

Summary Report

Impact Assessment of “Scholarship of Top Class Education for SC Students”



Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment



Centre for Market Research & Social Development
39, Ground Floor, Sant Nagar, East of Kailash, New Delhi-110065
Tel: 011-46578478, 41621978, Email: officemail.cmsd@gmail.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scheme "Scholarship of Top Class Education for SCs" aims at recognizing and promoting quality education amongst students belonging to SCs, by providing full financial support. The Scheme covers SC students for pursuing studies beyond 12th class. The Scheme is operated through top class institutes of the country. All the IIMs/ IITs/ IIITs / AIIMs/ NITs/NIFTs/ NIDs/ Indian Institutes of Hotel Management, National Law Universities and other Central Government Institutes are included in the Scheme. The scholarship, once awarded continues till the completion of the course, subject to satisfactory performance of the student.

The SC students, who secure admission in the notified institutes are awarded scholarship to meet the requirements for (i) full tuition fee and non-refundable charges (there will be a ceiling of Rs. 2.00 lakh per annum per student for private sector institutes and Rs. 3.72 lakhs per annum per student for the private sector flying clubs for Commercial Pilot Training and Type Rating Courses). CPL and Type rating Courses were included in the scheme of Scholarship of Top Class Education for SC students from the year 2017-18 till 2022-23 (ii) living expenses to the beneficiary @ Rs. 3000/- per month per student (iii) books and stationery @ Rs. 5000/- per annum per student and (iv) a latest computer/laptop of reputed brand with accessories like UPS and printer limited to Rs. 45000/- per student as one time assistance during the course. The Scheme is funded by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on 100% basis. The scholarship is payable immediately after a student has secured admission and has started attending the classes. The payment of tuition fee and other non-refundable charges are made directly to the beneficiaries by the Central Government through Direct Benefit Transfer mode. Similarly, the payment of living expenses, books & stationery and computer/laptop with accessories will be directly to the student by the Central Government through Direct Benefit Transfer mode.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India engaged Centre for Market Research and Social Development to conduct impact assessment of "Scholarship of top class education for SC Students". The objectives of this impact assessment study are:

- 1) To make an assessment of the extent up to which the scheme has been successful in delivering the desired benefits to SC students.
- 2) To analyze efficacy and effectiveness of the scheme from the perspective of successful completion of courses by beneficiaries of the scheme within time and gainful utilization of acquired professional and other expertise by way of employment or entrepreneurships.
- 3) To assess the socio-economic background of the beneficiaries.
- 4) To evaluate effectiveness of the scheme towards obtaining higher education in abroad or in India by the selected candidates.
- 5) To ascertain role of the scheme in changing social status of the family after completion of the course by the awardee.
- 6) To make comparison of the scheme with the similar schemes implemented by the State Governments/other Central Government Departments.
- 7) To ascertain the number of students admitted in each discipline (e.g. Engineering/ Medicine/ Dentistry, Law, Management and other specialized streams) under the scheme during the reference period.
- 8) To obtain feedback from admitted students about quality education being provided by the identified institutes.
- 9) To examine the problems, challenges and constraints in implementation of scheme and suggesting policy measures for effective implementation of the scheme.
- 10) To examine the overall impact the scheme has had on SC/OBC/EBC students and the reasons for varied rate of success across different states/UTs.
- 11) To examine about the grievance redressal mechanism at the Institute level.
- 12) To conduct the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis (SWOT analysis) of the scheme;
- 13) Recommendations/suggestions from beneficiaries for necessary restructuring to be carried in the scheme to achieve desired results and need for its continuation.
- 14) How increased awareness among the targeted people/families living in remote areas of States has prompted the prospective beneficiaries to avail the benefits of various welfare schemes meant for them?
- 15) Improvement in application procedure, selection process and disbursement of Scholarships/subsidies to eligible Students in the reference period of 2010-11 to 2018-19.

