

SUMMARY REPORT

OUTCOME BASED EVALUATION OF PRE-MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOR OTHER BACKWARD CASTES (OBCs)



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Pre-Matric Scholarship for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) Students was formulated in the year 1998-99 and has been in operation since then. It has been revised during 2017-18. The aim of the scheme is to motivate children of OBCs studying at Pre-Matric stage to get themselves educated. The envisaged scheme is for the socially/ educationally backward students amongst the OBCs. The pre-matric scholarship is awarded to school going children of poorer OBC parents whose annual income is below double the poverty line.

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India engaged Centre for Market Research and Social Development to conduct the study “Outcome Based Evaluation of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for OBC Students”. The key objectives of this evaluation study are:

- 1) To identify representative sample of households of OBC parents having children for participation in class I to X.
- 2) To know the impact of the scheme on drop outs separately for boys and girls, in the transition from elementary to secondary stage.
- 3) To know the impact of the scheme on participation of OBC students in class I to X who have passed class VIII.
- 4) Whether the fund provided is appropriately utilized for the purpose it was sanctioned.
- 5) To assess present status of parents of OBC children regarding their education in class I to X, in villages/schools/districts of States.
- 6) To assess the adequacy of the assistance provided for pre-matric education of OBC students.
- 7) To assess if parental income ceiling envisaged in the schemes is appropriate.
- 8) To assess effectiveness of disbursal mechanisms and whether DBT has actually been done in the accounts of students/guardians.
- 9) Problems faced by students in applying for the scholarship and the support provided by the State Scholarship Portals.
- 10) To identify the extent of ghost beneficiaries.

- 11) To examine the extent of appropriation of the benefits of the schemes by multiple beneficiaries in the same family over generations.
- 12) To identify whether the schemes reach out to those who are in dire need of it and who would have otherwise not been able to continue their school education.
- 13) To assess how much is the share of State Government towards the scheme vis-à-vis contribution of Central Government.
- 14) Whether norms followed by State Government are different & more liberal than that prescribed by Central Government. If yes, details thereof.
- 15) Key findings based on data collected from the field on the objectives of the study.
- 16) Recommendations/Suggestions for necessary restructuring to be carried out for improvement in the scheme to achieve desired results and need for its continuation.
- 17) To give five success stories in each selected state.

The study was based on the explorative, descriptive and analytical approach to study. Both secondary and primary research was undertaken to generate required information. Both secondary data and primary data were used for this purpose. Semi-structured schedules were prepared for the state officials, teachers and functionaries of selected schools, beneficiary students and parents of the beneficiary students to collect the desired information.

The study covered 13 States namely; Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Jammu & Kashmir, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Sikkim, Tripura and Delhi. Further, 100 districts of these 13 states were covered for the study. Purposive random sampling method was adopted for the selection of beneficiary students from each selected state. District wise, gender wise and area wise (rural/ urban) sample number of OBC beneficiary students were selected proportionate to their total number. Total 22000 beneficiary students were surveyed for the study. Apart from the beneficiary students, 3000 non-beneficiary students were surveyed in the Maharashtra. Purposive random sampling was also adopted for the selection of schools. 550 schools across the 12 states were covered for the study. The principal/headmaster/teacher and functionaries of the randomly selected schools were contacted and face-to-face interview with them was undertaken to elicit requisite information. A total number of 550 teachers of visited schools, 530 functionaries of

those schools and 580 parents of the beneficiary students were surveyed from 12 states to collection their views and opinions on the implementation and impact of the pre-matric scholarship for OBC students. Also, 42 scheme implementing officials were interviewed during the course of the study.

Major Findings

Implementation of the PMS-OBC scheme by the states

- 1) The study observed that majority (82%) of the surveyed States are following the Central Government norms for implementation of the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students, while Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir are implementing the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students with different norms and more liberal than that prescribed by Central Government.
- 2) Different norms implemented in Tamil Nadu are: (i) Maintenance charges for hostellers studying from class IV to class X are provided at the rate of Rs. 900/- per month; (ii) Reimbursement of exam fees are provided for the students studying in English medium in Govt. or Govt. aided Schools and appearing in 10th Public Examination; (iii) Incentive amount to girl students studying from Class III to Class VI in Govt. or Govt. aided schools functioning in rural areas are provided.
- 3) In Uttar Pradesh, the scholarship rate and annual income of parents/ guardians are different from the Central Government norms. Also, the scholarships are provided to only class IX and X students.
- 4) Different norms implemented in Jammu & Kashmir are: (i) The scholarship is provided to Class IX and Class X students for a period of 9 months at the rate of Rs. 150/- per month to boy students and Rs. 200/- to girl students; (ii) The minimum attendance required in the class is 80%; (iii) minimum 45% marks required in the previous class; (iv) the annual income of parents/ guardians should not exceed Rs. 25200/-.
- 5) The Social Justice and Welfare Department in Sikkim is following the revised guidelines as prescribed by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India. However, the eligible students in the State need to provide Certificate of Identification in order to avail the scholarship.

