households. This initiative is scrutinized closely, with focus on its features like muster rolls, worksite facilities, wage rates, and social audits. The research plan is structured meticulously with well-defined objectives and hypotheses concentrated on evaluating the impact of the MGNREGA program in the Ganderbal and Baramulla districts. It incorporates diverse research areas such as education, variables affecting performance, and stakeholder perspectives.

**Materials and methods** The study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate the implementation and planning of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in two districts of Kashmir Valley, namely Ganderbal and Baramula. These districts were chosen based on their performance indicators related to MGNREGA.

### 1.1. Data Collection

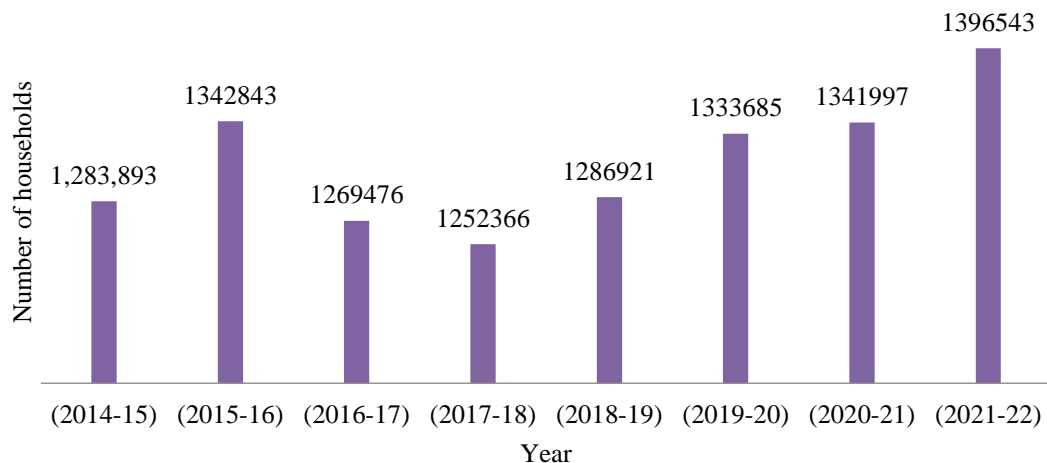
Primary data is collected through structured questionnaires administered to a diverse group of MGNREGA beneficiaries, including men and women of varying ages, marital statuses, and educational backgrounds. In addition, semi-structured interviews with randomly chosen beneficiaries are conducted to gather in-depth insights. Secondary data is collected from various sources, including the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India reports, MGNREGA’s website, and other relevant publications.

#### 2.1.1 Assessing the performance at the state level

Performance at the state level is a crucial aspect of the employment and registration process. It reflects the efficiency and effectiveness of the program in reaching and serving its target population. The performance can be evaluated by various metrics such as the number of households registered for job cards, the number of job cards issued, employment demanded, employment offered, and the total person days generated. These metrics provide valuable insights into the program's impact and the areas where improvement is needed.

##### 2.1.1.1. Household registered for Job card in J&K

The primary objective of Mgnrega is to provide employment that is unachievable if the beneficiaries do not ask for the work. Applied Job cards or Registration represents the willingness and need of rural people. The registration process is conducted by the Gram Panchayat. People can fill up a form, register with a blank page or inform verbally to the Panchayat. The increasing demand for guaranteed employment in the state of J&K is shown in Figure 2.1.