- 16) Constraints in obtaining scholarships/subsidies under the scheme in the reference period 2010-11 to 2018-19 from the perspective of beneficiaries and reasons thereof.
- 17) Impact assessment if the name of any particular scheme of Central/State Government has discouraged them from applying under current scheme.
- 18) Examining the effectiveness of the scheme in bridging the educational gap and promoting- social inclusion among disadvantaged communities.
- 19) Assessing the impact of the scheme on gender equality in education, particularly in terms of increased enrolment and retention rates for girls.
- 20) Analysing the role of the scheme in promoting skill development and vocational training among beneficiaries.
- 21) Analysing the long-term outcomes of the scheme, such as improved employability, higher income levels, and enhanced quality of life for the beneficiaries.
- 22) To assess the robustness of procedures for selection of students for various courses and fixation of fee.
- 23) Any other improvements or additions to the scheme that can make it more effective and meet its objective in the present scenario.
- 24) Key findings based on the data collected from the field on the objectives of the study.
- 25) Shortcomings identified in the design of the existing scheme if any; and
- 26) Recommendations/ suggestions for necessary restructuring to be carried in the scheme to achieve desired results and need for its continuation.

The study was based on the explorative, descriptive and analytical approach. Both secondary and primary research was undertaken to generate required information. Separate Interview schedules were prepared for the beneficiary students, academic educational institutes and FGD schedule to elicit the desired information.

The coverage of the study was pan India. Purposive random sampling method was adopted for the selection of beneficiary students. Course wise and gender wise sample number of beneficiary SC students were selected proportionate to their total number in each year of the reference period. As per the ToR, 2000 SC beneficiary students had to be surveyed, but 2260 were surveyed for the study. The reference period for the study was 2010-11 to 2018-19. The study also covered 50 top class educational institutes across the country. Also, the teachers, parents and officials implementing the scheme

were interacted to know the process of implementation and outcomes of the scheme. The data collection for the study was conducted during April and May 2024.

Major Findings

Financial and physical achievements under the scheme

- 1) The data on expenditure incurred under the scholarship scheme for top class education for SC students during the reference period of nine years (from 2010-11 to 2018-19) shows that the expenditure under the scheme has been increased significantly over the years, i.e., from Rs. 14.15 crore in 2010-11 to Rs. 25.48 crore in 2018-19. The highest expenditure under the scheme was incurred in 2017-18 with an expenditure of Rs. 33.94 crore.
- 2) While the expenditure was Rs. 14.15 crore in 2010-11, it was Rs. 14.82 crore in 2011-12, Rs. 16.70 crore in 2012-13, Rs. 23.18 crore in 2013-14, Rs. 19.37 crore in 2014-15, Rs. 29.77 crore in 2015-16, Rs. 28.50 crore in 2016-17, Rs. 33.94 crore in 2017-18, and Rs. 25.48 crore in 2018-19.
- 3) A total number of 13955 SC students were awarded scholarship under the scheme during 2010-11 to 2018-19. While 1036 students were benefitted in 2010-11, 1259 benefitted in 2011-12, 1306 in 2012-13, 1574 in 2013-14, 1568 in 2014-15, 1911 in 2015-16, 2033 in 2016-17, 1833 in 2017-18, and 1385 in 2018-19. The highest number of 2033 students were benefitted in 2016-17, while the lowest number of 1036 students were benefitted under the scheme in 2010-11.

Socio-economic background of the students

- 4) The secondary data collected from the institutes on the number of male and female students selected to get the benefit under the top class education scholarship scheme shows that male beneficiaries were 83.9% of the total beneficiaries, while 16.1% were female beneficiaries. Discipline wise analysis of the secondary data found that 89% were male beneficiaries and 11% were female beneficiaries in engineering; while 80.8% were male beneficiaries and 19.2% were female beneficiaries in management; 81.7% were male beneficiaries and 18.3% were female beneficiaries in hospitality; 53% were male beneficiaries and 47% were female beneficiaries in fashion/design; 15.7% were male beneficiaries and 84.3%

were female beneficiaries in medical (nursing); 79% were male beneficiaries and 21% were female beneficiaries in law; and 83.6% were male beneficiaries and 16.4% were female beneficiaries in agricultural sciences.