- 6) The study observed that majority (63.6%) of the states have state portal for release of pre-matric scholarship for OBC students, while states like Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura do not have state portal for the release of pre-matric scholarship for OBC students. Guidelines or eligibility criteria of the scholarship schemes are uploaded in the state portal, and students have to apply for the scholarship on the portal. In Karnataka, students need not have to apply online. Students' data is ported to State Scholarship portal from Education Department database. The data is processed as per guidelines for scholarship.
- 7) The application forms for scholarship from the eligible students are received online through their web portals in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The application forms are submitted at the schools by the students in the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. However, the students need not have to apply online in Karnataka. In Karnataka, students data (Stats Data) is ported to State Scholarship portal from Education Department Database. The data is processed as per guidelines of the scholarship.
- 8) The study observed that in most of the states the students/ guardians get directly the scholarship amount. The DBT is fully done in the accounts of students in all states except Tripura and Tamil Nadu. In Tripura, schools get the scholarship fund to disburse to the applicants. In Tamil Nadu, examination fee is reimbursed to Directorate of Government Examination, and rural girls incentive amount is deposited in students parent (mother) account.
- 9) The study found that the share of State Government towards PMS-OBC vis-à-vis contribution of Central Government is 50:50 in Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu and Tripura. Majority of the funds towards PMS-OBC is shared by the State Governments in Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. However, in Delhi, the PMS-OBC fund is fully funded by the Central Government.
- 10) The study findings illustrate that all the students benefitted under PMS-OBC in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu were of government schools. In Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, the students of government aided schools and private schools were also benefitted while most of the benefitted students were of government schools. In Sikkim, about one-third of the benefitted students were found to be of private schools, while majority were of government schools. In Tripura, most of the beneficiary students were of government schools, while few students were of government aided schools. Information related to the fund

distribution to different category of schools in the state were not provided by Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka and West Bengal.

- 11) While interacting with various stakeholders, it was observed that very few ghost beneficiaries have availed the pre-matric scholarship meant for OBC students. To avoid ghost beneficiaries, duplicacy and appropriate use of fund, states have developed strong verification systems such as adhaar authenticity, verification of documents by the head of the institutions, verification by district nodal officer, verification by concerned State Department, etc.

Particulars of the Beneficiary Students

- 12) Majority of the surveyed beneficiary students (54.1%) benefitted under PMS-OBC were girl students. The percentage of surveyed boy students is 45.9%. However, majority of the surveyed students in Delhi were boys.
- 13) It is observed that 1.5% beneficiary students come under the age group of up to 10 years, while 11.8% beneficiaries belong to the age group of 11 to 13 years, 23.7% beneficiaries are of 14 years, 28% beneficiaries are of 15 years of age, and 35% are 16 to 17 years of age.
- 14) Majority (52.7%) of students surveyed were studying in class X, while 28.1% were studying in class IX, 10.2% in class VIII, 4.4% in class VII, 2.8% in class VI, 1.1% in class V, and 0.6% students were studying in class IV.
- 15) Out of total beneficiary students surveyed, most (98.7%) were day scholars while 1.3% were hostellers. The hostellers were surveyed in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal.
- 16) Majority (61.5%) of the parents of surveyed beneficiary students are casual labourer, while 17.2% are farmers, 12.6% are job-employed, 7.6% are doing small business and 1.1% are involved on other activities.

Awareness and Submission of Application

- 17) It is observed that most (89.1%) beneficiary students came to know about the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students from the school teachers, while 5.5% have come to know about the scheme from their friends, 2.6% have come to know from the internet, 2.1% have come to know from newspaper, and few (0.7%) have come to know about the scheme from the parents or relatives.

