

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE TAMIL PUTHALVAN WELFARE SCHEME ON HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS, SKILL DEVELOPMENT, AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES IN TAMIL NADU- AN EVALUATION

Dr. G. YOGANANDHAM,

Professor, Department of Economics, Thiruvalluvar University (A State University) Serkkadu, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu, India- 632 115.

ABSTRACT: This study evaluates the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu and its effect on higher education students. The scheme aims to improve access to college, support skill development, and increase employment opportunities for students from poor and rural backgrounds. Using data from 70 students in government colleges in Vellore, the study finds that most students are aware of the scheme and credit it with helping them enroll in college and stay in education. The scheme provides monthly financial aid of ₹1,000, which reduces financial barriers and encourages students to continue their studies. It also promotes skill development in areas like digital literacy, vocational training, soft skills, and entrepreneurship, making students more job-ready.

Many students benefited from internships and career guidance, which improved their chances of finding good jobs. The study shows that the scheme has significantly increased college enrollment and reduced dropout rates, especially among disadvantaged groups. Analysis indicates that the scheme's impact varies across colleges, highlighting the need for targeted improvements. Overall, the scheme contributes positively to educational access, skill acquisition, and employment prospects, helping to build a skilled workforce and support economic growth in Tamil Nadu. The findings suggest that continued and increased support can further enhance the scheme's benefits, promoting social mobility and inclusive development in the state. In this perspective, the study examines critical and rapidly evolving issues that are becoming increasingly significant in today's interconnected global context.

KEYWORDS: Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme, Skill Development, Employment Opportunities, Financial Aid, Financial Barriers, Digital Literacy, Vocational Training, and Soft Skills.

The theme of the article

Education is a crucial instrument for personal, social, and economic development. In Tamil Nadu, higher education has witnessed significant reforms aimed at improving accessibility, enhancing skill development, and increasing employment opportunities for students. Among such initiatives, the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme has been implemented to provide financial assistance, scholarships, and skill development programs to students from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. This scheme aims to reduce barriers to higher education, encourage academic continuity, and equip students with employable skills, thereby improving their socio-economic outcomes. The welfare scheme is particularly important in bridging the gap in educational opportunities among students from rural and urban areas. By supporting students in their higher education journey, the scheme also indirectly contributes to the state's economic development and human capital formation.

Background of the Study

Higher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of students and the broader society. In Tamil Nadu, government initiatives such as the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme are designed to facilitate access to education for marginalized groups. Despite these efforts, students often face challenges related to financial constraints, lack of skill training, and limited employment opportunities. Evaluating the effectiveness of such schemes is crucial to understanding their impact on students' educational achievements, skill acquisition, and employability. This study focuses on assessing the scheme's outcomes with a view to offering policy insights for further improvement.

Statement of the Problem

Many students in Tamil Nadu, especially those from rural and underprivileged backgrounds, encounter difficulties in pursuing higher education due to economic, social, and infrastructural constraints. While the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme is intended to alleviate these barriers, the degree to which it has been successful in enhancing educational access, skill development, and employment prospects remains under-explored. This study seeks to evaluate the scheme's impact on students' academic progression, skill acquisition, and employment outcomes in selected government arts colleges of Vellore District.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme on higher education students in Tamil Nadu, with special reference to:

1. To assess how the scheme facilitates enrollment and retention in higher education.
2. To examine the role of the scheme in enhancing students' vocational and soft skills.
3. To analyze the scheme's influence on students' employability and job prospects.
4. To explore how the scheme contributes to improving students' social and economic status.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following key questions:

- ❖ How has the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme influenced access to higher education and skill development among beneficiary students in Tamil Nadu?
- ❖ How has the scheme affected employment opportunities of beneficiaries, and what challenges continue to limit its overall effectiveness despite implementation?

Hypotheses of the Study

- ❖ The Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme significantly enhances educational access for higher education students.
- ❖ The scheme contributes positively to students' skill development.
- ❖ Beneficiaries of the scheme have better employment outcomes compared to non-beneficiaries.

Significance of the Study

This study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in promoting higher education among underprivileged students. The findings will help policymakers and educational institutions understand the strengths and limitations of the scheme and make informed decisions to improve its implementation. Furthermore, the study highlights the link between welfare interventions, skill development, and employability, contributing to broader socio-economic development in Tamil Nadu.

Research Methodology

The research methodology used to evaluate the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu and its impact on higher education students, with special reference to educational access, skill development, and employment outcome prospects. The study was conducted among students of selected government arts colleges in Vellore District. The study adopted a descriptive research design, as it is suitable for systematically collecting and analyzing data to understand the impact of the scheme. This design helped in identifying patterns and differences in educational access, skill development, and employment-related outcomes among students. The population of the study included students enrolled in government arts colleges in Vellore District who were eligible beneficiaries of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme. Students from different years of study, socio-economic backgrounds, and genders were included.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents, as only beneficiaries of the scheme were relevant for the study. A total of 70 students were selected from six government arts colleges in the Vellore district ensuring fair representation from each institution. For data collection, a structured questionnaire was used to gather quantitative information on educational access, skill development, and employment readiness. Personal interviews were conducted to validate responses and collect qualitative insights. Observation was also used to verify students' participation in training and skill-development activities under the scheme. Data were collected after obtaining permission from college authorities, and confidentiality was assured to all respondents. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis, mean scores, Chi-square test, and ANOVA to examine variations across colleges and student categories. The results helped assess the overall educational, social, and economic impact of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme. The details of the Sample Distribution of Respondents across Colleges in the study area are stated in table – 1.

