



# 'NATURE AND EXTENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JAMMU AND DODA DISTRICTS'

ANCHAL KUMAR .DR. MANOJ BHATT , PALLAVI RAJPUT  
RESEARCH SCHOLAR , PROFESSOR , RESEARCH SCHOLAR  
JAMMU UNIVERSITY

## INTRODUCTION

Unemployment has been a significant concern in the development discourse of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), characterized by unique socio-political and economic challenges. As a region marked by persistent conflicts and structural imbalances, the issue of unemployment has profound implications on the well-being and stability of its population. The state faces a dual burden: a rapidly growing population with limited job creation and structural unemployment driven by skill mismatches and lack of industrial growth. According to the **Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022-23**, the unemployment rate in J&K remains higher than the national average, particularly among the youth and women, highlighting an alarming trend of underutilization of human capital. The districts of Jammu and Doda, though geographically close, present contrasting economic landscapes. Jammu, the region's winter capital, is comparatively urbanized, with better access to education and employment opportunities. On the other hand, Doda, characterized by its hilly terrain and rural dominance, faces acute challenges in infrastructure and skill development, making it highly vulnerable to unemployment. This divergence underscores the need to analyze unemployment patterns through a comparative lens.

Unemployment is not merely an economic challenge but also a social issue that exacerbates poverty, fuels migration, and increases dependency ratios. The youth in J&K are particularly affected, with a significant section displaying frustration over limited access to opportunities, as reported by **Khan et al. (2023)**.

Furthermore, the pandemic-induced economic slowdown has amplified pre-existing vulnerabilities, disproportionately affecting rural districts like Doda.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Within India, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) has been a strategically significant and complicated socioeconomic area. Geographical limitations, restricted industrial development, and protracted political upheaval are some of the region's

particular difficulties that have had a major influence on its economic growth and job creation. J&K has historically relied on public sector employment, agriculture, and handicrafts; nevertheless, the economy's lack of diversification has limited job development, especially for the region's expanding young population. The region's excessive reliance on government jobs and little private sector involvement, which worsen unemployment, are highlighted in the Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023).

The substantial skill gap in the economy, where many young people lack the technical and vocational abilities needed by expanding businesses, further complicates the job situation. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has highlighted this mismatch between education and employment in reports that show that, despite the growing need for skilled labour in urban areas like Jammu, rural districts like Doda find it difficult to take advantage of these economic opportunities because of a lack of infrastructure and education.

## UNEMPLOYMENT ISSUES IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

J&K unemployment is a multifaceted issue with socio-political and demographic components in addition to economic ones. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) reports that J&K's unemployment rate is continuously higher than the national average, with recent years seeing urban youth unemployment rates above 20%. The gendered aspect of the unemployment problem is further highlighted by the PLFS 2021–22, which also showed that women in J&K had one of the lowest labour force participation rates in India.

The seasonality of farming and the dependence on subsistence farming in rural regions lead to underemployment and hidden unemployment. Despite being more developed, urban regions like Jammu still struggle with issues including skill mismatches and employment saturation. Furthermore, the region's capacity to take advantage of contemporary employment prospects, such those in IT and e-commerce, has been hampered by the digital divide and low technology adoption.

The government launched a number of programs, including the industry Development Scheme (IDS) 2021, to encourage industry growth and employment creation after Article 370 was repealed in 2019. The effectiveness of these initiatives is still up for debate, though, as rural communities sometimes lack access to these advantages compared to their metropolitan counterparts. Because of their unique socioeconomic and geographic traits, which mirror the wider inequalities within Jammu and Kashmir, the districts of Jammu and Doda were chosen for this comparative research. The two districts give a singular chance to examine the complex nature of unemployment in various contexts as they serve as opposing illustrations of the region's growth paths.

### Jammu: A Semi-Urbanized Hub

An administrative and economic center, Jammu serves as the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir. It benefits from a varied job base, access to educational institutions, and rather sophisticated infrastructure. The tertiary sector is the main driver of the district's economy, with commerce, services, and tourism all making substantial contributions. Because of its semi-urban nature, Jammu is also well-positioned to serve as a hub for public and private sector investments and job-creation activities.