- 18) The study finds that 49.4% beneficiary students had submitted online application, while 50.6% had submitted the application to the school where they study. All the beneficiary students in Jammu & Kashmir and Tripura had applied for the scholarship by submitting applications to their schools.
- 19) Beneficiaries who submitted the application form online, 4.6% of them reported that they found difficulty in accessing the scholarship portal and application form submission. 21% beneficiary students in Rajasthan found difficulty in accessing the scholarship portal and application form submission. It was observed that beneficiary students in most states did not find any difficulty in accessing the scholarship portal and application form submission. The difficulty faced by the student in submitting application, is low network availability and slow speed of the portal. Apart from that, 3.6% beneficiary students reported about the difficulty faced in getting the caste certificate and 2.2% beneficiaries reported about the problem of adhaar linking.

Scholarship received by the students

- 20) Most students reported that as per the guidelines, they have received Rs. 100/- as scholarship amount for a period of 10 months. When the study tried to know how the beneficiary students received the scholarship amount, it was observed that most (97.2%) students received the scholarship amount through DBT in the bank account, while 2.8% received the scholarship amount from their schools. 40% students in Sikkim, 29% Students in Tamil Nadu, 15.2% students in Tripura, and 13.7% students in West Bengal have got scholarship amount from school, while all the students in Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh received the scholarship amount through DBT in their bank account.
- 21) While 97.2% received the scholarship amount directly in their bank account, 2.5% received the amount in cheque and 0.3% received the amount in cash. The students have received the cheque or cash as scholarship from school.
- 22) Very few (1%) beneficiary students indicated that they faced difficulty in getting the scholarship. Majority of them said that they faced difficulty due to late receipt of the scholarship amount while many said that they faced difficulty due to closure of their bank accounts.

Outcomes of the scheme

- 23) The study findings illustrate that 50.6% beneficiaries have utilised the scholarship amount for himself/herself, while 30.7% parents have utilised the amount, 18.6% guardians have utilised the amount, and other family members have utilised the scholarship amount in very few (0.2%) cases.
- 24) The study observed that in all the surveyed states almost all the beneficiary students have appropriately utilised the pre-matric scholarship amount for the purpose it was given them. Overall, it was found that 96.6% beneficiary students have appropriately utilised the scholarship amount.
- 25) The study observed that most of the students have utilized the scholarship amount for purchase of books & stationery and payment of tuition fees. While 83.8% students have utilized the scholarship amount for purchase of books & stationery, 66.1% have utilized for payment of tuition fees, 5.6% have utilized for purchase of school uniform, and 0.3% students have utilised the scholarship amount for payment for boarding and lodging charges.
- 26) The study found that there is a great impact of the scholarship in financially supporting or motivating 23.4% beneficiary students to continue their studies, while the impact is moderate for 55.6% beneficiary students and it has somewhat supported or motivated 20.5% beneficiary students to continue their studies. Overall, it is observed the pre-matric scholarship has benefitted almost all (99.4%) beneficiary OBC students in financially supporting or motivating them to continue their studies.
- 27) 15.3% parents indicated that the the scholarship has helped them to a great extent to financially support the study of their child(ren), while it has helped 56.9% parents reasonably and helped 25.3% parents slightly to financially support the study of their child(ren). Few (2.4%) parents told that the scholarship has not helped them financially support the study of their child(ren).
- 28) 24.8% parents told that the the scholarship has an immense financial impact on them to be less worried for the study of their child(ren), while it has a little financial impact on 73.8% parents and no financial impact on 1.4% parents to be less worried for the study of their child(ren).
- 29) Further, 25.5% parents reported that the scholarship has a huge psychological impact on them to feel being supported, while it has a little psychological impact on

72.6% parents and no psychological impact on 1.9% parents to feel being supported for the study of their child(ren).