Table - 1
Sample Distribution of Respondents across Colleges in the study area

S. No	Name of College	Location	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Government Thirumagal Mills College	Gudiyattam	15	21.43
2.	Muthurangam Government Arts College	Vellore	10	14.29
3.	Arignar Anna Government Arts College	Walajapettai	15	21.43
4.	Dr MGR Government Arts College	Madhanur	10	14.29
5.	Sholingur Government Arts College	Sholingur	10	14.29
6.	Government Arts College	Serkkadu	10	14.29
Total			70	100

Review of literature

A literature review forms the base of any research by summarizing earlier studies, identifying research gaps, and setting the background for the present study. This chapter reviews earlier research related to the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme, other welfare programs in Tamil Nadu, and their influence on higher education students, particularly in terms of access to education, skill development, and employment outcomes. Several studies highlight that access to higher education is strongly supported by welfare initiatives. Yoganandham. G (2020) examined welfare-based educational support schemes in Tamil Nadu and found that financial assistance significantly improved college attendance among rural and first-generation students. The study highlighted reduced economic burden as a key factor for continuity in higher education. Yoganandham. G (2021) analyzed the role of student welfare schemes in enhancing academic performance and motivation. The findings showed that beneficiaries displayed better classroom participation and lower dropout tendencies.

Rajan (2017) pointed out that scholarship schemes improve college enrollment among economically weaker students. Similarly, Selvakumar (2018) observed that financial support under Tamil Nadu welfare programs reduced dropout rates in rural colleges. Yoganandham.G (2022) focused on skill development initiatives linked with educational welfare programs. The study revealed that training in digital and soft skills improved employability among government college students. Subramanian and Krishnan (2020) found that schemes such as Tamil Puthalvan increased enrollment and retention, especially among first-generation learners, by combining financial aid with academic guidance.

Yoganandham.G (2023) studied the impact of welfare schemes on employment readiness of graduates in Tamil Nadu. The research reported higher placement rates among students receiving scholarships and career guidance. Skill development is another important outcome of welfare schemes. Ramesh (2016) and Anitha and Kumar (2019) noted that vocational and soft-skill training improved students' confidence, employability, and job readiness. Pradeep (2021) further reported better computer skills and problem-solving abilities among beneficiaries. Studies on employment outcomes show positive results. Yoganandham. G (2024) evaluated recent welfare reforms with emphasis on inclusive education. The study concluded that integrated financial aid and counseling services strengthened long-term career prospects of students. Ravindran (2017) and Karthik and Nirmala (2022) found higher placement rates and career growth among supported students. Recent studies (2022–2026) also emphasize digital skills, entrepreneurship, and career counseling under the Tamil Puthalvan Scheme, leading to improved academic motivation and employment prospects. The details of the Age-wise Distribution of Respondents in the study area are stated in table – 1

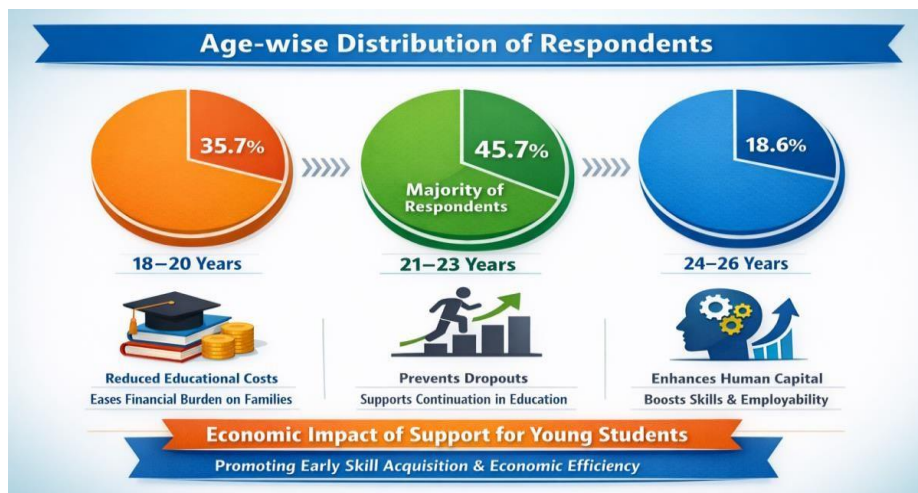
Table - 2
Age-wise Distribution of Respondents in the study area

S. No.	Age Group (Years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	18–20	25	35.7
2.	21–23	32	45.7
3.	24–26	13	18.6
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 2 shows the age-wise distribution of respondents in the study area. The majority of the respondents (45.7%) belong to the 21–23 years' age group, followed by 35.7% in the 18–20 years' category. Only 18.6% of the respondents fall in the 24–26 years' group. This distribution indicates that most beneficiaries are in the prime age of higher education, when financial support plays a crucial role in sustaining academic participation.

Figure – 1



Economically, assistance during this stage reduces the burden of educational expenses on households, prevents dropouts due to income constraints, and enhances human capital formation. The lower proportion in the higher age group suggests relatively timely entry into higher education, reflecting the scheme's positive role in promoting economic efficiency through early skill acquisition. The details of the Gender Distribution of Respondents in the study area are presented in table – 3.

