

Facilitating Access: Pre-matric Scholarship in Rajasthan

Analysis of Budget and Resource Gap

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Executive Summary

Government of Rajasthan provides various scholarships to the children studying in the state government schools and government recognized schools. The pre-matric scholarships are provided to the class 6 to 10 children of the various marginalized sections of the society. These scholarships are important incentives for the children from the marginalized communities to continue their education.

A study found that only 44 percent of the girls and parents said to have received the amount of pre-matric scholarship in state of Rajasthan. Many challenges are also faced by the students in accessing the pre-matric scholarship in terms of delay receipt of amount, mismatch in documents and Aadhar linkages, time and money spent in ensuring documentation and lack of adequate information on the application processes.

The number of beneficiaries and their percentage to total enrolments in the government schools show fluctuations over the years, especially for SC and ST children of classes 6 to 8 while it shows increasing trend for the SC and ST children of classes 9 to 10. There is a slight increase over the years of the minority and EBCs beneficiaries and decline in the number of OBC beneficiaries. Number of children of manual scavenger's beneficiaries is very low and has been declining over the years.

Budget for pre-matric scholarships: Budget for the pre-matric scholarship for the classes 6 to 8 is provided by the state government while the pre-matric scholarship for the classes 9 to 10 is a centrally sponsored scheme (CSS) for which central assistance is provided by the central government through the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (for the SC and OBC children) and by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (for tribal children). There are different sharing patterns between state and central governments for the centrally sponsored schemes for the pre-matric scholarships.

The union budget for Pre-matric scholarship for SCs has been very low in the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 before it increased again in 2019-20. But it was still much below the 2016-17 level in the year 2019-20. Budget for Pre-matric scholarship for OBCs is almost stagnant over the years. There has been a slow increase in the budget for Pre-matric scholarship for STs and Minorities.

The state budget allocations for the pre-matric scholarship scheme for the SC and TS children remained more or less stagnated during 2016-17 to 2020-21. There is also a continuous decline in the state budget allocation for the scholarship for the children of manual scavengers during the year 2016-17 to 2020-21. In the year 2020-21 the budget allocation for the pre-matric scholarship scheme for the SC and OBC children is less than previous year and is almost same for ST children. There seems to be an impact of decline in the central budget for pre-matric scholarships on the state budget for the scheme evident from the fluctuations in central share for the scheme in the Rajasthan budget.

The actual expenditure of the allocated budget in the state, especially for SC, ST children and children of manual scavengers, has been very low compared to the budgetary allocations. The actual expenditure

for ST children has been less than 50% in the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 and has increased in later years. The actual expenditure for SC children has also been very low in first two years of analysis and has increased later. The actual expenditure especially for children of manual scavengers remain low throughout the first three years and has shown some increase only in last years revised estimates (RE). However, there is an improvement in the state in the utilization of the allocated budget for the pre-matric scholarships in the last couple of years.

Cost estimation of the pre-matric scholarship schemes: In this report we have tried to estimate the total budget required if the pre-matric scholarships are to be provided to all the SC, ST and OBC children studying in the government schools of Rajasthan. Though there is lack of data on gender wise and social group wise enrolment in government schools and the number of students living in the hostels, we tried to overcome this by taking data on enrolment available for this year and applying ratio of girls and boys in previous years on this year numbers. The numbers of enrolment in 2021-22 has been projected based on the trends in enrolment in the previous years.

The cost assessment exercise suggests that if the pre-matric scholarship is to be provided to all the SC, ST and OBC children studying in government schools, the budget allocation for this scheme has to be increased substantially. The gap between the allocations and estimated requirement in current financial year (2020-21) is Rs. 230 crores. This resource gap is found in all three categories of scholarships.

The pre-matric scholarships are important schemes having positive impact on retaining the children in schools and helping them to complete more years of education. But not many children have been benefiting from these schemes yet. Recent trends, however, are showing that the number of beneficiaries as well as the percentage of actual expenditure to the budget allocations in this scheme is on rise in last two years. Considering the improved budget utilisation under the scheme, it can be said that the popularity of scheme seems to be on rise and more and more children are likely to apply in coming years. Therefore, there is a need to not only increase the budget allocations but also to improve the mechanism of applying and getting the benefit of the scholarship schemes, so that it is easier for the marginalized children to avail the benefits of these schemes.