- 5) Similarly, majority of the surveyed beneficiary students (84.3%) benefitted under the scheme were male. The percentage of surveyed female beneficiaries is 15.7%. While more percentage of male beneficiaries were surveyed in engineering, management, law and agricultural sciences; more percentage of female beneficiaries were surveyed in hospitality, medical (nursing) and fashion/design courses.
- 6) The scheme guideline says that thirty percent (30%) of slots allotted to the Institution shall be reserved for eligible SC girl students as per their inter-se merit. In the absence of sufficient number of girl students, the slots may be transferred to eligible boy students as per their inter-se merit. However, the 30% slots as mentioned above will not include those girl students who are selected on the basis of their performance in the overall merit list of SC students of the Institution. Despite of such guidelines, the study observed that only about 16% girl students have been benefitted under the scheme. The main reason for this is that out of the total slots, 61% slots are for the engineering discipline, and in that slot, 89% were male beneficiaries and 11% were female beneficiaries. Due to this, gender equality could not be achieved under the scheme.
- 7) Analyzing the present age of the beneficiary students, it is seen that 20.9% come under the age group of 23 to 25 years, while 67.1% beneficiaries belong to the age group of 26 to 30 years, 9.9% beneficiaries are in the age group of 31 to 45 years and 2.1% beneficiaries are in the age group of 36 to 42 years.
- 8) Course wise analysis observed that half of the medical (nursing) students and 31% fashion/design students are up to 25 years of age, while the present age of 20% law students is above 30 years.
- 9) The base locality of the majority (63.4%) of the surveyed beneficiaries is found to be rural, and the locality of 36.6% beneficiaries is urban. Course wise analysis found that majority of the surveyed beneficiary students in hospitality course are from urban localities, while majority of the students of all other courses are from rural localities. The study further found that out of the total male beneficiary students, 61% were from rural areas. But, in case of female students, 73% were from rural areas. This shows that the reach of the scheme to the rural areas is significant in providing scholarship for top class education.

- 10) Analysis of occupation of the parents/guardians of the surveyed beneficiary students illustrates that 18.9% are farmers, 24.3% are casual labour, 7.7% are in government service, 32% are in private service, 12% are in business and 5% are traditional artisan. Very few parents/guardians were found to be doing other activities.
- 11) The study observed that most (97.3%) of the parents/guardians' income is up to Rs. 2.5 lakh per annum, while 2.6% parents/guardians' annual income is above Rs. 2.5 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh, and 0.1% parents/guardians' annual income is above Rs. 5 lakh to 8 lakh. The finding reflects that the top class institutes have preferred meritorious students with the lower family income for the scholarship under the scheme.
- 12) On analysis of the disciplines or courses being pursued by surveyed beneficiary students during the period of scholarship reveals that 68.7% students were studying engineering courses, while 15.2% were in management courses, 7.6% were in law, 4.8% were in fashion/design, 2.3% were in hospitality, 0.8% in agricultural sciences and 0.5% were doing medical (nursing) course. This ascertains that students of various disciplines like engineering, management, law, medical, agricultural sciences, fashion/design and other specialized streams like hospitality have been benefitted under the scheme during the reference period of 2010-11 to 2018-19.
- 13) On analysis of the stage of the courses being pursued by surveyed beneficiary students during the period of scholarship reveals that most (89.6%) students were doing graduation courses, while 10.4% were doing post-graduation courses. However, it was observed that majority of management students were doing their post-graduation courses during the scholarship for top class education.
- 14) Since the reference period of the study was from 2010-11 to 2018-19, the study intended to know the highest educational qualification of the beneficiary students. On analysis it was found that the highest qualification of 83.9% students is graduation and of 16.1% students is post-graduation.

Awareness about the Scheme

- 15) When the beneficiary students were asked about their source of awareness of the scheme, 14.6% beneficiary students reported that they have come to know about the scheme from the newspaper, while 21.5% have come to know about the

scheme from the internet, 26.3% have come to know from the friends, 27.4% have come to know from family member, 2.9% from the institution teacher, 5.6% from the institution staff, and 1.7% have come to know about the scholarship scheme of top class education for SC students from the government officer.