Table - 3
Gender Distribution of Respondents in the study area

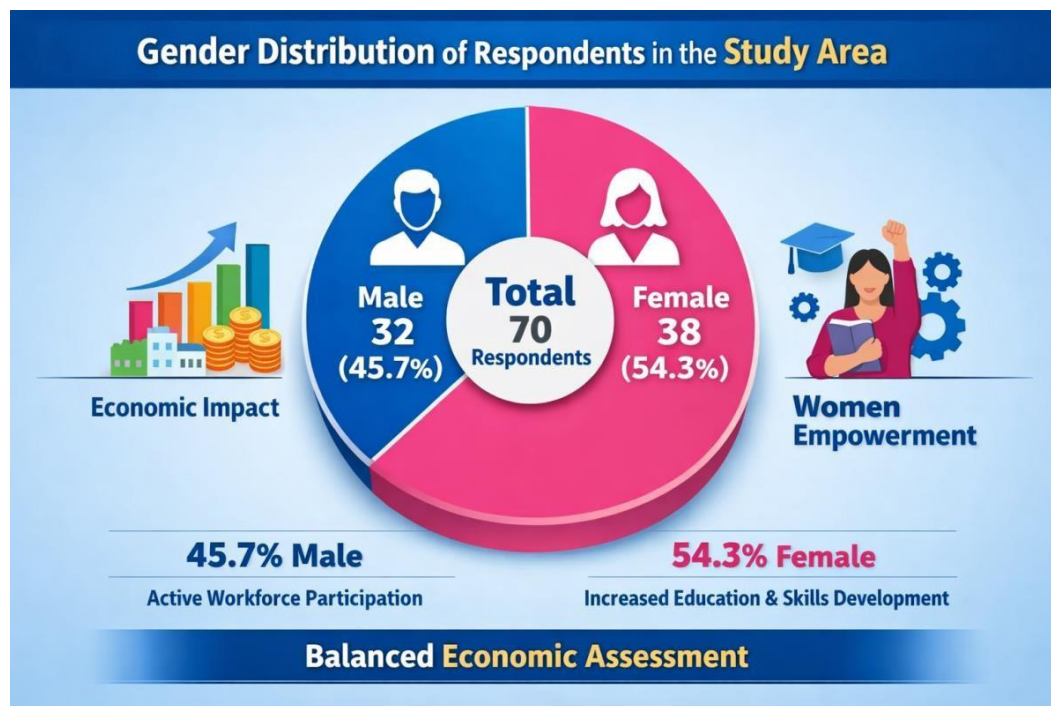
S. No.	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Male	32	45.7
2.	Female	38	54.3
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Data shown in table – 3, reveals that the gender-wise distribution of respondents indicates a relatively balanced representation, with females constituting a slightly higher proportion of the sample. Out of 70 respondents, 38 are female (54.3 per cent) and 32 are male (45.7 per cent). The marginal dominance of female respondents

suggests increased participation and engagement of women in the study area.

Figure – 2



From an economic impact assessment perspective, this higher female representation is significant, as it reflects the growing role of women in accessing education, welfare schemes, and skill development initiatives. Enhanced female participation contributes to improved human capital formation, greater labour force participation, and long-term household income stability. The near parity between genders also ensures inclusiveness, enabling a balanced evaluation of economic outcomes and policy impacts across both male and female respondents. The details of the Awareness of the Scheme in the study area are given in table –3.

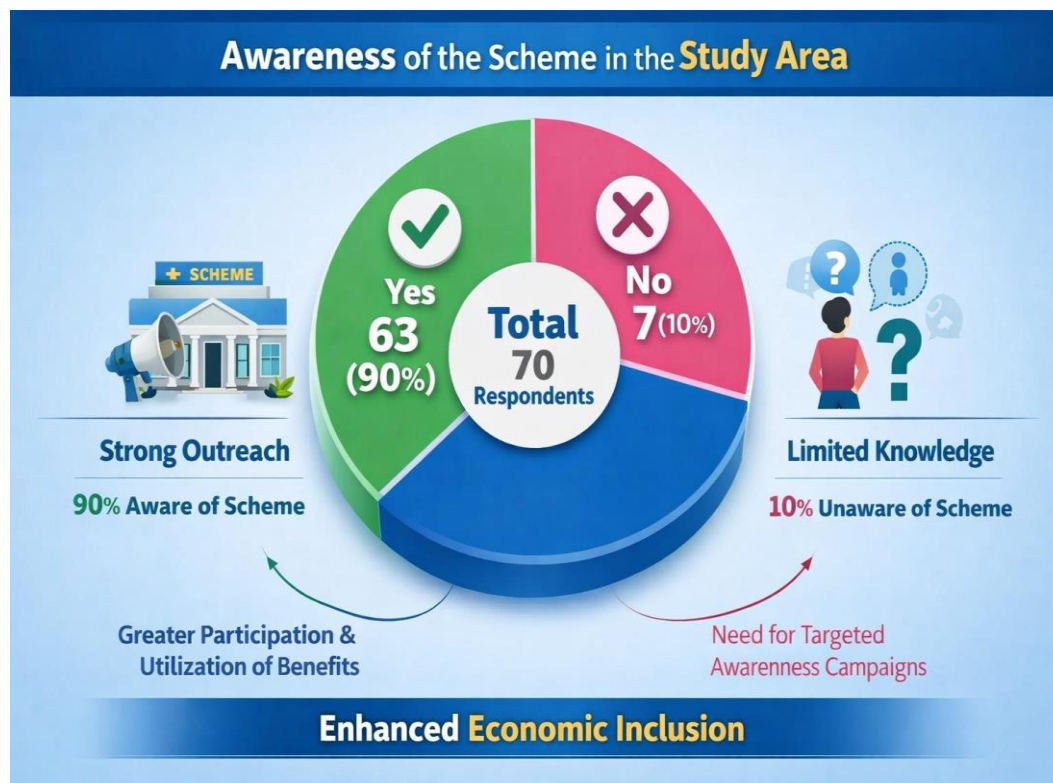
Table -4
Awareness of the Scheme in the study area

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	63	90
2.	No	7	10
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table – 4, shows a very high level of awareness about the scheme among the respondents in the study area. Out of 70 respondents, 63 (90 per cent) reported that they are aware of the scheme, while only 7 respondents (10 per cent) are not aware of it. This high awareness level indicates effective dissemination of information through government institutions and educational channels.