Introduction: Pre- Matric Scholarship in Rajasthan

Government of Rajasthan provides various scholarships to the children studying in the state government schools and government recognized schools. The scholarships include the pre-matric scholarships being provided to the children of the various marginalized sections of the society. These scholarships are important incentives for the children from the marginalized communities to continue their education. Though these scholarships provide very small support to the children of classes from 6 to 10 from different marginalized sections, studies have shown that there are obvious benefits of the scholarships.¹ More than 80 percent girls and parents reported that scholarships helped girls study longer and 75 percent or more reported that they prevented girls from dropping out of schools. The study found that these scholarships are “beneficial in preventing dropouts and ensuring girls’ continued education.”

However, there are also various implementation issues which the beneficiaries of the scholarships have to face. The above study finds that implementation of different scholarship schemes is poor in the state Rajasthan. Some of the issues highlighted by the above mentioned study are:

- * The study found that only 44 percent of the girls and parents said to have received the amount of pre-matric scholarship in state Rajasthan
- * There is also variation in the receipt of scholarship. Study reveals lack awareness among beneficiaries about the provisions and actual amount received for scholarship as well as inconsistent disbursement of scholarship amount.
- * Many challenges are also faced by the students in accessing the pre-matric scholarship in terms of delay receipt of amount, mismatch in documents and Aadhar linkages, time and money spent in ensuring documentation and lack of adequate information on the application processes.
- * A key demand from the girls and the parents interviewed for the study was increasing the amount of Pre-Matric Scholarship, as the current amount is not enough to cover all costs associated with a girl’s education.

Pre-matric Scholarship Schemes: main features

The Directorate of Secondary Education, Bikaner under the Department of School Education, Govt. of Rajasthan implements the pre matric scholarship programs. Following table provides details of benefits and eligibility criteria for the each type of pre-matric scholarship:

¹ Development Solutions and IDS, 2020, Perception Survey to Understand Barriers and Enablers to Girls’ Secondary Education in Rajasthan in the context of COVID-19

Table 1: Pre-matric scholarship schemes in Rajasthan

Scholarship	Class	Family income criteria	Amount	Annual cost (Rs.)
Pre- Matric Scholarships for SCs	6-8	Non Tax payers	Rs. 75 pm to boys and Rs. 125 pm to girls	Rs. 750 to boys and Rs. 1250 to girls
Pre- Matric Scholarships for SCs (CSS)	9-10	Non Tax payers	for day scholars Rs. 225 per month for 10 months and Rs. 750 once in a year Rs. 525 pm for hostellers for 10months and Rs. 1000 once in a year	for day scholars Rs. 3000 (2250+750 Rs.) Rs. 6250 (5250+1000 Rs.) for hostlers
Pre- Matric Scholarships for STs	6-8	Up to Rs. 250,000	Rs. 75 pm to boys and Rs. 125 pm to girls	Rs. 750 to boys and Rs. 1250 to girls
Pre- Matric Scholarships for STs (CSS)	9-10	Up to Rs. 200,000	for day scholars Rs. 225 per month for 10 months and Rs. 750 once in a year and for hostellers Rs. 550 per month for 10 months and Rs. 1000 once in a year	for day scholars Rs. 3000 (2250+750 Rs.) and for hostellers Rs. 6500 (5500+1000)
Pre- Matric Scholarships for OBCs	6-10	Up to Rs. 250,000	for day scholars Rs. 100 per month for 10 months in a year for day hosteller Rs. 500 per month for 10 months in a year	for day scholars Rs. 1000 for hostellers Rs. 5000
Pre- Matric Scholarships for EBCs	6-10		Rs. 50 pm to boys and Rs. 100 pm to girls for classes 6-8 and Rs. 60 pm to boys and Rs. 120 pm to girls for classes 9-10	Rs. 500 to boys and Rs. 1000 to girls for classes 6-8 and Rs. 600 to boys and Rs. 1200 to girls for classes 9-10
Pre- Matric Scholarships for children of Manual Scavengers	1-10		for day scholars (classes 1-10) Rs. 225 per month for 10 months and Rs. 750 once in a year and for hostellers (3-10) Rs. 700 per month for 10 months and Rs. 1000 once in a year	for day scholars (classes 1-10) Rs. 3000 (2250+750 Rs.) and for hostellers (3-10) Rs. 8000 (7000+1000 Rs.)