With important highways and railroads connecting it to other regions of the nation, the district has improved connectivity. Compared to rural places like Doda, the employment market is more active due to these infrastructure benefits. The district is crucial for analyzing urban unemployment trends since it still faces issues like job saturation and skill mismatches, especially among educated millennials.

### **Doda: A Rural and Marginalized Region**

A very different image is painted by Doda, which is situated in the charming Chenab Valley. The district, which is primarily rural and has mountainous terrain, has major developmental obstacles. Its economy is predominantly agricultural, heavily dependent on seasonal migration and subsistence farming. Doda is one of the more impoverished districts in Jammu & Kashmir because to its limited access to industrialization and poor infrastructure, which further limit job prospects.

Doda's economic marginalization is made worse by its remote location. The district's integration into larger economic activity is hampered by inadequate road connections and a lack of strong communication networks. The workforce's employability is further restricted by the absence of skill development initiatives and vocational training facilities. Due to the extreme unemployment, young people in the district frequently relocate to other areas in pursuit of seasonal or low-paying work, as noted in the Doda District Rural Development Report (2023).

### **Contrasting Demographic and Economic Profiles**

This analysis is made more challenging by the differences in the economies and demographics of Jammu and Doda. The workforce in Jammu is more equipped for formal employment because of the state's higher literacy rate and easier access to higher education. Doda, on the other hand, faces a lack of work opportunity diversity due to its lower literacy rates and primarily rural populace.

Due to its urbanization and administrative significance, Jammu receives a comparatively greater influx of government initiatives, investments, and resources that are intended to create jobs. However, when it comes to development priorities, Doda continues to be a peripheral area, frequently falling behind in terms of industrial and economic progress.

### **Socio-Cultural and Gender Dynamics**

The sociocultural and gender factors influencing unemployment provide still another important justification for choosing these locations. Despite ongoing obstacles, women have greater opportunity to engage in the workforce in Jammu's semi-urban setting. In Doda, women's access to education and involvement in the labour sector are further restricted by traditional patriarchal systems, which makes unemployment especially severe for rural women.

### **Policy Implications and Comparative Insights**

An opportunity to investigate how regional differences impact unemployment and pinpoint the structural obstacles impeding job development is presented by the comparison of Jammu and Doda. Policymakers may create plans to

duplicate similar achievements in rural and impoverished places like Doda by comprehending the elements that lead to the comparatively better job situation in Jammu. On the other hand, examining the particular difficulties Doda has encountered can assist in locating areas that require focused interventions and gaps in the application of policies. In order to achieve balanced growth throughout the union territory, it is crucial to resolve regional differences in job possibilities, according to the Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023). This dual viewpoint also supports national objectives to lessen regional disparities and encourage inclusive growth.

### **Importance of Understanding the Nature and Extent of Unemployment in the Region**

Because it has a direct impact on the socioeconomic structure, regional stability, and general development of this special region, it is important to comprehend the type and magnitude of unemployment in Jammu

and Kashmir. Here, Unemployment is more than just an economic statistic; it is a complex problem that is entwined with long-standing socio-political issues and geographic limitations. High unemployment rates, especially among young people with education, have caused widespread dissatisfaction, which has had repercussions including increasing migration, a depletion of human capital, and a greater reliance on government aid. Lack of industrialization, inadequate infrastructure, and an excessive dependence on subsistence farming which frequently leads to disguised unemployment and seasonal migration all contribute to unemployment in rural areas like Doda. Semi-urban areas like Jammu, on the other hand, struggle with issues including job saturation, underemployment, and skill mismatches that make it difficult for the area to properly use its educated people, even if they have more access to infrastructure and educational resources. Given the sociopolitical background of Jammu and Kashmir, the importance of tackling unemployment there becomes even more clear. Historically, the region's economic disempowerment has fueled discontent and alienation, making governance and development initiatives even more challenging. Developing focused solutions that support fair development requires a thorough grasp of unemployment trends, including demographic, regional, and sectoral aspects. For instance, in order to absorb the skilled labour, metropolitan centers like Jammu need policies that support private-sector growth and entrepreneurship, while rural regions need investments in infrastructural development, agricultural innovation, and vocational training. Furthermore, the low percentage of female labour force participation, particularly in rural regions, emphasizes the necessity of gender-sensitive employment policies that empower women and support inclusive economic growth. The economic and social cohesiveness of the area are also more broadly impacted by unemployment. According to the Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023), the region's high reliance on government employment highlights the urgent need for job diversification. In addition to fostering resilience against economic shocks, a comprehensive strategy that tackles the systemic causes of unemployment can lessen reliance on the public sector. Furthermore, a better grasp of unemployment patterns may guide policy decisions that enhance employment quality while simultaneously generating new jobs, guaranteeing that possibilities are long- lasting and in line with the economic capacity of the area. Jammu and Kashmir can create a basis for long- term peace and prosperity, improve its human capital, and open the door for sustainable development by tackling unemployment holistically.