Figure – 3



From an economic impact assessment perspective, greater awareness enhances scheme utilization, leading to improved access to financial assistance, educational support, and skill development opportunities. Increased participation helps reduce economic barriers, strengthens human capital formation, and improves employability outcomes. Conversely, the small proportion of unaware respondents highlights the need for targeted outreach to ensure inclusive economic benefits across all sections. The details of the Impact on College Enrollment are presented in table – 5.

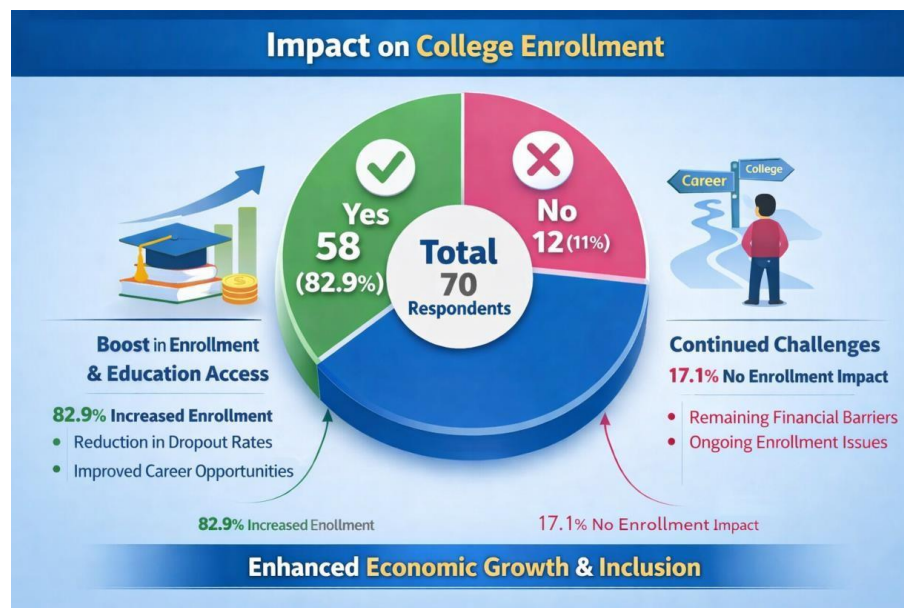
Table - 5
Impact on College Enrollment

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	58	82.9
2.	No	12	17.1
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table - 5 reveals that a substantial majority of respondents perceive a positive impact of the scheme on college enrollment. Out of 70 respondents, 58 (82.9 per cent) reported that the scheme has contributed to increased college enrollment, while 12 respondents (17.1 per cent) did not perceive such an impact. This high level of affirmative response indicates that the scheme plays a significant role in reducing financial and social barriers to higher education.

Figure – 4



From an economic impact assessment perspective, increased college enrollment enhances human capital formation, improves skill accumulation, and raises future employability and income potential. Higher enrollment rates also contribute to long-term economic growth by expanding the educated workforce and supporting inclusive development in the study area. The details of the Reduction in Dropout Rate are stated in table – 6.

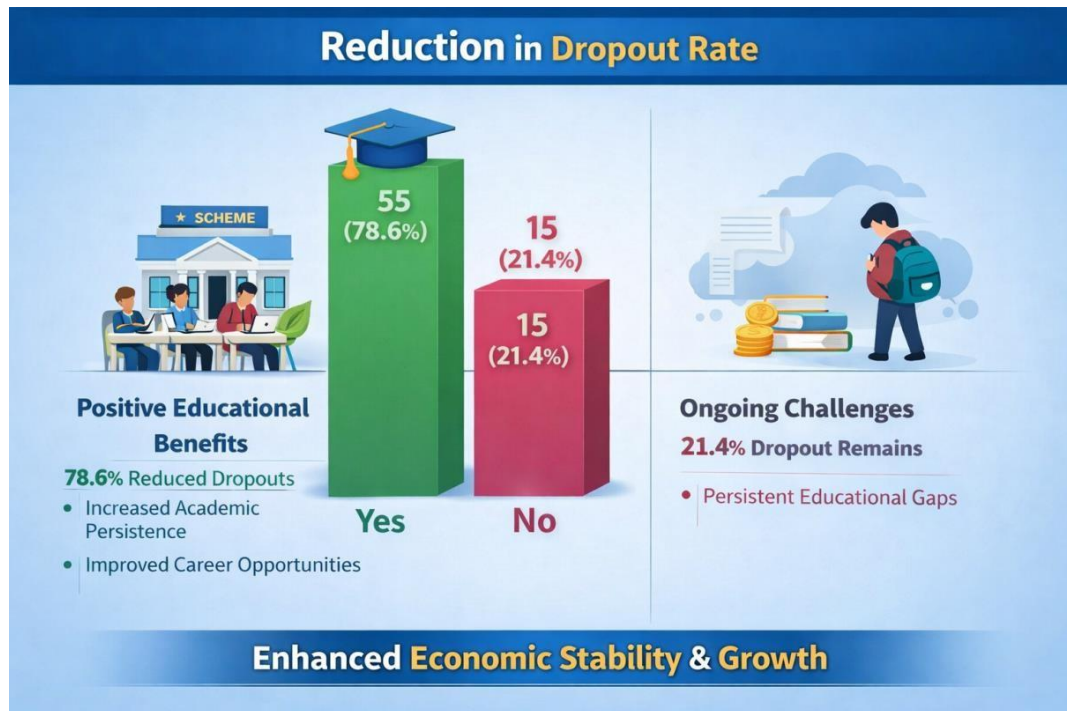
Table – 6
Reduction in Dropout Rate

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	55	78.6
2.	No	15	21.4
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table – 6, indicates that a majority of respondents experienced a reduction in dropout rates due to the scheme. Out of 70 respondents, 55 (78.6 per cent) agreed that the scheme helped reduce dropout rates, while 15 respondents (21.4 per cent) reported no such impact.