Source: Government order by the Secondary Education Department, Govt. of Rajasthan, dated 25.08.2020

Note: Beside above pre-matric scholarships, there is also pre-matric scholarship for the students of minority communities provided by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

The pre-matric scholarships are provided to the children of the government schools and government recognized private schools, if they fulfill the income criteria. According an official in the Directorate of Secondary Education, the scholarship is open for the children of the private schools whose parents fulfill the income criteria. But generally there are very few applications from the private school children. Data on the number of beneficiaries of these schemes is provided by department in their annual report. The following table summarizes the number of beneficiaries' vs-a-vs total enrolment (government and private schools) for each category:

Table 2: Number of total enrolment in government schools and beneficiaries of the various pre-matric scholarship schemes

Name of scholarship	Year	Total enrolment in Govt. School			Number of beneficiaries	% of beneficiaries
		Boys	Girls	Total		
Pre- Matric Scholarships for SCs (Classes 6-8)	2016-17	275,372	273,263	548,635	210,011	38.28
	2017-18	277,040	277,568	554,608	148,808	26.83
	2018-19	259,648	263,153	522,801	249,028	47.63
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	146,203	
Pre- Matric Scholarships for STs (Classes 6 – 8)	2016-17	235,175	219,248	454,423	185,944	40.91
	2017-18	239,941	223,451	463,392	116,999	25.25
	2018-19	231,241	218,046	449,287	282,514	63.02
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	164,521	
Pre- Matric Scholarships for SCs (Classes 9-10)	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	23,542	
	2017-18	163,770	152,936	316,706	72,401	22.86
	2018-19	173,374	169,112	342,486	231,664	67.64
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	182,096	
Pre- Matric Scholarships for STs (Classes 9-10)	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	101,346	
	2017-18	121,914	121,858	243,772	135,595	55.62
	2018-19	131,322	135,420	266,742	321,525	120.54
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	182,625	
Pre- Matric Scholarships for OBCs (Classes 6-10)	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	427,044	
	2017-18	756,121	835,904	1592,025	322,016	20.23
	2018-19	751,321	851,014	1602,335	232,450	14.51
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	272,312	
Pre- Matric Scholarships for children of Manual Scavengers	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	34,556	
	2017-18	N/A	N/A	N/A	26,404	
	2018-19	N/A	N/A	N/A	16,114	
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	6,143	

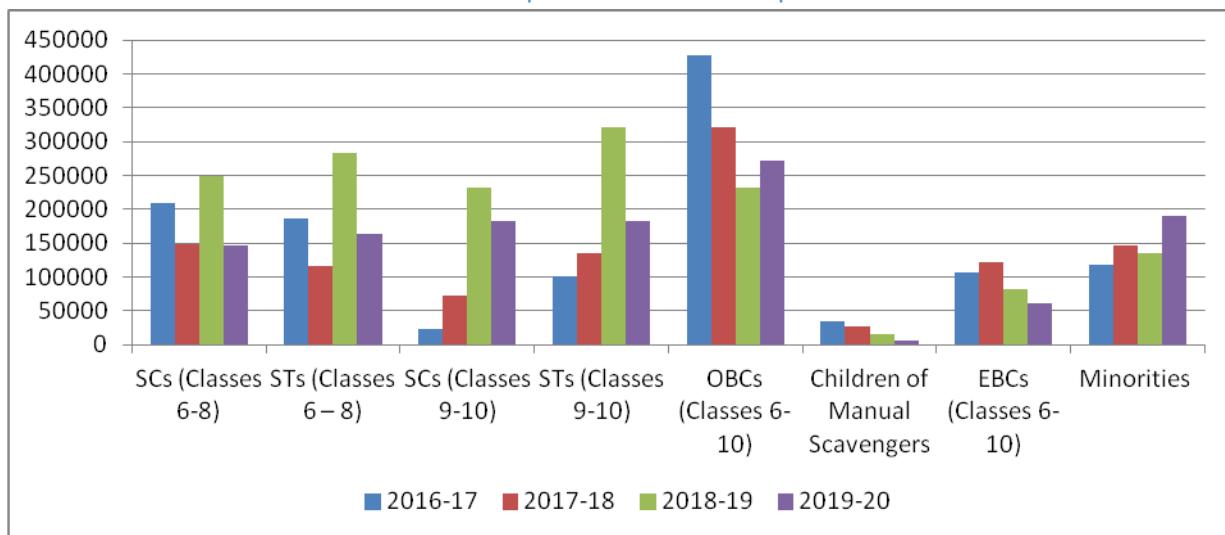
Pre- Matric Scholarships for EBCs (Classes 6-10)	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	106,484
	2017-18	N/A	N/A	N/A	121,212
	2018-19	N/A	N/A	N/A	81,923
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	61,286
Minorities (Pre-matric)	2016-17	N/A	N/A	N/A	117,789
	2017-18	N/A	N/A	N/A	145,846
	2018-19	N/A	N/A	N/A	135,980
	2019-20	N/A	N/A	N/A	190,834