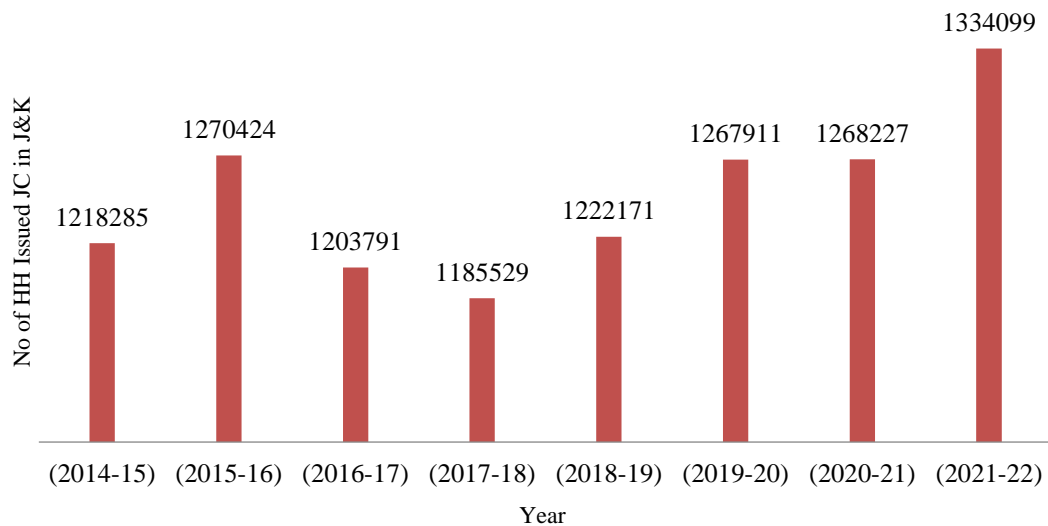
**Figure 2.1 Number of Households Registered for job card in J&K**

Figure 2.1 reveals that the application for job cards by households (HH) has decreased for the year 2016-17 and 2017-18. Firstly rising in the year 2015-16 to 13,42,843 from 12,83,893 in the year 2014-15 (a rise of 4.5 %). In the year 2016-17, the JC Applied number plummeted to 12,69,476 (a fall of 5.4%). The number fell again in the year 2017-18, and it’s the lowest number in our range of data. It reached 12,52,366 in the year 2017-18. In the year 2018-19, the number of JC applicants rose to 12,86,921. Again the numbers grew in the year 2019-20 to 13,33,685. 2020-21 records a marginal increase, and

13,41,997 HH were registered. In the year 2021-22, the JC applied reached the highest numbers amongst the range of data taken, recorded at 13,96,543(a rise of 4%); it's the most number of JC applied in the last seven years. From 2015 to 2022, the registration number grew by (8.7%). We can see the decrease in the number of applicants is not a natural trend. The reason for the fall in the year 2016-17 and 2017-18 can be attributed to Demonetization, as most economic activities suffered during that period. Whereas the rising numbers of the past three years can be attributed to reverse migration caused due to covid-19.

### 2.1.1.2. Household Issued Job Card

Figure2.2 presents a comprehensive overview of the number of household job cards issued in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir. These job cards are an important aspect of the government's efforts to provide employment opportunities and financial stability to families in the region. The data reflects the progress made and highlights areas where improvement is needed to ensure that all eligible households receive the benefits they are entitled.