- 30) To identify whether the pre-matric scheme has reached out to those who are in dire need of it and who would have otherwise not been able to continue their school education, the surveyed parents of the beneficiary students were asked incase the pre-matric scholarship is not provided to their child(ren), would they have been able to continue their school education. In response, about one-fifth (19.7%) parents indicated that they would were not able to continue their school education if the pre-matric scholarship is not provided to their child(ren). This reflects that the pre-matric scheme has reached out to those poor backward class parents who are in dire need of it and they would have otherwise not been able to continue their school education if not provided the pre-matric scholarship to their child(ren).
- 31) Further on being asked to the parents and school functionaries whether the pre-matric scholarship is provided to the students who really needed it and would have not been able to continue education if not been given, 58.8% parents and 82.5% school functionaries said that pre-matric scholarship is provided to the students who really needed it and would have not been able to continue education if not been given.
- 32) During the study, data on number of the OBC students in class IX and X who are eligible for scholarship, and data on number of OBC students in class IX and X who are getting scholarship were collected from the visited schools. The collected data reflects that 82% OBC students in class IX and X who are eligible for scholarship are getting the scholarship. This indicates that though not all eligible students get the pre-matric scholarship meant for OBC students, most of the eligible students are covered under the scheme.
- 33) To analyze how much PMS-OBC has impacted in reducing drop outs of OBC students in the transition from elementary to secondary stage, the data on drop outs of OBC students in the transition from elementary to secondary stage was collected from the visited schools. As per the data provided by the schools on the drop outs, it was extracted that there is reduction of 49% in the boys drop outs and reduction of 52% in girls drop outs. Overall, it was observed that the scheme has a large impact in reducing drop outs of OBC students in the transition from elementary to secondary stage.

- 34) Out of the 550 teachers surveyed from 550 schools, 46.9% teachers viewed that the PMS-OBC scheme has a great impact to enable poor OBC children to remain in school after Class-VIII, while 46.9% viewed impact as moderate and 6.2% teachers viewed that the scheme has no impact to enable poor OBC children to remain in school after Class-VIII. The finding shows that the PMS-OBC scheme has a significant impact to enable poor OBC children to remain in school after Class-VIII.
- 35) 24.1% of the school functionaries viewed that the PMS-OBC scheme is helping the OBC students to a great extent in financially supporting and motivating them for the study, while 58.7% viewed that the scheme is helping the students to some extent for their study, 15.8% viewed that the scheme is helping the students a little bit and 1.4% school functionaries viewed that the PMS-OBC scheme is not helping the OBC students for their study.

Perception of the beneficiary students

- 36) On adequacy of the scholarship amount given to the students, majority (72.2%) beneficiary students viewed that the scholarship amount given under the scheme is inadequate, while 23.6% viewed that the scholarship amount is adequate, and 4.2% beneficiary students viewed that the scholarship amount under the scheme is neither adequate nor inadequate.
- 37) 12.3% beneficiary students indicated that the pre-matric scholarship is excellent, while 67.6% rated the scholarship as good, 19.7% rated the scholarship as moderate, and 0.3% beneficiary students rated the scholarship as useless.
- 38) More than three-fourth (78.8%) surveyed beneficiary students viewed that the income ceiling of Rs. 2.5 lakhs per annum to receive the scholarship is justified, while about 21.2% students viewed the income ceiling of Rs. 2.5 lakhs is unjustified.
- 39) When asked to the surveyed beneficiary students for suggestions for improvement in implementation and impact of the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students, 11.2% students suggested for income limit to be decreased to Rs. 2 lakh, 10.8% students suggested that more number of eligible OBC students should get the benefit under the scheme, 7.6% suggested for timely release of scholarship amount, and 5.8% students suggested that income limit should be increased Rs. 3 lakh.

Present status of the parents of beneficiary students

- 40) When analyzed the present occupational status of the surveyed parents of the beneficiary students, it was observed that majority (51.5) of them are labourer, while 23.4% are farmers, 11% are businessmen/ self-employed, 8.8% are job-employed and 5.2% are involved in other occupation.
- 41) The educational status of the surveyed parents of the beneficiary students reveals that 16.7% parents are illiterate. The beneficiaries with primary education constitute 25%, while parents with middle school education constitute 27.8%, parents educated up to secondary level are 25.3%, parents with college level education are 4.8% and 0.3% parents reported to be technically qualified.
- 42) Present annual income of the parents reveals that most (93.1%) of the parents have annual income of up to Rs. 1 lakh while 6.9% parents have annual income of above Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2.5 lakh.
- 43) 18.1% surveyed parents said that any of their children have dropped out of education due to financial problem. This reflects that the pre-matric scholarship scheme has benefitted them to continue the education of their child who has got the scholarship.
- 44) To examine the extent of appropriation of the benefits of the scheme by multiple beneficiaries in the same family over generations, the study intended to find out the number of children have been benefitted the sample parents. The findings show that majority (65.3%) of the parents have one child benefitted under the pre-matric scholarship scheme, while 29.8% parents have two benefitted children and 4.8% have three children benefitted under the pre-matric scholarship scheme.