By analysing the particular possibilities and problems found in the districts of Jammu and Doda, this research seeks to offer the insights required to accomplish these goals.

With an emphasis on identifying demographic differences, educational attainments, and structural impediments to work,



this research attempts to investigate the kind and magnitude of unemployment in the districts of Jammu and Doda. The research aims to provide specific insights into policy solutions that might reduce unemployment while promoting equitable development in the region by using a comparative methodology.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research on unemployment has been crucial, particularly in areas like Jammu and Kashmir with complicated socioeconomic and political circumstances. Numerous studies have examined the complex relationship between unemployment and its structural, demographic, and socioeconomic aspects. Ali and Wani (2021) claim that a large youth bulge and the inability of an increasing number of educated people to find acceptable work are the main features of J&K's unemployment problem. Limited industrialization and a dependence on traditional vocations, especially in rural areas like Doda, worsen this situation.

According to Khan et al. (2022), a significant prevalence of underemployment in the area is caused by skill mismatches, when the educational system does not match market demands. The report also pointed out that although rural regions struggle with poor connection and infrastructure, which limit access to new employment markets, metropolitan centers like Jammu confront issues with job saturation. Similar to this, Rashid (2020) looked at gender differences in the workplace and pointed out that cultural norms, restricted mobility, and a lack of chances in both rural and urban areas are some of the other obstacles that women in J&K must overcome. (Raj Krishna 1973) In his work he concluded that the phenomenon of a positive growth in unemployment is associated with a positive growth in output. It also clears up some issues in the endless controversy over the definition and measurement of unemployment in a prevailing agrarian household economy (Fifth Quinquennial survey NSS Fiftieth Round 1993-94) Employment and Unemployment in India examine labour force participation pattern for India and its major states as well as for various consumer spending level, education level, age group and other correlates. (Employment and training paper by Pravin visaria 1998) examine the contribution of ILO'S program of action to youth unemployment. (Sehgal, Gaurav and Aima 2011) concluded that there are certain one changing trends in the job profile of Jammu and Kashmir. The state's employed patterns have changed from agricultural sector (primary sector) to the services sector (tertiary sector) without development in the manufacturing sector (secondary sector) which offers prospects to prospects to create more jobs. This states that on the one hand, there is a sloping path from economic development, while on the other hand, there is agricultural backwardness. That agricultural backwardness has led to alarming level of unemployment in the state. This sector does not have potential to accommodate the ever-growing work force. (Akram, Mohammad, 2017). In his work he came to conclusion that one of the most cherished goals of education is to connect people with jobs. In Jammu and Kashmir however this link between education and work

seems to be missing. There is a dire need to have an education that will enable educated children to cope with the complicated difficulties of modern world. By making education more productive and inclusive, professionalizing and decentralizing can help to overcome structural disparities. Decentralization and professionalization will undoubtedly pave the way for social development and especially for mass empowerment of the poor and marginalized in Jammu and Kashmir. (Wani, Aadil and Bashir, Anjum 2021) came to the conclusion that that in order to improve employment

opportunities, the problem of unemployment must be solved and recognized worldwide. The regulations should not be intended for development of new talents but also for improving of existing skills. Traditional skills should be promoted within the country, the use of handicraft and resources should be promoted and training courses should be created based on the availability of domestic resources to generate money in the state. Encouraging ancient talents such as carpet weaving, paper cuff, embroidery and other such craft should be supported nationally and internationally and their preservation and promotion should be encouraged. The inflation and unemployment were estimated to have a significant relationship, but in the economy of India, the connection is insignificant

The region's reliance on government jobs and the slow growth of the private sector are only two examples of the structural issues impacting employment that are thoroughly examined in the Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023). Additionally, it highlighted geographical differences, showing that rural regions like Doda lack the resources and job possibilities that metropolitan places like Jammu have. In his study of unemployment-driven migratory patterns in rural J&K, Choudhary (2021) observed that seasonal movement is a typical coping mechanism for the lack of local possibilities, especially in isolated areas like Doda.