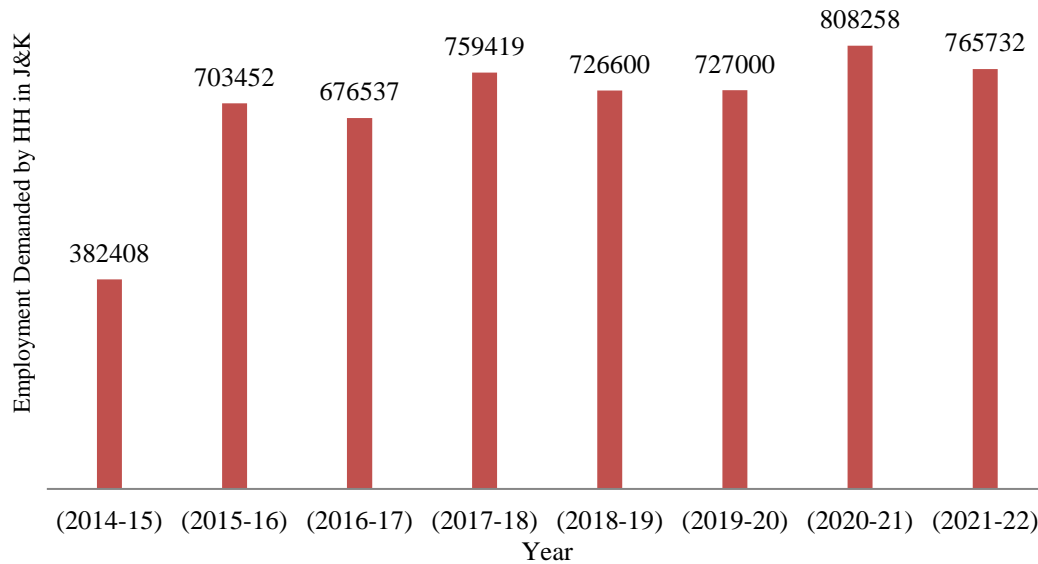
**Figure2.2 Number of Household issued job cards in Jammu and Kashmir**

Figure2.2 shows that in the year 2014-15, the number of Job cards issued was 12,18,285. In the following year, 2015-16, the number of JC issued increased to 12,70,424 (a rise of 4.2%). In the year 2016-17, the Issued number of JC fell to 12,03,791. A similar trend followed in the year 2017-18, where only 11,85,529 JC were issued as a number of Applicants deceased also. The deficit of application to issuing of JC was 66,837, and the rate of the deficit from the past year marginally increased. However, an increasing trend of more applicants started catching up, and in the year 2018-19, 12,22,171 JC were issued. It shows an increase of a mere 3% from last year. The number of JC issued in the year 2019-20 rose exponentially to 12,67,911. From 2015 to 2022, the JC-issued numbers rose by 9.5%. In the year 2020-21 the number of JC issued rose marginally and was recorded at 12,68,227. The number of people who were not issued the JC was 73,770 (the highest in the last six years). In the year 2021-22, the number of JC issued was 13,27,328 highest in the last seven years.

### 2.1.1.3. Employment Demanded by Household

After applying for the Job Cards and eventually being issued one, this record helps us to understand how many households demanded work after getting registered. The status of Employment demanded by

households in J&k is shown in Figure2.3. It can be seen there is a vast difference between the number of HH registered and the demand for employment by HH. Everyone who registers is guaranteed 100 days of work (skilled or unskilled).