Views of the parents on PMS-OBC

- 45) On adequacy of the scholarship amount given to the students, majority (53.4%) parents of the beneficiary students viewed that the scholarship amount given under the scheme is inadequate, while 41.9% viewed that the scholarship amount is adequate, and 4.7% parents viewed that the scholarship amount under the scheme is neither adequate nor inadequate.
- 46) 6.6% parents of the beneficiary students indicated that the pre-matric scholarship is excellent, while 71% rated the scholarship as good, and 22.4% parents of beneficiary students rated the scholarship as average.

- 47) Majority (78.1%) of the surveyed parents of the beneficiary students viewed that the income ceiling of Rs. 2.5 lakhs per annum to receive the scholarship is justified, while about 21.9% parents viewed the income ceiling of Rs. 2.5 lakhs is unjustified, and most of them suggested for a lower fixed income ceiling under the scheme so that poorest of the poor students can be benefitted.
- 48) When the study intended to know whether the parents and school functionaries have the knowledge of any student not belonging to OBC category has got the PMS-OBC, 6.7% parents and 7.9% school functionaries said that they have the knowledge of student not belonging to OBC category has got the PMS-OBC, and these response came from the states of Madhya Pradesh, Punjab & Rajasthan.

Views of the school teachers on PMS-OBC

- 49) On effective disbursal mechanism of pre-matric scholarship to OBC students, majority (54.9%) of the school teachers viewed that the disbursal mechanism is smooth, while 40.5% indicated the mechanism as somewhat irregular and 4.6% school teachers indicated that the mechanism as very irregular. The schools reported of very irregular disbursal mechanism of pre-matric scholarship to OBC students were in the state of Punjab.
- 50) 13.8% school teachers indicated that the pre-matric scholarship for the OBC students is excellent, while 57.8% rated the scholarship scheme as good, 27.5% rated it as average, and few (0.9%) school teachers rated the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students as useless.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The “Outcome Based Evaluation of Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme for OBC Students” assessed the various aspects of the implementation and impact of the scholarship provided under the scheme and revealed that the scheme has been successful to a great extent. Even though the support under this scholarship scheme has made substantial impact on the beneficiary students in providing financial assistance to continue their study, the performance of the scheme can be improved by giving some importance to the implementation part of the scheme.

Recommendations

- 1) In hilly and north-eastern states, the students from remote areas are left behind in unavailing pre-matric scholarship. Thus, yearly awareness programmes are to be conducted in each district and most effectively in each school as conducted in Sikkim. Sikkim has already started the awareness programmes where official from Human Resource Development Department (HRDD), BDOs, Principals, Panchayats and other stakeholders are invited to brief them about the centrally sponsored scholarship schemes of Government of India, and with the request to spread the benefits of the scholarship among the students of remote areas. This inventiveness may be replicated in other states to create awareness amount the target group in rural and remote areas so that more number of students from rural and remote areas in the country can avail pre-matric scholarship.
- 2) As the students are from very poor background, they do not make regular transactions in their bank account and therefore the bank account becomes periodically inactive in some cases and the money transferred online is returned and no intimation is sent to students or schools in this regard. Thus, it is proposed that advisory may be issued by the Government of India to banks to evolve a mechanism where such accounts are not made dormant due to lack of periodic transactions.
- 3) In most states, transfer of money is done centrally at state level. In case of any problem in transfer, students and schools face problems in follow up. Thus, it is proposed that the disbursement of scholarship may be done at district level and necessary modalities may be worked out by the states.
- 4) Due to the absence of administrative expenditure items in the guideline, other necessary resources for the widespread publicity and effective implementation of the scheme are not met. Thus, there is need of a provision of administrative expenditure in the guideline issued for the other backward classes under the pre-matric scholarship scheme for which the scheme would be widely publicized and other necessary resources would be replenished.
- 5) The study found that many eligible OBC students are deprived of the pre-matric scholarship due to limited fund allocation under the scheme. However, there is need to develop a mechanism to gradually increase the budget allocation both by State

and Central Government to provide pre-matric scholarship to more number of eligible OBC students.

- 6) The study observed that there is a great impact of the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBC students in continuing study of the poor OBC students and reducing drop outs of OBC students in schools. Therefore, the present evaluation study recommends for the continuation of the pre-matric scholarship scheme for OBCs to support the poor OBC students financially and continue their education till matriculation.