Figure - .5



From an economic impact assessment perspective, reduced dropout rates contribute to sustained educational attainment, better skill formation, and higher future earning potential. Continued education lowers long-term unemployment risks and strengthens human capital, thereby supporting inclusive economic development and productivity growth in the study area. The details of the Access to Books and Study Materials are stated in table – 7.

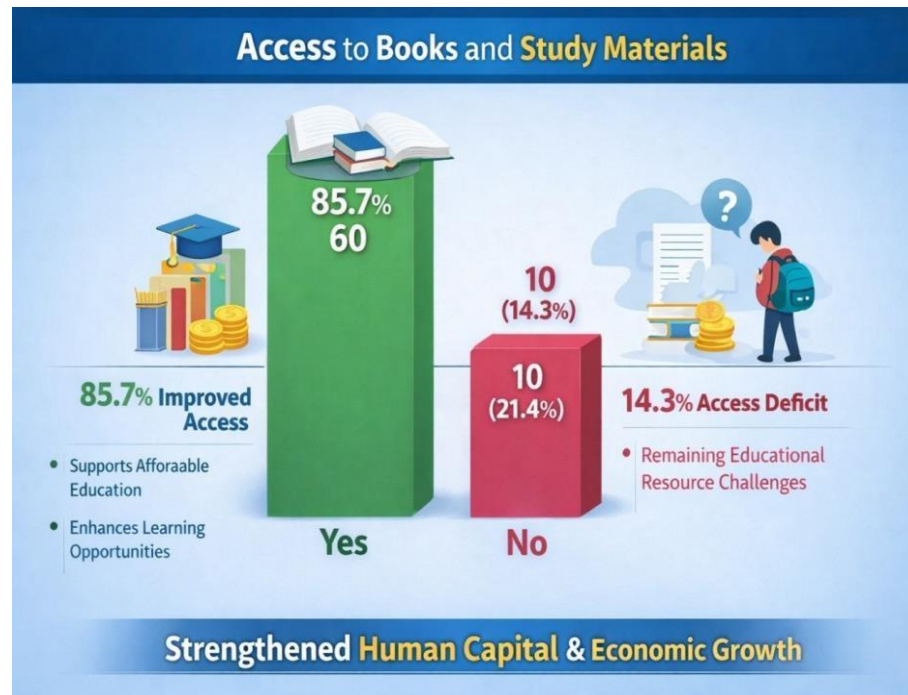
Table - 7
Access to Books and Study Materials

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	60	85.7
2.	No	10	14.3
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table – 7, shows that a large majority of respondents reported improved access to books and study materials due to the scheme. Out of 70 respondents, 60 (85.7 per cent) affirmed that they have access to necessary books and study materials, while only 10 respondents (14.3 per cent) reported a lack of access. From an economic impact assessment perspective, enhanced access to learning resources reduces out-of-pocket educational expenditure for households and supports academic continuity.

Figure – 6



Availability of study materials improves learning outcomes, skill development, and academic performance, which in turn strengthens human capital formation. This contributes to higher future employability, income potential, and long-term economic productivity in the study area. The details of the Influence on Academic Motivation are presented in table – 8.

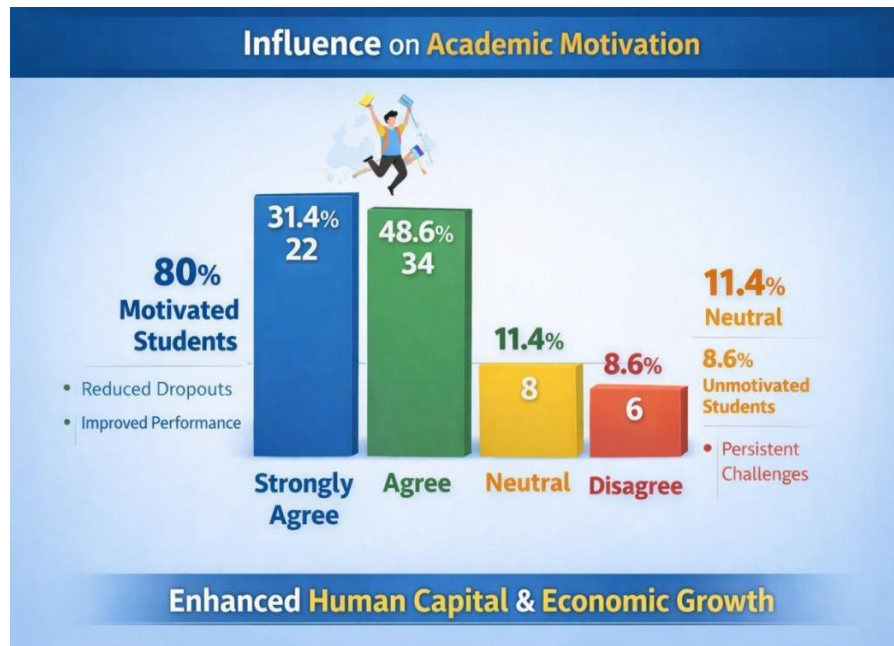
Table - 8
Influence on Academic Motivation

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Strongly Agree	22	31.4
2.	Agree	34	48.6
3.	Neutral	8	11.4
4.	Disagree	6	8.6
5.	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table -8, indicates a strong positive influence of the scheme on academic motivation among respondents. Out of 70 respondents, 56 students (80 per cent) either strongly agree (31.4 per cent) or agree (48.6 per cent) that the scheme has enhanced their academic motivation. Only 8 respondents (11.4 per cent) remained neutral, while a small proportion, 6 respondents (8.6 per cent), expressed disagreement, and none strongly disagreed.