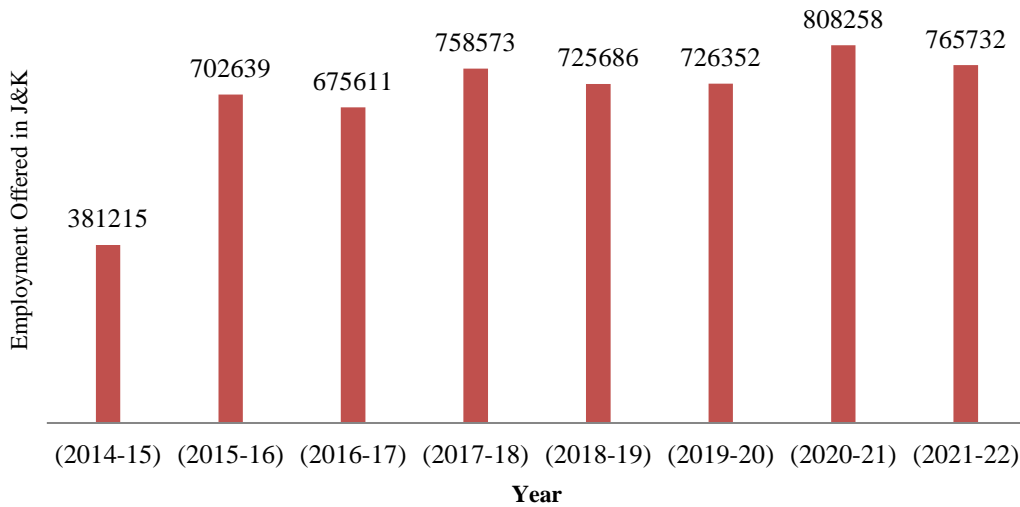


**Figure2.3 Employment demanded by household in J&k**

Figure2.3 shows that here is a vast difference between the number of HH-issued JC and the number of HH-demanded employment. This shows many people, in spite of having a JC, never even get to demand the work. Starting with the year 2014-15, the number of HH demanded work was 3,82,408. The next year which was 2015-16, the number of people demanding work almost doubled and stood at 7,03,452 (a rise of 83%, the highest single-year rise in the taken data). In the year 2016-17, the demand for work reduced marginally, and 6,76,537 HH demanded employment. This number rose again substantially in the year 2017-18, and 7,59,419 HH demanded work. Since 2014 the demand for work has either decreased marginally or just kept increasing. The number of HH demanding work in the year 2018-19 marginally decreased to 7,27,000. In the year 2019-20, the numbers rose marginally, and 7,27,000 HH demanded employment. The year 2020-21 has seen a rise in the data in every aspect of Mgnrega. For the first time in the past six years, more than 800,000 HH demanded employment (8,08,258), followed by 7,65,732 HH demanding employment in the year 2021-22. From 2015 to 2022, the employment demanded rose by 100.2%.

#### 2.1.4. Employment Offered to Household in J&K

It's the mandate of the Mgnrega to provide 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to households. The adult member of rural India is willing to do unskilled manual jobs. Generation of employment opportunities and asset creation are major qualitative results of MGNREGA. It has helped our large agrarian population to sustain their lives in the rural system. Figure2.4 shows Employment offered in Jammu and Kashmir.



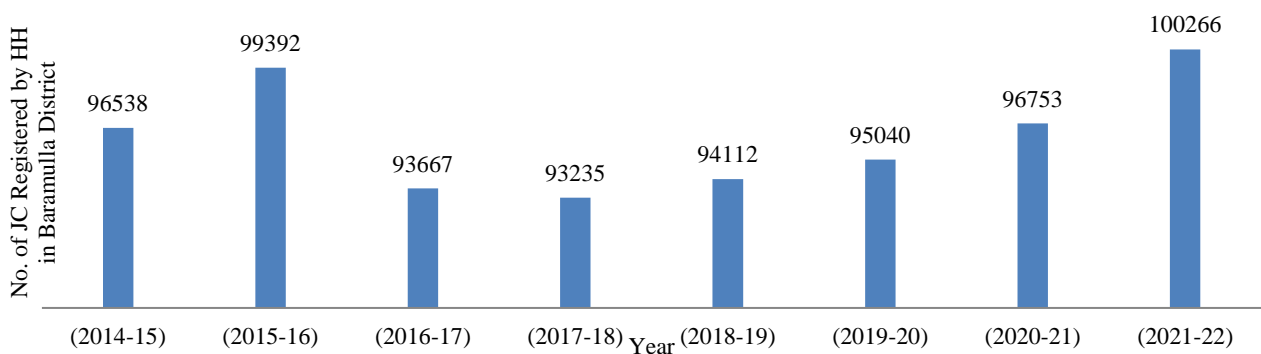
**Figure2.4 Employment offered in Jammu and Kashmir**

Figure2.4 reveals that the year 2014-15 records the lowest number of HH offered employment in J&K in our data, recorded at 3,81,215. The next year employment offered to HH in J&K stood at 7,02,639 (a rise of 84.3%). That’s a huge spike in a single year. In the year 2016-17, the numbers were marginally low and were recorded at 6,75,611. We can see that difference between the number of HH that demanded work and were offered employment is quite remarkable, and the deficit is usually low. Employment offered to HH in the year 2017-18 was 7,58,573. This number marginally dropped in the year 2018-19 and was recorded at 7,25,686 (a drop of 4.5%). Then in the year 2019-20, the number of HH offered employment dropped and reached 7,26,352. In the year 2020-21, we see the largest number of HH offered with employment in the last six years, and it reached 8,08,258 (the first time passing the 80,000 mark, and it got more than double in just six years starting from 2014). The next year, i.e., 2021-22, the numbers were marginally lower than the current year, yet it’s the second most number of HH offered employment since 2014, recorded at 7,65,732. From 2015 to 2022, the employment offered rose by 100.8%.