Source: No. of beneficiaries: Annual Report of the Department of the Secondary Education, Govt. of Rajasthan; Enrolment: State Report Cards, various years, available on:

<https://rajsmsa.nic.in/public/ReportCard.aspx>

N/A – Not available

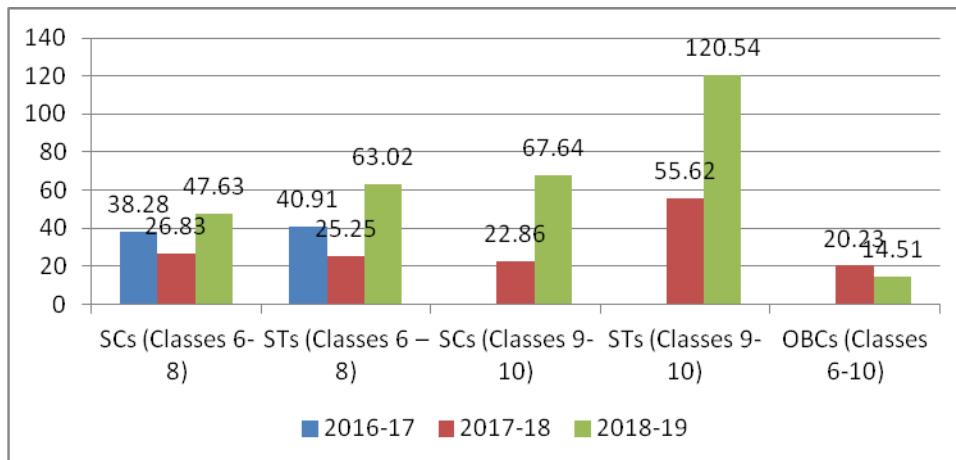
Chart 1: Number of beneficiaries of various pre-matric scholarship schemes



Source: Table 2

As can be seen from the table 2 and chart 1, the number of beneficiaries shows fluctuations over the years especially for SC and ST children of classes 6 to 8 while it shows increasing trend for the SC and ST children of classes 9 to 10. There is a slight increase over the years of the minority and EBCs beneficiaries and decline in the number of OBC beneficiaries. Number of children of manual scavenger's beneficiaries is very low and has been declining over the years.

Chart 2: Beneficiaries of Pre-matric scholarship as % of total enrolment (Govt. Schools)



Source: Table 2

The beneficiaries of scholarships, in term of percentage to the total enrolment in the government schools, also show the fluctuations over the years (Chart 2). In cases of both SC and ST children, the children of classes 9 to 10 seem to be doing better than the children of the classes 6 to 8. However, overall the percentages of the ST children are better than those of the ST children who are receiving the pre-matric scholarships. The percentages of OBC children who are getting the scholarship is the lowest.

