

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (DoSJE) is implementing **Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY)** to provide residential accommodation facilities to SC Boys and Girls studying in middle schools, higher secondary schools, colleges and universities. Presently 309 hostels are run under this scheme in 5 states, namely MP (71); Punjab (11); Odisha (169); West Bengal (53); and Tripura (5).

The evaluation of the scheme based on outcome serves a two-fold benefit. *First*, the findings generated from this study may act as strategic inputs for modelling need based approach of implementing the proposed interventions. *Secondly*, it yields estimates of the desired indicators, which would enable measuring the outcome and impact of the schemes. The study also make an assessment of the need to continue the scheme; and suggests measures for further improvements.

The list of selected hostels was provided by the DoSJE. In all 1950 beneficiaries were proposed to be covered from 30 hostels. The sample was proportionately allocated to each hostel in proportion of total beneficiaries into them. Selection of beneficiaries was done randomly from the list of beneficiaries provided by respective hostels. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were applied for generating desired information. Informant specific survey questionnaires were developed and used to pursue study objectives and interviews conducted with District Social Welfare Officers/State Nodal Officers, hostel management officials and hostel inmates.

A major finding of the evaluation study is that due to availability of boarding and lodging facility, students from very poor families are able to move away from their village homes, reside in bigger towns and cities and avail facilities of higher education.

Since the Scheme guidelines make in mandatory for schools and colleges to which students go, to be in a close radius, girl students are benefited. Since the overall distance from the hostel to the school/college is about 2 kms, poor SC students are able to save travelling costs also. Had these hostels not been there,overwhelming large proportion of the sample size evaluated would not have been able to carry on with their studies.

However, this is not to say that the hostels functioning optimally at present. 63% of the students sampled belonged to Below Poverty Line with average annual income of Rs. 23,152/-. Since seats are limited, most states apply a merit requirement for getting a seat in the hostel. Also, the states do not have any standard scheme or project under which these hostels are funded for their maintenance and upkeep. The Stipend given to the students by the states is used for food and other necessities and most hostels do not have any routine arrangements for cleaning, cooking and security. It is felt that Central Government Should at least partly bear the costs of maintenance of the hostels.

Further, Students have no access to tutoring and books in the hostels. So while the hostels provide them the basic accommodation and lodging arrangements, the educational requirements are left entirely unmet. Hence, it is felt that there is scope for the Central Government to build upon the existing hostel scheme and provide for residential schools especially for SC girls. Then the overall comprehensive requirements of a poor SC student viz. nutrition, security, educational mentoring and support could be provided to ensure that she is able to complete her education.

This report provides a detailed description of findings; outcome of the scheme; and impact indicators pertaining to key areas of interest to the Ministry, as a result of the evaluation.

OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

- Among the 30 sampled hostels selected for the study, only 28 were found operational with 1492 inmates. One hostel in Punjab and another in Tripura were found to be non-functional. All the 28 operational hostels were found to be located in the address provided by the Ministry.
- 50% hostels are for boys and 50 % are for girls.
- Address of all the hostels were matching with the provided address.
- Out of total inmates majority (59% inmates) were in the age group of 'upto 15 years'.
- 58% inmates belonged to Scheduled castes.
- Overall 70% inmates were Hindus.
- 63% belongs to BPL category with average annual income of Rs. 23,152/-.
- Highest educational qualification for majority of the respondents are secondary pass (62%).

- Total sanctioned capacity of the hostel was 2248 out of which 66 % are residing in the hostel.
- Average rooms per hostel was 19 as against 20 sanctioned.
- Average occupancy per room was 8 as per the sanctioned norms.
- Average gap in sanction and construction of hostel was 2 years. There is no gap between construction and hostel getting fully operationalized.
- 70% hostels have reported having some kind of rule book.
- Major criteria for adopted for selection of inmates was merit of the applicant, permanent resident of the state, annual family income, caste of the student etc.
- 46% hostels have provision for reservation of disabled children.
- Availability of facilities like toilets, bathrooms, water facility in toilets and bathrooms, kitchen, dining room, warden room, electricity connection, lights, fans, recreational facilities, regular cleanliness, drinking water are available and functional in almost all the hostels with some degree of variations.
- Standard of available facilities like boarding & lodging arrangements, quality of mess food, variety in mess food, cleanliness in mess, spaciousness in hostel room, furniture's, toilets, bathrooms, cleaning frequency of toilets and bathrooms, availability of water in toilets and bathrooms, overall environment, health facilities, cleanliness of hostel premises, overall rules and regulations are rated average or below average except for security measures especially for girls and curb of ragging in campus and recreational facilities. It needs lots of attention for improvement.
- Account book was available in 71% hostels.
- Admission register was available and maintained in all the hostels.
- Attendance register of students and staffs was available and maintained in all the hostels.
- Stock register was available and maintained in 86% of the hostels.
- Salary register was available and maintained only in 44% hostels of Odisha.