**2.1.2. Assessing the performance at the District Level (Baramulla )**

**2.1.2.1. Number of Job Cards Registered in Baramulla District**

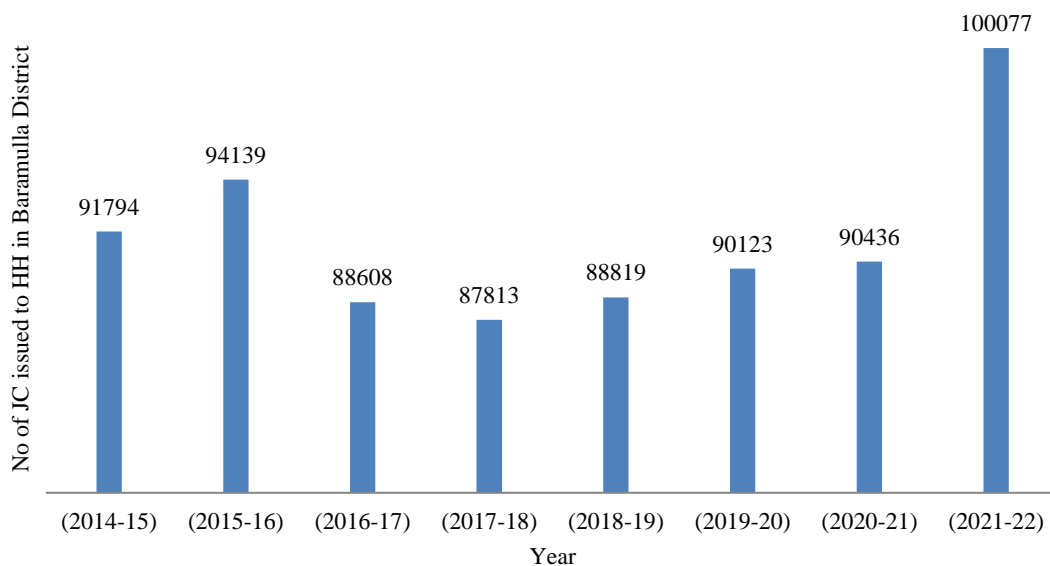
The number of job cards registered by households in the district of Baramulla is shown in Figure2.6.



**Figure2.6 number of job cards registered by household in the district of Baramulla**

Figure 2.6 reveals that in the year 2014-15, the number of HH registered was 96,538, and in the next year, 2015-16, it increased and reached 99,392 (a rise of 2.95%). In the year 2016-17, the JC registration numbers plummeted to 93,667 (a fall of 5.76%), the numbers fell again marginally in the year 2017-18, and it's the lowest number in our range of data. It reached 93,235 in the year 2017-18. In the year 2018-19, the number of JC registration rose to 94,112. Again the numbers grew in the year 2019-20 and reached 95,040. 2020-21 records a marginal increase and 96,753 JC were registered. In the year 2021-22, the JC application reached the highest numbers amongst the range of data taken, recorded at 1,00,266 (a rise of 3.63%); it's the most number of JC registered in the last seven years. From 2015 to 2022, the HH registered rose by 3.8%. We can see the decrease in the number of registration is not a natural trend. The reason for the fall in the year 2016-17 and 2017-18 can be attributed to Demonetization, as most economic activities suffered during that period. Whereas the rising numbers of the past three years can be attributed to reverse migration caused due to covid-19.