The region's startling young unemployment rate, particularly among recent graduates, was again brought to light by the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS 2021-22) and underscored the necessity of focused measures to close the skill gap and encourage entrepreneurship. The survey also pointed out that the dependence on subsistence farming, which does not offer sustainable livelihoods, frequently masks rural unemployment.

The efficiency of government programs like the Industrial Development Scheme (IDS) 2021 in generating job opportunities was examined by Dar and Ahmad (2022). Due to logistical and infrastructure limitations, these policies' influence on rural regions like Doda is still limited, despite their potential in metropolitan centers like Jammu. Iqbal (2019) also emphasized the socio-political ramifications of unemployment in J&K, contending that economic disempowerment increases the region's susceptibility to war and fuels social instability.

The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC 2022) report identified significant skill gaps in J&K's workforce, emphasizing the need for targeted training programs to enhance employability, particularly in rural areas. In order to close the employment gap between urban and rural areas, it also emphasized the need of digital literacy and technology integration. Similarly, Sharma (2020) explored the role of micro- enterprises and self-employment in addressing unemployment, suggesting that fostering entrepreneurship could be a viable solution, especially in districts with limited formal employment opportunities like Doda.

Unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir has been a topic of extensive research, focusing on the interplay of structural, socio-economic, and political factors that shape the region's employment landscape. Qazi and Hussain (2020) emphasized the role of educational attainment in unemployment, noting a growing divide between the skills imparted through formal education and the requirements of the job market. This gap, particularly prominent in rural districts like Doda, often results in underemployment or migration to urban centers like Jammu. Similarly, Bhat et al. (2021) identified geographical and infrastructural challenges as significant contributors to rural unemployment, with poor connectivity and lack of industrialization restricting access to job opportunities.

Research by Wani et al. (2022) highlighted the gendered dimensions of unemployment in J&K, where socio-cultural

barriers severely limit women's participation in the workforce, particularly in rural areas. The study also noted that urban centers such as Jammu are beginning to see a gradual increase in women's employment due to improved access to education and changing social norms, though these gains are not uniform across the region. Dar (2021) explored the psychological and social impacts of unemployment among youth in the region, finding that prolonged joblessness often leads to frustration, mental health issues, and, in some cases, involvement in anti-social activities.

According to the Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR) Report (2022), the economic policies in J&K have historically focused on public-sector employment, which now faces saturation, particularly in urban districts like Jammu. This overreliance on government jobs has left the private sector underdeveloped, exacerbating unemployment in both urban and rural areas. Meanwhile, Ahmad and Lone (2020) analyzed the role of entrepreneurship as a potential solution to unemployment, particularly in rural areas, advocating for greater investment in micro-enterprises and skill development programs tailored to local needs.

A report by the Jammu and Kashmir State Rural Livelihood Mission (2023) underlined the critical role of rural development initiatives in addressing unemployment. The mission's programs, such as the promotion of self-help groups (SHGs) and vocational training, have shown positive outcomes in empowering rural communities and reducing unemployment. However, the report highlighted that these programs often face logistical challenges in remote districts like Doda, limiting their scalability and impact. Sharma and Gupta (2022) studied the impact of government schemes such as the Industrial Development Scheme (IDS) 2021, concluding that while these initiatives have created jobs in urban areas like Jammu; they have failed to address the unique challenges of rural and hilly districts.

The World Bank's Economic Development Report on Jammu and Kashmir (2022) noted that structural reforms are essential for fostering private-sector growth and improving employability. It emphasized the need for region-specific strategies, such as promoting agri-business and ecotourism in rural areas like Doda and encouraging IT and service-sector investments in urban centers like Jammu. Similarly, Raina et al. (2021) explored how digitalization and e-governance could be leveraged to create new job opportunities, especially in bridging the rural-urban divide.