- 16) Since it was found that family members, friends and internet are the source of information about the scheme for three-fourth beneficiary students, more steps with regard to awareness generation about the scheme should be taken over electronic and print media.
- 17) Most (97.1%) of the beneficiary students reported that the increased awareness in them or in their family about the scheme had prompted them to avail the top class education scholarship.
- 18) All the surveyed students reported that they are not aware of any similar central or state government scheme which has discouraged the SC students from applying under top-class education scholarship scheme. However, during the interaction with the institutes, teachers and parents, it was observed that e-grantz scholarship by Government of Kerala for the state students has been discouraging SC students from applying for top-class education scholarship scheme.
- 19) The E-grantz Scholarship typically offers financial assistance to students based on various criteria such as academic merit, financial need, and other eligibility requirements. It is a centralized scheme that covers the pre and post-matric educational needs of SC, ST, and OBC communities in Kerala. With a centralized scholarship application system, it offers sufficient E-Grantz scholarship amounts for degree students. The scholarship provides direct financial assistance through DBT to cover tuition, books, and living expenses.

Implementation of the scheme

- 20) The surveyed beneficiary students were asked in which year they first received the top class education scholarship. It was found that 8.2% have got the scholarship in 2010-11, 7.8% have got the scholarship in 2011-12, 9.5% students in 2012-13, 9.0% students 2013-14, 9.6% students in 2014-15, 9.4% students 2015-16, 13.2% students in 2016-17, 11.5% students in 2017-18, and 21.7% have got the scholarship in 2018-19.
- 21) It was observed that most (96.8%) beneficiary SC students did not find any difficulty in getting the scholarship of top class education. The difficulty faced by

few students is mainly for the long processing time taken by the Ministry and delay in getting the scholarship amount.

- 22) Various types of grievance redressal mechanism are adopted by the educational institutes to resolve the difficulties of the SC students in getting the top class education scholarship. In many institutes, students approach the nodal officer of the institution for any information or issue with regard to the scholarship, and the nodal officer takes up the matter with the concerned officials of the Ministry for resolving the issue or difficulty. Also, the nodal officer guides and helps the students in the getting the scholarship.
- 23) During the interaction with the beneficiary students, the students were asked about the quality of education provided by the institutes on certain parameters like education facilities and infrastructure in the institutes, quality of faculties, teaching & learning pattern, curriculum implementation and assessment, and management & discipline in the institutes. The study observed that the quality of education at the institutes from where the beneficiary students have studied during the period of getting the top class education is very good. 84.3% students informed that that the institutes provided them very good quality education, 15.4% rated the quality of education as good and only 0.3% rated the quality of education at the institutes as average.
- 24) The study observed the following shortcomings in the design of the existing scheme: (1) Only the first-year students are benefitted for fresh scholarship. The scheme is not opened for students of other years to apply. (2) In the present scheme design, parents are unaware of sanctioned scholarship to their ward. (3) Releasing the scholarship to the semester back students after re-passing should be stopped. Renewal should not be considered for semester back students. (4) The scheme considers the shortlisting of SC students based on inter-se merit ranking rather than income. It is difficult to select a Below Poverty Line (BPL) students if he/she has not in top inter-se-rank but needy. Clear guidelines may be provided in case of a BPL applicant.

Impact of the scheme

- 25) Since the study reference period was 2010-11 to 2018-19, it was found that all those students benefitted under top class education scholarship scheme have completed the course for which the scholarship was provided.