Figure – 7



From an economic impact assessment perspective, higher academic motivation leads to improved academic performance, reduced dropout rates, and better skill acquisition. This strengthens human capital formation, enhances employability, and contributes to long-term economic productivity and inclusive growth in the study area. The details of the Vocational Skills Development are stated in table – 9

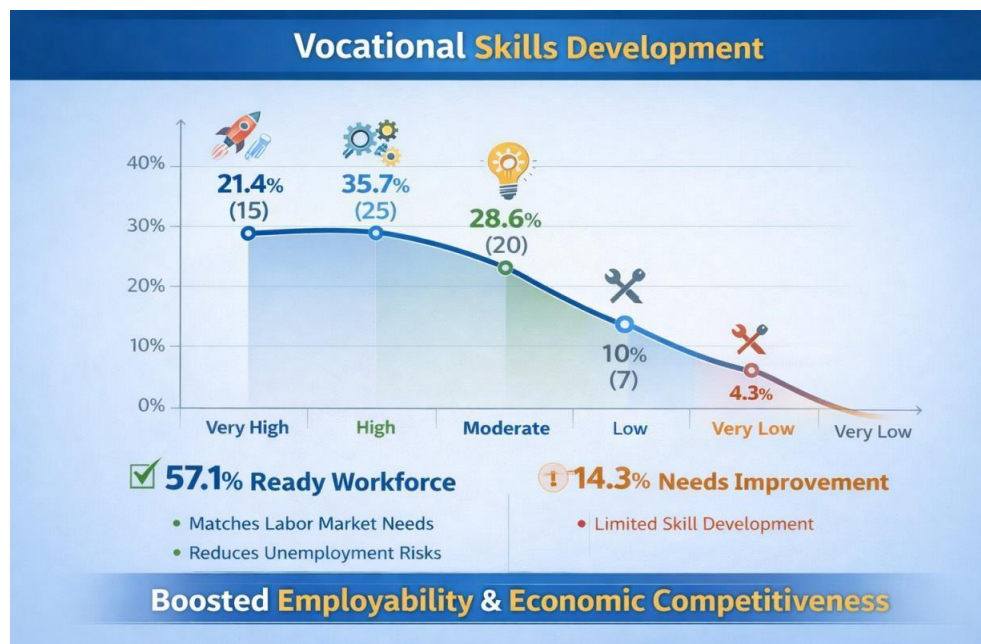
Table - 9
Vocational Skills Development

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	15	21.4
2.	High	25	35.7
3.	Moderate	20	28.6
4.	Low	7	10
5.	Very Low	3	4.3
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table -9, indicates that a substantial proportion of respondents experienced positive vocational skills development due to the scheme. Out of 70 respondents, 40 students (57.1 per cent) reported a high or very high level of skill development, while 20 respondents (28.6 per cent) perceived a moderate impact. Only 10 respondents (14.3 per cent) reported low or very low skill development.

Figure – 8



From an economic impact assessment perspective, enhanced vocational skills improve employability, productivity, and income-generating capacity of students. Skill acquisition aligned with labour market needs supports workforce readiness, reduces unemployment risks, and contributes to sustainable economic growth and inclusive development in the study area. The details of the Digital Literacy Enhancement are given in table – 10.

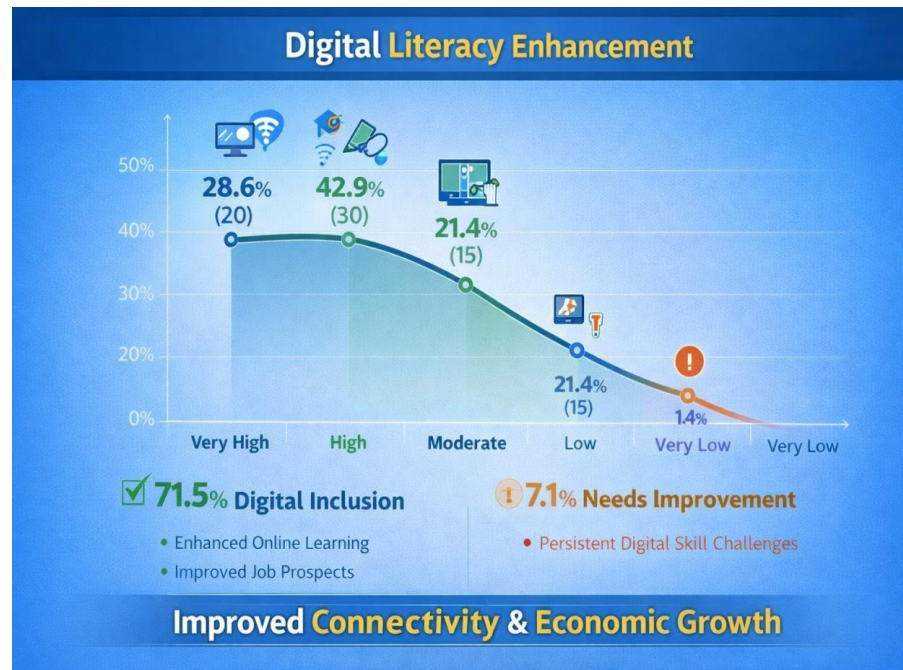
Table- 10
Digital Literacy Enhancement

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	20	28.6
2.	High	30	42.9
3.	Moderate	15	21.4
4.	Low	4	5.7
5.	Very Low	1	1.4
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table – 10, shows that the scheme has significantly enhanced digital literacy among respondents. Out of 70 participants, 50 respondents (71.5 per cent) reported a high or very high improvement in digital skills, 15 respondents (21.4 per cent) reported moderate enhancement, and only 5 respondents (7.1 per cent) experienced low or very low improvement.