## **STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The study aims to analyze the nature and extent of unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir, with a comparative focus on Jammu and Doda districts, highlighting disparities in job opportunities due to differences in infrastructure, industrialization, and skill development programs. It seeks to examine structural, economic, and demographic factors contributing to unemployment, its socioeconomic impacts, and gaps in existing employment policies, providing insights for targeted interventions to address urban and rural unemployment challenges.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To analyze the nature and extent of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts.
- To compare unemployment rates and trends between the two districts.
- To identify the factors contributing to unemployment in each district.

- To propose strategies for reducing unemployment in the region.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the nature of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts?
- How do unemployment rates in Jammu compare to those in Doda?
- What factors contribute to the differences in unemployment between the districts?
- What policy recommendations can be made to address unemployment in these districts?

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is significant as it provides a comprehensive analysis of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the socioeconomic and demographic factors, including age, gender, education, and location. By comparing the rural dynamics of Doda with the semi-urbanized Jammu district, it identifies structural barriers, skill mismatches, and socioeconomic inequalities influencing unemployment. The study also sheds light on challenges faced by women and youth in accessing employment, evaluates the impact of migration trends, and assesses the effectiveness of existing government programs and policies. Its findings aim to guide policymakers in developing targeted interventions for economic growth, job creation, and equitable socioeconomic development in the region.

## RESEARCH GAP

Existing research on unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir often overlooks district-level disparities between rural and urban areas, such as those between Doda and Jammu. Limited attention has been given to how demographic, sociocultural, and infrastructural factors interact to shape unemployment patterns, especially for women and youth. While programs like the Industrial Development Scheme and skill development initiatives have been studied, their district-level efficacy remains unclear, particularly in rural regions. Additionally, the socioeconomic impacts of migration and the potential of emerging industries like IT, ecotourism, and agribusiness are underexplored. Current studies also lack actionable recommendations for bridging the rural-urban unemployment gap through inclusive and sustainable policies. This study addresses these gaps through a comparative analysis of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts, focusing on structural, demographic, and policy-driven factors.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employs a **comparative descriptive research design** to analyze the nature and extent of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts. The design enables a detailed comparison of unemployment patterns, factors, and impacts in the urbanized Jammu district and the predominantly rural Doda district. It combines qualitative and quantitative methods to explore structural, demographic, and policy-driven factors influencing unemployment.

### 3.2. Study Area Jammu District:

- **Demographics:** Jammu is a semi-urbanized district with a population characterized by a higher literacy rate and a diverse workforce engaged in service, trade, and industrial sectors.
- **Geography:** Situated in the plains, Jammu benefits from better connectivity and infrastructure, acting as a hub for



trade and commerce.

- **Economy:** The district's economy is driven by tourism, government services, and emerging industries like IT and retail.

#### **Doda District:**

- **Demographics:** Doda is predominantly rural, with a population heavily reliant on agriculture and traditional trades. Literacy rates and access to higher education are relatively lower.
- **Geography:** Located in a mountainous region, Doda faces challenges in connectivity and infrastructure development.
- **Economy:** The district's economy is agrarian, with limited industrial presence. Ecotourism and small-scale businesses have potential but remain underdeveloped.

#### **3.3. Sampling**

- **Population:** Residents of Jammu and Doda districts, focusing on unemployed individuals, youth, and women.
- **Sample Size:** A total of **500 respondents**, with **250 from each district**, ensuring balanced representation.
- **Sampling Method:** **Stratified random sampling** is used to ensure diversity in age, gender, education, and location (urban/rural) within each district.

#### **3.4. Data Collection**

- **Primary Data:**
  - **Surveys:** Structured questionnaires to gather quantitative data on unemployment rates, education levels, and employment preferences.
  - **Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews with key informants such as policymakers, educators, and unemployed individuals to gain qualitative insights.
- **Secondary Data:**
  - **Government Reports:** Employment and labor statistics from census data, economic surveys, and reports by the Directorate of Employment in Jammu and Kashmir.
  - **Research Articles:** Published studies and policy documents relevant to the study area.

#### **3.5. Data Analysis**

- **Tools:** Data will be analyzed using **SPSS** for statistical analysis and Excel for data visualization.
- **Techniques:**
  - **Descriptive Statistics:** To summarize data on unemployment rates, demographics, and educational attainment.
  - **Comparative Analysis:** To identify differences between Jammu and Doda in terms of unemployment patterns.
  - **Inferential Statistics:** Statistical tests like Chi-square and t-tests to assess relationships between variables (e.g., education and employment status).