- 26) Present status of beneficiary students reveals that only 86.7% beneficiary students are in job employment, while 4.3% are self-employed. Thus, the study found that 91% beneficiaries are either job-employed or self-employed. Also, 8.6% beneficiaries are presently student and 0.4% beneficiaries are presently unemployed.
- 27) Analysis of course wise present status of beneficiary students shows that most of the beneficiary students of all different courses are presently job employed, while 12.5% engineering students are presently doing higher studies and 16.3% students of fashion/design course are presently self-employed.
- 28) Out of 1959 beneficiary students who are presently job employed, it was further found that 19% are employed in government sector, while most (81%) are job employed in private sector. Course wise analysis found that 64% students of medical (nursing) course are job employed in government sector, followed by 21% engineering students are employed in government sector. Most of the beneficiary students of other courses are employed in private sector job.
- 29) While analyzing the monthly income of 2057 job-employed and self-employed beneficiaries, it was found that monthly income of 95.8% beneficiaries is up to Rs. 50,000/-, it is above Rs. 50,000/- to Rs. 1 lakh for 2.2% beneficiaries, and the monthly income is above Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh for 2% beneficiaries.
- 30) 40.6% beneficiary students indicated that the scholarship has helped them to a large extent for successful completion of course in time, while 24% indicated the help was moderate, 35.3% indicated the help was slight, and 0.1% beneficiary students indicated that the scholarship had not helped them for successful completion of course in time.
- 31) 17.3% beneficiary students indicated that the scholarship has helped them to a large extent to obtain higher education, while 70.3% indicated the help was moderate, 12.3% indicated the help was slight, and 0.1% beneficiary students indicated that the scholarship had not helped them to obtain higher education.
- 32) 64.4% beneficiary students said that the scholarship has helped to a large extent for changing social status of their families after completion of the course, 17.9% said the help was moderate, 17.7% said the help was slight, and only one beneficiary student said that the scholarship did not help for changing social status of his family after completion of the course.
- 33) 28.1% beneficiary students said that the scholarship has helped to a large extent for their skill development and vocational training, while 39.2% said the help was

moderate, 32.5% said the help was slight, and 0.2% beneficiary students said that the scholarship had not helped them for their skill development and vocational training.

- 34) 39.1% beneficiary students informed that the scholarship has helped them to a large extent in improving their employability, while 45.5% informed the help was moderate, 15.3% informed the help was slight, and 0.1% beneficiary students informed that the scholarship had not helped them in improving their employability.
- 35) 51.3% beneficiary students said that the scholarship has helped them to a large extent for their employment or entrepreneurship, while 34.3% said the help was moderate, 14.2% said the help was slight, and 0.2% beneficiary students said that the scholarship had not helped them for their employment or entrepreneurship.
- 36) 43.2% beneficiary students said that the scholarship has helped them to a large extent for their enhanced quality of life, while 30.5% said the help was moderate, 26.2% said the help was slight, and 0.1% beneficiary students said that the scholarship had not helped them for their enhanced quality of life.
- 37) 43.9% beneficiary students informed that the top class education scholarship scheme for SC students is very effective in bridging the educational gap and promoting social inclusion among SC communities, while 23.6% informed that the scheme is somewhat effective and 32.3% informed that the scheme is slight effective in bridging the educational gap and promoting social inclusion. Only 0.2% students informed that scheme is not at all effective in bridging the educational gap and promoting social inclusion among SC communities.
- 38) 21.8% beneficiary students feel that the top class education scholarship scheme for SC students has been successful to a large extent in delivering the desired benefits to SC students, while 64.1% feel that the scheme is somewhat successful and 14% feel that the scheme is slight successful in delivering the desired benefits to SC students. Only 0.1% students informed that scheme has not been successful in delivering the desired benefits to SC students. All the surveyed institutes, teachers and parents viewed that the scheme has been successful to a large extent in delivering the desired benefits to SC students.
- 39) Almost all (99.6%) students viewed that the overall impact of the scheme on SC students is excellent or good. All the surveyed institutes, teachers and parents viewed that the overall impact of the scheme on SC students is excellent. This shows that the scheme plays an important role in making higher education more accessible and affordable for the students belonging to SC communities.