Budget for Pre-matric scholarship schemes

The pre-matric scholarships are run for children classes 6-8 by the state government and for the children classes 9-10, the pre-matric scholarship is centrally sponsored scheme. Budget for the pre-matric scholarship for the classes 6 to 8 is provided by the state government while the pre-matric scholarship for the classes 9 to 10 is a centrally sponsored scheme for which central assistance is provided by the central government through the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (for the SC and OBC children) and by Ministry of Tribal Affairs (for tribal children). There are different sharing patterns for the centrally sponsored schemes for the pre-matric scholarships.

Table 3: Fund sharing patterns of the Pre-matric scholarships

CSS for Pre-matric scholarships for	Share pattern (centre:state)
SC children (9 to 10)	60:40 (90:10 in case of NE states)
OBC Children (9 to 10)	50:50 (100% in case of UTs), subject to availability of the budget under the scheme
Children of parents involved in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards (1 to 10)	60:40 (90:10 in case of NE states)
ST Children (9 to 10)	75:25 (90:10 in case of NE states)

Source: Annual Report, 2019-20, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs website: <https://tribal.nic.in/ScholarshiP.aspx>

It is important to look at the budget allocations of the union government towards the pre-matric scholarships. The Budget for the pre-matric scholarship schemes by the union government is given in the table below:

Table 4: Budget for Pre-budget scholarships –Union govt. (Rs. Crore)

Schemes	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	BE	Actuals	BE	Actuals	BE	Actuals	BE	RE	BE	
Pre Matric Scholarship for SCs	550	507.47	50	62.97	125	115.64	355	355	700	
Pre-Matric Scholarship to the Children of those engaged in occupations involving cleaning and prone to health hazards	1.8	1.88	2.7	0.35	5	3.12	5	30	25	
Pre-matric Scholarship to OBCs	142	129.14	142	128.23	232	121.84	220	220	250	
Pre-Matric scholarship for STs		265		294.08	350	311.5	340	440	400	
Pre-Matric Scholarship for Minorities	931	369.25	950	1026.02	980	1176.2	1220.3	1199.82	1330	

Source: Union Budget, various years

The table above shows that:

- The budget for Pre-matric scholarship for SCs has been very low in the years 2017-18 and 2018-19 before it increased again in 2019-20. But it was still much below the 2016-17 level in the year 2019-20.
- Budget for Pre-matric scholarship for OBCs is almost stagnant over the years.
- There has been a slow increase in the budget Pre-matric scholarship for STs and Minorities

Budget for the Pre-matric scholarship schemes in Rajasthan

The table below provides the budget allocation, revised budget and actual expenditure for these pre-matric scholarship schemes in the state of Rajasthan.

Table 5: Pre- Matric Scholarships for SC, ST, OBCs, Minority and Manual Scavengers (Rs. Crore)

Year	SCs	STs	OBCs	Children of Manual Scavengers	Minority	Total
2016-17 BE	89.22	86.70	27.34	12.00	45.21	260.47
2016-17 RE	82.46	80.08	24.15	9.67	45.21	241.57
2016-17 AE	33.96	37.80	18.00	6.39	1.79	97.95
2017-18 BE	89.00	85.50	24.20	10.00	45.21	253.91
2017-18 RE	97.00	75.00	40.40	8.00	45.21	265.61
2017-18 AE	49.63	39.83	25.96	4.88	0.00	120.30