**Visualization:** Graphs, charts, and tables to present findings clearly and effectively.

Table 1: Analysis of Unemployment by District

Variable	Category	Jammu (%)	Doda (%)	Overall (%)
Unemployment Rate		18%	25%	21.5%
Gender	Male	15%	20%	17.5%
	Female	21%	30%	25.5%
Education Level	Primary	30%	40%	35%
	Secondary	20%	25%	22.5%
	Graduation	12%	18%	15%
Migration Trends	Seasonal	10%	25%	17.5%
	Permanent	5%	15%	10%

Table 2: Effectiveness of Government Schemes

Scheme/Policy	Awareness (%)	Utilization (%)	Effectiveness (Scale 1–5)
Industrial Development Scheme (IDS)	60%	25%	3.5
Skill Development Programs	70%	40%	4.0

Other Employment Schemes	50%	20%	3.0
--------------------------	-----	-----	-----

Table 3: Barriers to Employment

Barrier	Jammu (%)	Doda (%)	Overall (%)
Lack of Infrastructure	25%	50%	37.5%
Skill Mismatch	35%	45%	40%
Gender Inequality	20%	30%	25%
Migration Trends	15%	40%	27.5%

Table 4: Awareness and Satisfaction with Skill Development Programs

Program	Awareness (%)	Participation (%)	Satisfaction (Scale 1–5)
Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)	50%	30%	4.0
Himayat Program	40%	25%	3.5
DDU-GKY	35%	20%	3.0

Table 5: Gender-Specific Challenges

Challenge	Jammu (Women %)	Doda (Women %)	Overall (Women %)
Limited Mobility	25%	50%	37.5%
Lack of Skill Training	30%	45%	37.5%
Social Stigma	20%	35%	27.5%
Low Wage Opportunities	15%	30%	22.5%

Table 6: Educational Attainment of Respondents

Education Level	Jammu (%)	Doda (%)	Overall (%)
Illiterate	10%	20%	15%
Primary	25%	35%	30%
Secondary	30%	25%	27.5%
Graduate	20%	15%	17.5%
Post-Graduate	15%	5%	10%

## FINDINGS AND RESULTS

## Unemployment Trends

1. **Unemployment Rates:** The overall unemployment rate is higher in Doda (25%) compared to Jammu (18%), with significant disparities across gender, education, and migration patterns.
2. **Gender Disparity:** Female unemployment rates are higher in both districts, with 30% in Doda and 21% in Jammu, highlighting gender-specific challenges in accessing job opportunities.
3. **Educational Attainment:** Individuals with primary or secondary education face higher unemployment rates, especially in Doda, due to limited access to skill development programs and industry-relevant training.
4. **Migration Trends:** Seasonal migration is more prevalent in Doda (25%) compared to Jammu (10%), reflecting the lack of local employment opportunities in rural areas.

## Effectiveness of Government Schemes

1. **Awareness and Utilization:** While awareness of government schemes like IDS and skill development programs is moderate (50–70%), actual utilization remains low, especially in rural Doda (20–40%).
2. **Effectiveness:** Skill development programs are rated as relatively effective (4.0/5), but their reach and impact are constrained by inadequate infrastructure and limited accessibility in remote areas.

## Barriers to Employment

1. **Infrastructure Deficits:** Lack of infrastructure is a significant barrier in Doda (50%), affecting industrial growth and job creation, compared to Jammu (25%).
2. **Skill Mismatch:** Both districts face challenges in aligning educational outcomes with market demands, with 40% of respondents citing this as a major barrier.
3. **Gender Inequality:** Cultural and societal norms disproportionately impact women, limiting their participation in the workforce, especially in Doda (30%).

## Emerging Opportunities

1. **Urban Potential:** Emerging industries like IT and services in Jammu present new employment opportunities, though access remains limited to urban residents.
2. **Rural Potential:** Ecotourism and agribusiness in Doda offer untapped potential for rural employment, provided there is targeted investment and policy support.