- 40) The scholarship of top class education for SC students is a means cum merit scholarship scheme. The selection of students is restricted to the top students in the inter-se merit list based on the admission criteria for the course. Thus, the states with maximum number of top and meritorious students in various entrance examination have more beneficiary students than the states with less number of top and meritorious students. Secondly, there are a higher number of top class institutes and scholarship slots in the states like Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Delhi than the states like Sikkim, Assam, Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya and Himachal Pradesh. Thus, the states with a greater number of top class institutes and scholarship slots have a greater number of beneficiary students than the states with a smaller number of top class institutes and scholarship slots. These two factors primarily contribute to varied rate of success of the scheme across different states and UTs.
- 41) All the surveyed beneficiary students suggested that the top class education scholarship scheme should be continued in the future in the saturation mood so that all eligible SC students could get the scholarship under the scheme for their top class education.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions for changes in policy for effective implementation of the scheme

- 1) List of students benefitted under the scheme may be provided in the portal for every financial year. This information will be handy for the institutes and parents.
- 2) There should be effective response system to resolve student issues at Ministry/NSP/PFMS level. Students are facing difficulties in case of an issue, due to lack of effective communication with designated officials at Ministry, NSP and PFMS. Easy multiple point of contacts should be made available to resolve issues. The Ministry level nodal officer's contact details may be displayed on portal prominently to resolve queries on the students and institutes.
- 3) There is need of simplifying documentation. Essential documents like allotment memo, family income certificate, caste certificate and fee structure of the institution are sufficient documents for considering the scholarship. The previous academic qualification certificates are the undesired documents which make the documentation bulky.

- 4) Timely processing of the applications and disbursement of the scholarship amount is needed for more benefit to the students. speedy approval of scholarship by the institutes and timely disbursal of scholarship amount by the Ministry can help the scheme to be more successful in delivering the desired benefits to SC students.
- 5) Awareness camps should be organized in institutes to create awareness among target students. A summarized guidelines of the scheme in pamphlets may be prepared for circulation among students to create awareness about the scheme and the documents required for application for wide publicity.
- 6) Provision may be made in the portal to check the applications by the students and remarks if any at any point of time.
- 7) There is the need of system generated mail communication to students mail ids instead of SMS.
- 8) If a bank account is not seeded with the Aadhaar, it should not be accepted by the portal. After applying for the scholarship, students are getting message to seed Aadhaar with their bank account.

Suggestions for necessary restructuring in the scheme that can make it more effective and meet its objectives in the present-day context

- 9) Increase the number of slots for the institutes and overall number of scholarships. Number of slots assigned to the institute may be revised based on the students' strength so that more students can be benefitted under the scheme. The allocation of slots for the institutes could be augmented to cover more needy and meritorious SC students.
- 10) As per the scheme guidelines, the scholarship is terminated if the student fails to progress to the next semester or class. But, once such student gets promoted to the next class, the renewal scholarship shall be released suo moto. The study observed that students who fail in the examination, apply for renewal of scholarship when they later pass out the semester/class. This creates conflicts between the institutes and such students because of the issue of termination and continuation of scholarship. Hence scholarship renewal form needs to be restructured to avoid repeat students getting scholarship. It is highly needed to restructure the scheme guidelines that "the scholarship should be terminated if the student fails to get promoted to next higher semester/class" and the renewal should not be done for such students. This will also

motivate the beneficiary students to focus on their study to progress to the next class without fail or repeat.

Suggestions for other improvements or additions to the scheme that can make it more effective and meet its objective in the present scenario

- 11) It is suggested that to add a column or clause in the scholarship renewal form that "Whether students has passed in the previous semester/year? (Yes/No). If Yes, please mention the year".
- 12) Conformation of other scholarships have been applied and benefit availed should be checked. The top class education scholarship should be allowed to only such students who have not applied for any state government scholarship, EWS scholarship, college or institute scholarship or any eminent scholarship. Undertaking of the student in this regard should be with the student's application form to avoid any dispute at college or institute level.
- 13) Beneficiary students under the scheme may be provided with mentorship guidance, which means experienced professionals or faculty members will offer personalized advice, support, and guidance to help students navigate their career paths, identify potential opportunities, develop necessary skills, and make informed decisions about their future careers.