2.1.2.2. Number of Job Cards issued to Households in the Baramulla district: The number of Job cards issued is an important indicator for determining the performance of MGNERGA in a region. Figure 2.7 represent the no of job card issued in the household in Baramulla district.

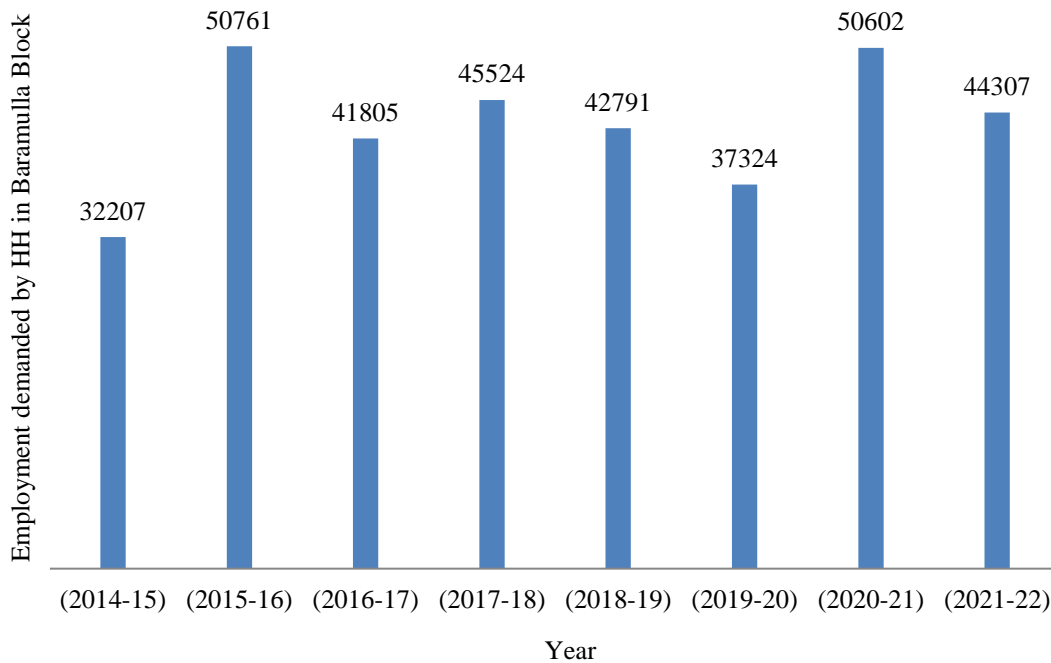


**Figure 2. 7 No of issued to the household in Baramulla district**

Figure 2.7 shows that in the year 2014-15, the number of Job cards issued in the district was 91,794. In the following year, 2015-16, the number of JC issued increased to 94,139 (a rise of 2.5%). In the year 2016-17, the Issued number of JC fell significantly to 88,608 (a fall of 5.8%). A similar trend followed in the year 2017-18, where only 87,813 JC were issued as a number of Applicants decreased also during those years. However, an increasing trend of more applicants started catching up, and in the year 2018-19 and 88,819 JC were issued. It shows an increase of merely 1.1% from last year. The number of JC issued in the year 2019-20 rose to 90,123.

In the year 2020-21, the number of JC issued rose marginally and was recorded at 90,436. In the year 2021-22, the number of JC issued was 1,00,077 (a rise of 10.66%) highest in the last seven years. From 2015 to 2022, the JC issued to HH rose by 9.02%

2.2.3. Employment Demanded by Household in Baramulla District Figure2.8 represents the data on employment demanded by the HH annually in the district of Baramulla.