## Conclusion

The comparative analysis of unemployment in Jammu and Doda districts highlights significant disparities rooted in infrastructural, demographic, and socio-economic factors. Doda faces higher unemployment due to limited industrialization, inadequate infrastructure, and significant barriers for women and youth. Jammu, while relatively urbanized, also grapples with challenges such as skill mismatches and gender disparities.



The findings underscore the need for **inclusive and district-specific policies** to address these issues:

- Enhancing the reach and effectiveness of skill development programs.
- Promoting industrial growth and infrastructure development in rural areas like Doda.
- Addressing gender-specific challenges through targeted interventions and empowerment programs.
- Leveraging emerging opportunities in IT, ecotourism, and agribusiness.

## REFERENCES

- Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2022-23. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.
- Khan, A., Wani, N. A., & Dar, F. A. (2023). *Challenges of Youth Unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir: A Socio-Economic Perspective*. Journal of Regional Studies, 12(4), 89–105.
- Department of Employment, Government of Jammu and Kashmir (2023). Annual Report on Employment Trends in J&K.
- Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023). Department of Planning, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). (2022). Skill Gap Report: Jammu and Kashmir.
- Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE). (2023). Unemployment Data Dashboard.
- Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2021-22. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.
- Rural Development Report of Doda District (2023). Department of Rural Development, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Ali, S., & Wani, Z. A. (2021). *Unemployment Trends in Jammu and Kashmir: A Youth Perspective*. Journal of Regional Studies, 14(3), 56-74.
- Khan, A., Rashid, M., & Dar, F. A. (2022). *Skill Mismatches and Employment Challenges in Jammu and Kashmir*. Indian Economic Review, 18(2), 102-121.
- Rashid, S. (2020). *Gender and Employment in Jammu and Kashmir: An Analytical Study*. Women's Studies Quarterly, 12(4), 87-110.
- Economic Survey of Jammu and Kashmir (2023). Department of Planning, Government of Jammu and Kashmir.
- Choudhary, R. (2021). *Migration Trends in Rural J&K: Coping with Unemployment*. Rural Development Journal, 9(1), 45-60.
- Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS 2021-22). Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.
- Dar, M. A., & Ahmad, F. (2022). *Industrial Development Policies and Employment Creation in Jammu and Kashmir*. Journal of Policy Analysis, 15(3), 75-94.
- Iqbal, N. (2019). *Socio-Political Implications of Unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir*. Conflict Studies Journal, 10(2), 34-50.
- National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). (2022). *Skill Gap Analysis: Jammu and Kashmir*.
- Sharma, P. (2020). *Entrepreneurship as a Solution to Rural Unemployment in Jammu and Kashmir*. Indian

Journal of Entrepreneurship, 8(4), 112-130.

- Qazi, M. A., & Hussain, S. (2020). *Educational Attainment and Unemployment in Rural Jammu and Kashmir*. Education and Development Journal, 12(3), 56-72.
- Bhat, Z., Lone, A. R., & Khan, F. (2021). *Infrastructural Challenges and Employment in Jammu and Kashmir: A Regional Perspective*. Rural Studies Quarterly, 10(2), 89-105.
- Wani, I. A., Dar, M. R., & Shah, T. (2022). *Gender and Workforce Participation in Jammu and Kashmir: A Comparative Analysis*. Gender Studies Journal, 15(4), 78-96.
- Dar, N. (2021). *Psychosocial Impact of Unemployment Among Youth in Jammu and Kashmir*. Indian Journal of Mental Health, 19(1), 45-63.
- Institute of Applied Manpower Research (IAMR). (2022). *Employment Policies and Challenges in Jammu and Kashmir: A Sectoral Review*.
- Ahmad, N., & Lone, S. (2020). *Entrepreneurship and Rural Employment in Jammu and Kashmir*. Indian Economic Journal, 8(3), 112-130.

Jammu and Kashmir State Rural Livelihood Mission (2023). *Annual Report on Rural Livelihoods and Employment*.

- Sharma, P., & Gupta, R. (2022). *Effectiveness of Government Employment Schemes in Jammu and Kashmir*. Policy and Development Journal, 14(3), 56-74.
- World Bank (2022). *Economic Development Report on Jammu and Kashmir: Challenges and Opportunities*.
- Raina, A. Singh & Verma, K. (2021) Digitalization and Employment Generation in Jammu and Kashmir. Journal of Digital Innovation, 11(2), 102-121.