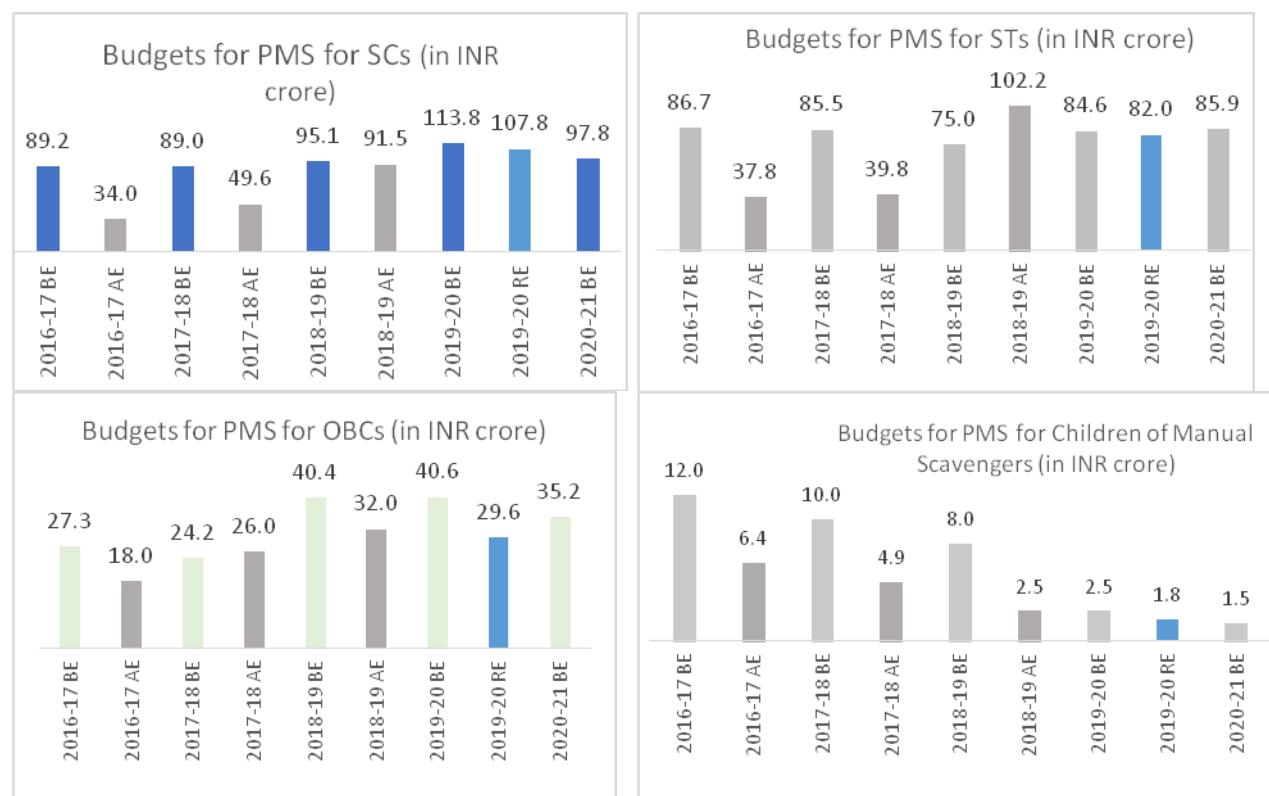
2018-19 BE	95.10	75.00	40.39	8.00	45.21	263.70
2018-19 RE	118.00	124.10	40.20	3.48	0.00	285.78
2018-19 AE	91.54	102.20	31.99	2.48	0.00	228.21
2019-20 BE	113.80	84.60	40.60	2.48	0.00	241.48
2019-20 RE	107.80	82.00	29.58	1.78	0.00	221.16
2020-21 BE	97.80	85.89	35.20	1.50	0.00	220.39

Source: State Budget Books, various years

Note: 1. Budget for OBCs children includes budget for EBCs children as also

2. The Pre-matric scholarship for minority children started being credited directly to the beneficiaries' account so it's not shown in actual expenditure and 2019-20 onwards the BE also started showing no amount (as per the information provided by the Department of Minority Affairs, GoR).

Chart 3: Budget for various pre-matric scholarship schemes



The table (5) and charts above showing the budget allocations for the various pre-matric scholarships by the state governments highlight the following trends:

- * Budget allocation and expenditure has been continuously declining for the scholarship for the children of manual scavengers during the year 2016-17 to 2020-21.
- * **Budget allocations** for the pre-matric scholarship scheme for the SC and TS children remained more or less stagnated during 2016-17 to 2020-21.

- * In 2020-21 the budget allocation for the pre-matric scholarship scheme for the SC and OBC children is less than previous year and is almost same for ST children
- * Budget allocation for the OBCs children, however, has increased slightly during this period.

As we saw above, the union budget for pre-matric scholarship schemes is showing fluctuations in allocations. It is important to understand how it has impacted the allocations in the state. The following table is showing the states government's allocation and amount provided as central share in various pre-matric scholarship programmes.