Figure – 9



From an economic impact assessment perspective, improved digital literacy strengthens students' ability to access online learning, e-resources, and digital job opportunities. It enhances employability, supports participation in the digital economy, reduces skill gaps, and contributes to inclusive economic growth and productivity in the study area. The details of the Soft Skills Development (Communication, Teamwork) are stated in table – 11.

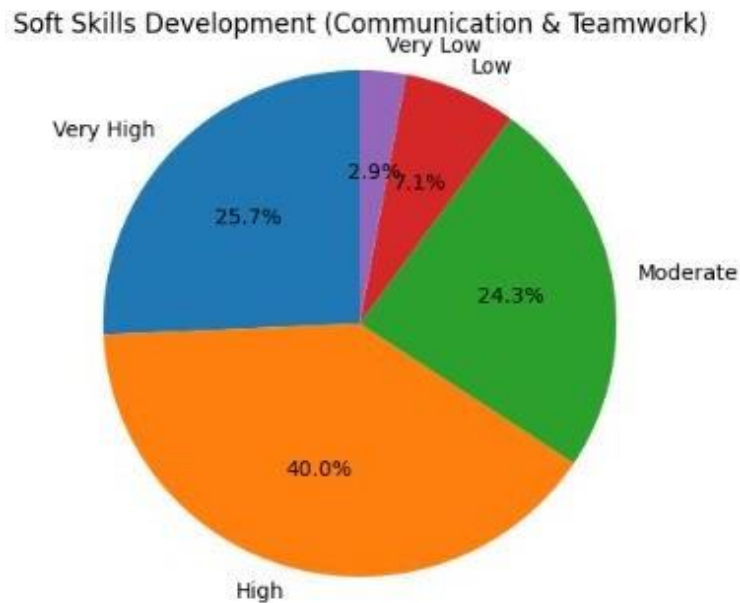
Table - 11
Soft Skills Development (Communication, Teamwork)

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	18	25.7
2.	High	28	40
3.	Moderate	17	24.3
4.	Low	5	7.1
5.	Very Low	2	2.9
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

The table -11, indicates a strong impact of the scheme on soft skills development, including communication and teamwork. Out of 70 respondents, 46 students (65.7 per cent) reported a high or very high improvement, 17 respondents (24.3 per cent) experienced moderate development, and only 7 respondents (10 per cent) reported low or very low enhancement.

Figure – 10



From an economic impact assessment perspective, improved soft skills increase employability, workplace adaptability, and productivity. Strong communication and teamwork abilities enhance career prospects, facilitate efficient organizational performance, and contribute to the development of human capital. This, in turn, supports inclusive economic growth and competitiveness in the study area. The details of the Entrepreneurship & Innovation Skills are presented in table – 12.

Table – 12
Entrepreneurship & Innovation Skills

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	10	14.3
2.	High	22	31.4
3.	Moderate	25	35.7
4.	Low	8	11.4
5.	Very Low	5	7.1
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table 12 indicates that entrepreneurship and innovation skills among respondents are largely at a moderate to high level. A majority of respondents (35.7%) reported a *moderate* level of skills, while a substantial proportion (31.4%) indicated a *high* level and 14.3% a *very high* level. This suggests a reasonable capacity for entrepreneurial thinking, which can positively contribute to economic growth, self-employment, and innovation- led development.

Figure – 11



However, the presence of respondents with *low* (11.4%) and *very low* (7.1%) skill levels highlights the need for targeted training and policy interventions to strengthen entrepreneurial capabilities and enhance overall economic impact. The details of the Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills are given in table – 13.

Table - 13
Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	12	17.1
2.	High	28	40
3.	Moderate	22	31.4
4.	Low	6	8.6
5.	Very Low	2	2.9
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 13, indicates that a substantial majority of respondents report strong problem-solving and critical thinking skills, with 57.1% falling under the High and Very High categories. This suggests a positive economic impact, as such skills enhance productivity, efficient resource utilization, and informed decision-making. A further 31.4% show a Moderate level, indicating potential for skill upgradation through targeted training.

Figure – 12



Only 11.5% fall under Low and Very Low, implying limited economic inefficiency risks. Overall, the findings reflect a workforce with considerable cognitive capacity to support innovation, employability, and sustainable economic development. The details of the Internship Opportunities Provided by the Scheme are given in table – 14.