Impact on Health

- Students stay healthy due to availability of timely & regular meals.
- Facility of Regular health check-up especially in PHC/CHC is improving the health condition of inmates.
- Availability of first aid kits is helpful in providing on site instant treatment for minor injuries and illness. It is a big step towards ensuring good health of inmates.

Impact on Education

- Due to availability of free boarding and lodging facility, drop outs have started reducing especially for SC boys and girls from poor families.
- Those students who are preparing for competitive exams get opportunity to attend good coaching institutions which gives impetus to their career.
- As the inmates stay in the hostels located near to their educational institutes, it reduces the travel time which gives them more time for studies. This also minimizes their fatigue.
- Academic performance of both boys and girls during their stay in the hostels across states was reportedly good. However, after moving out of the hostel most of the students in Madhya Pradesh continued their higher studies. In Punjab they continued their studies only till they got some job. In Odisha, they started working. In West Bengal some of them continued their higher studies, and started working. In Tripura, no information was available on this account.

Outcomes of the scheme

- Only 5 states have taken advantage of the scheme.
- The scheme has maximum effect in Orissa and minimum in Tripura. It registered significant effect in Madhya Pradesh; followed by West Bengal. The effect in Punjab and Tripura can be best described as limited.
- The socio-economic profile of the inmates shows that the benefit of providing hostel facilities reached to the right category of target groups; and poor SC students coming for studies from long distances. Thus, outcome of the scheme in study areas has been in conformity with the objectives of the scheme.
- The number and spread of hostels should be increased and income limit for admission of inmates should be increased so that more and more disadvantaged students are benefitted under the scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

Maintenance

- Budget for major repair & maintenance work goes to PWD department. This often causes delay in implementation. There must be some mechanism to speed up the

repair & maintenance process. Some budget for maintenance must be provided to the hostels.

- There should be a regular and adequate budget provisions for regular repair and maintenance of hostels including regular cleaning of rooms, toilets, kitchen, compound etc. The amount should be adequate enough and provided to the hostels or the inmates account directly.
- The MoSJE may work out a mechanism to ensure the maintenance of hostels does not suffer due to non-availability of adequate funds.
- All hostels should be provided with basic facilities like computers, RO/water cooler, Solar Heater, Television, games facility etc, as these are requirements as per today's need.

Security

- Permanent staffs are required to be posted in the hostels, as several hostels reported their non – availability. Especially wardens are required in every hostel.
- All girls hostel should have female wardens only.
- Warden quarters may be constructed in all the girls' hostels and it should be made mandatory for warden to stay in them.
- No outsiders like families and friends of staffs or teachers families must not be allowed to occupy the hostel.
- Mandatory construction of boundary wall around the hostel and posting of night watchman in every hostel.
- Other security measures like installation of CCTV cameras in all hostels.
- Locations selected for construction of hostels must have adequate security for girl students and access to good roads, potable drinking water.

Scholarship

- Scholarship amount should be increased to compensate escalation of prices and should be paid on time (monthly basis) as this forms major source of funds for food and other components of expenses by hostel inmates.
- The scholarship and other amount like food expense, maintenance expense etc. should be directly given to inmates account.

- Diet charges should be enhanced to meet the rising prices.
- Mess facility should be strengthened and free food should be must.

Additional Educational Facility

- The hostels sanctioned under the scheme should be located in educational hubs for the benefit of the targeted beneficiaries.
- All hostels should have library facility for reading and studying to improve their knowledge and learning.
- Special coaching classes for students preparing for competitive exams and facility of career counseling should be provided for all inmates. There should be provision for e-learning facility.
- The hostels should have the additional facility for technical training / skill training in convergence with other departments.

Others

- Regular medical check -up of inmates should be ensured in all hostels.
- All the hostel wardens must send periodical, preferably on monthly basis, progress report in a structured format about maintenance and upkeep of hostels to the concerned district administration. District Social Welfare Officers should personally check the progress by surprise checks and ensure corrective measures are taken for the benefit of the inmates.
- In cases where inmates are more than the sanctioned strength, provision for additional amenities such as toilets, living rooms etc. should be made.
- A satisfactory mechanism for dissemination of guidelines issued by nodal agencies to implementing agencies must be ensured.
- There should be uniformity in terms of rules and regulations for boarding and lodging across states.
- The number and spread of hostels should be increased and income limit for admission of inmates should be increased so that more and more disadvantaged students are benefitted under the scheme.
- There should be a proper monitoring mechanism from the Ministry and uniform norm for maintenance and upkeep of hostels should be provided to produce a better result from this scheme.