Table 6: Budget for pre-matric scholarships in Rajasthan-State and Centre's share (Rs. crores)

Year	Pre-matric scholarships for				
	SC	ST	OBC	MINORITY	Manual Scavengers
2016-17 BE	NP	39.22	35.70	0.53	0.00
	Plan	50.00	51.00	26.81	45.21
	CSS	41.00	42.50	7.21	45.21
	Total (NP+P)	89.22	86.70	27.34	45.21
2016-17 AE	NP	21.73	23.90	0.13	0.00
	Plan (CS included)	12.24	10.90	17.87	1.79
	Total (NP+P)	33.97	34.80	18.00	1.79
2017-18 BE	State	48.00	43.00	18.45	0.00
	Centre Share	41.00	42.50	5.75	45.21
	Total	89.00	85.50	24.20	45.21
2017-18 AE	State	33.34	33.05	19.93	0.00
	Centre Share	16.29	6.78	6.03	0.00
	Total	49.63	39.82	25.96	0.00
2018-19 BE	State	50.00	45.00	32.90	0.00
	Centre Share	45.10	30.00	7.49	45.21
	Total	95.10	75.00	40.39	45.21
2018-19 AE	State	63.38	58.84	17.08	0.00
	Centre Share	28.16	43.36	14.91	0.00
	Total	91.54	102.20	31.99	0.00
2019-20 BE	State	81.80	49.60	17.90	0.00
	Centre Share	32.00	35.00	22.70	0.00
	Total	113.80	84.60	40.60	0.00
2019-20 RE	State	75.80	37.00	14.00	0.00
	Centre Share	32.00	45.00	15.58	0.00
	Total	107.80	82.00	29.58	0.00
2020-20 BE	State	79.80	52.00	23.20	0.00
	Centre Share	18.00	33.89	12.00	0.00
	Total	97.80	85.89	35.20	0.00

Source: State budget books, various years

Not: NP - Non-Plan, P - Plan

Looking at the table above, there seems to be an impact of decline in the central budget for pre-matric scholarships on the state budget for the scheme evident from the fluctuations in central share for the scheme in the Rajasthan budget. Also, mostly the underutilization of the central share in the budget for the pre-matric scholarship is higher than the underutilization (if any) of the state share. In some years, the state government actually ended up spending more than the budget estimates (for example for pre-matric scholarships for SC and ST children in 2018-19).

Utilization of the allocated budget

The table below shows what percentage of the total allocated budget was utilized by the government each year by calculating the percentage of actual expenditure (AE) to the budget estimates (BE).

Table 7: Actual Expenditure as percentage of Budget Estimates in last four years

Pre-matric scholarship for	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 RE
SCs	38.06	55.76	96.25	94.72
STs	43.59	46.58	136.26	96.92
OBCs	65.84	107.25	79.19	72.86
Children of Manual Scavengers	53.27	48.84	31	71.68
Total	44.66	57.64	104.44	91.58

Source: Calculated from the Table 5.

Note: Total does not include budget for the pre-matric scholarship for minorities

The table above shows that the actual expenditure especially for SC, ST children and children of manual scavengers has been very low compared to the budgetary allocations. The actual expenditure for ST children has been less than 50% in the years 2016-17 and 2017-18 and has increased in later years. The actual expenditure for SC children has also been very low in first two years of analysis and has increased later.

The actual expenditure especially for children of manual scavengers remained low throughout the first three years and has shown some increase only in last years revised estimates (RE). The actual expenditure for OBC children is also lower but is better in comparison of other three groups.

However, on the positive side there seems to be considerable improvement in the actual expenditure under the scheme especially in last two years. According to the officials in the Directorate of Secondary Education, this could be attributed to the increased number of applications by students in recent years and also because of the payment of due amount of previous years.