**Figure2. 8 Employment demanded by households in Baramulla district**

Figure2.8 shows that there is a vast difference between the number of HH issued with a JC and the number of HH-demanded employment. This shows many people, in spite of having a JC, never even get to demand the work. Starting with the year 2014-15 the number of HH demanded for work were 32,207. The next year which is 2015-16 the number of people demanding for work rose exponentially and stood at 50,761 (a rise of 57.60%, highest single year rise in the taken data). In the year 2016-17 the demand for work reduced marginally and 41,805 HH demanded for employment. This number rose again substantially in the year 2017-18 and 45,524 HH demanded for work. Since 2014 the demand for work has either decreased marginally or just kept increasing. The number of HH demanding for work in the year 2018-19 marginally decreased to 42,791. In the year 2019-20 the numbers dropped significantly and 37,324 HH demanded employment (a fall of 12.77%). The year 2020-21 has seen a rise in the data in every aspect of Mgnrega. 50,602 HH demanded employment in the year 2020-21. Whereas in the year 2021-22 the numbers dropped to 44,307. Since 2015 to 2022 the employment demanded by HH rose by 38.19%.

### Summary of the Research

The study aimed to evaluate the efficacy of institutions and methods in educating the public about job cards, employment, and registration under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in Jammu and Kashmir, focusing on Baramulla and Ganderbal districts.

3.1.1. Fluctuation in Registrations and Issuance of Job Cards: The number of households registered for job cards in Jammu and Kashmir has fluctuated over the years. There was an overall increase in registrations from 2015 to 2022. Notably, there was a dip in registrations in 2016-17 and 2017-18, which



was possibly due to external factors like demonetization and the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of job cards issued followed similar patterns.

3.1.2. Gap Between Registration and Employment Demand: There is a significant discrepancy between the number of households registered and those actively demanding employment. Many households did not demand work despite having job cards. However, there is an overall upward trend in demand for employment over the years.

3.1.3. Variability in Employment Offered: The employment offered to households varied, with an increase noted in 2020-21. Employment opportunities through MGNREGA are vital for sustaining rural livelihoods. The aim of MGNREGA is to provide 100 days of guaranteed employment, but the data shows that only a small percentage (5.83%) have achieved this target.

3.1.4. Performance at District Level: Similar trends of registrations and job cards issuance were observed in Baramulla district .

3.1.5. Performance at Village Level: In Ganderbal, Tulmulla-B village performed the highest in terms of registrations and employment demand, whereas Drend performed the lowest. In Baramulla, Kanispora-A had the highest registrations, Jalsheeri had the highest employment demand, and Gutyar performed the lowest on both counts.

3.1.6. Dissatisfaction with Registration and Job Card Process: More than 46% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the registration and job card process, citing delays, difficulties, and allegations of corruption.

3.1.7. Variable Participation in Gram Sabha Meetings: Regular participation in Gram Sabha meetings was variable across villages. Higher participation was observed in Tulmulla-B and Jalsheeri, whereas Gutyar and Drend had lower participation. Factors like lack of awareness and limited community engagement were reported to affect participation.

3.1.8. Issues with Muster Roll Maintenance: Approximately half of the respondents reported that muster rolls were regularly updated. The other half expressed dissatisfaction, citing lack of transparency and irregular record-keeping.

Overall, the results indicate that there is a fluctuation in the registration and issuance of job cards, a gap between registration and employment demand, and variable employment opportunities under MGNREGA in Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, there is dissatisfaction with the registration process, variable participation in Gram Sabha meetings, and issues with muster roll maintenance. These findings suggest that there is room for improvement in the functioning of institutions and methods employed in educating the public and facilitating the MGNREGA scheme at the ground level. It is evident that the level of awareness among beneficiaries varies. While some are well informed about MGNREGA, others are less aware of its provisions and benefits. The disparities in awareness levels can be attributed to various factors such as the effectiveness of communication channels, literacy rates, and the socio-economic status of beneficiaries. Tailoring information dissemination methods and utilizing community-based approaches to raise awareness can be beneficial. The study suggests that authorities need to undertake more targeted initiatives for awareness generation among the rural populace.

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