Cost Estimation for the pre-matric scholarship schemes in Rajasthan

The budget utilization trends discussed in the above section shows that the government is not able to utilize the total budget allocated to the various pre-matric scholarships. There are various reasons to it as suggested by the studies referred above. But are the allocations enough to provide all the children of relevant social categories enrolled in the state in the classes 6 to 10. To know this we tried to assess the amount of fund which will be required to provide pre-matric scholarships to all the SC, ST and OBC children in the government schools. There are, however, challenges in conducting this exercise. Two main challenges which we faced are:

- * Lack of gender wise and social group wise data on enrolment in govt. schools
- * No class wise gender wise data available on children living in hostels

Methodology

We tried to overcome the above challenges and took data on enrolment available for this year and applied ratio of girls and boys in previous years on this year numbers. In order to assess the total resources required we adopted following methodology.

- * Data on group wise enrolment on govt. school children for the year 2020-21 is taken from Shaladarpan website
- * In this data gender wise break up has been assessed by applying the gender ratio in the total enrolment
- * The enrolment data for the year 2021-22 has been projected by increasing the 2020-21 numbers by 5% for classes 9-10 and has been kept same as 2020-21 for classes 6-8, based on the trends observed in the U-DISE data on enrolment during the last 5 years.
- * The unit cost for each scholarship has been taken as annual expenditure made by the govt. on each day-scholar girl and boy respectively.
- * Cost has been estimated by multiplying the number of girls and boys to the unit cost per annum.

Estimation of enrolment

The tables below provides the gender wise estimated number of children of various categories enrolled in the government schools in the years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Table 7: Class Group/Category Wise Enrollment 2020-21

Classes/ Social Group	ST			SC			OBC		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
6-8	253833	233277	487109	291440	267838	559278	430053	395227	825280
9-10	149478	146664	296142	189255	185693	374949	310778	304928	615705
6-10							740831	700155	144098
									5

Source: Calculated by research team base on Shaladarpan data

Table 8: Class Group/Category Wise Enrollment 2021-22 (after increase 5 % in 9-10 Class)

Classes/ Social Group	ST			SC			OBC		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
6-8	253833	233277	487109	291440	267838	559278	430053	395227	825280
9-10	156952	153998	310950	198718	194978	393696	326316	320174	646491
6-10							756369	715401	1471771

Source: Calculated by research team based on Shaladarpan data and previous years DISE data

Resource requirement

After calculating the estimated number of children in each category we calculated the total resource requirement by simply multiplying the number of estimated children in each category to the unit cost as given in the table 1 above. Since we do not have data on hosteller children we calculated the resource requirement using the unit cost for the day scholar children. The estimated resource required to provide pre-matric scholarship to all the children in the government schools in the state is shown in the table below:

Table 9: Current budget vs. estimated resource required to provide pre-matric scholarship (Rs. crores)

Pre- Matric Scholarships	2020-21	2020-21	2020-21	Gap in 2020-21 against Budget allocated	2021-22
	BE	AE*	Required Budget		Required Budget
SC	97.80	29.39	167.82	-70	173.45
ST	85.89	17.4	137.04	-51	141.48
OBC	35.20	NA	144.0985	-109	147.18

Total	220.39	NA	448.82	-230	462.11
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Source: Column 1 State Budget, 2020-21, Column 2 –IFMS website, Estimation of requirement and gap calculated by research team

The table above shows that there is a huge gap between the allocations being made now and the estimated requirement to provide pre-matric scholarships to all the government school children. The gap between the allocations and estimated requirement in current financial year (2020-21) is Rs. 230 crores. This resource gap is found in all three categories of scholarships. Now since the utilization is increased in the recent years and more and more children are likely to apply for the pre-matric scholarship with the rising awareness of the same it is critically important to increase the allocations and bridge this gap.

Concluding remarks:

The pre-matric scholarships are important schemes having positive impact on retaining the children in schools and helping them to complete more years of education. According to one study only 44% children have been reported to get benefit of the schemes. However, considering the improved budget utilisation under the scheme, it can be said that the popularity of scheme seems to be on rise and more and more children are likely to apply in coming years. The mechanism of applying and getting the benefit of the scholarship schemes should be further improved and made easier for the marginalized children.

The budget allocation for the scheme has to be increased substantially if all/majority of the children are to be covered under the schemes. Budget also needs to be increased as there seems to be backlog for previous years. The budget for SC and ST children should be doubled from the present level and for OBC should be increased almost 5 times if all the children of the government schools are to be covered under the scheme.