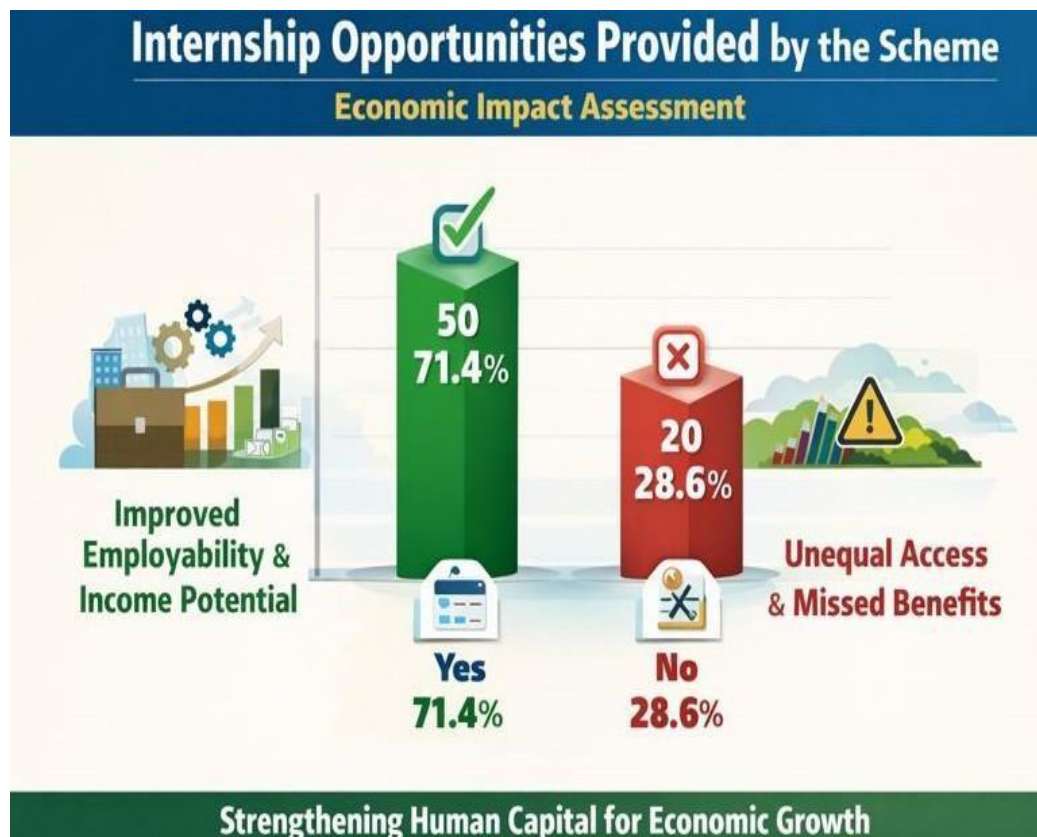
Table - 14
Internship Opportunities Provided by the Scheme

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	50	71.4
2.	No	20	28.6
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 14, reveals that a significant majority of respondents (71.4%) benefited from internship opportunities provided by the scheme, indicating a strong positive economic impact. Internships enhance practical skills, workplace exposure, and job readiness, thereby improving employability and future income potential. This contributes to productivity growth and smoother school-to-work transitions.

Figure - 13



However, 28.6% did not receive such opportunities, suggesting unequal access and missed economic benefits. Expanding internship coverage could further strengthen human capital formation, reduce unemployment risks, and maximize the scheme's contribution to sustainable economic development. The details of the Improvement in Job Readiness are presented in table – 15.

Table – 15
Improvement in Job Readiness

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very High	18	25.7
2.	High	30	42.9
3.	Moderate	15	21.4
4.	Low	5	7.1
5.	Very Low	2	2.9
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 15, shows that a strong majority of respondents experienced notable improvement in job readiness, with 68.6% reporting High or Very High levels. This reflects a positive economic impact, as enhanced job readiness increases employability, reduces skill mismatch, and supports faster entry into the labour market. A further 21.4% reported Moderate improvement, indicating scope for additional training interventions.

Figure – 14



Only 10% reported Low or Very Low improvement, suggesting limited inefficiency. Overall, the findings highlight the scheme's effectiveness in strengthening human capital and contributing to productivity growth and employment generation. The details of the Career Guidance & Counseling are stated in table – 16.

Table - 16
Career Guidance & Counseling

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Helpful	20	28.6
2.	Helpful	32	45.7
3.	Neutral	12	17.1
4.	Not Helpful	6	8.6
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 16, indicates that career guidance and counseling under the scheme have a strong positive economic impact. A majority of respondents (74.3%) found the services Very Helpful or Helpful, suggesting improved career planning, better job matching, and reduced frictional unemployment. This support enhances human capital utilization and future earning potential.

Figure – 15



Meanwhile, 17.1% remained Neutral, indicating scope for improved relevance or outreach. Only 8.6% found it Not Helpful, reflecting minimal inefficiency. Overall, effective career guidance contributes to informed labor market decisions, productivity growth, and sustainable economic development. The details of the Overall Satisfaction with Employment Opportunities are stated in table - 17.

Table - 17
Overall Satisfaction with Employment Opportunities

S. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Very Satisfactory	18	25.7
2.	Satisfactory	32	45.7
3.	Neutral	12	17.1
4.	Unsatisfactory	8	11.5
Total		70	100

Source: Primary data.

Table - 17 shows that a large majority of respondents (71.4%) expressed Very Satisfactory or Satisfactory levels of satisfaction with employment opportunities, indicating a strong positive economic impact of the scheme. High satisfaction reflects improved job availability, better income prospects, and effective alignment between skills and labor market demand.

Figure – 16



The Neutral response (17.1%) suggests scope for further enhancement in job quality or placement support. However, 11.5% reported dissatisfaction, pointing to remaining employment gaps. Overall, the findings highlight the scheme's contribution to employment generation, workforce stability, and sustainable economic development.

Table - 18
Mean Scores of Dimensions

S. No.	Dimension	Mean Score
1.	Educational Access	4.01
2.	Academic Continuity	3.89
3.	Skill Development	3.76
4.	Employment Outcomes	3.68

Table - 18, presents the mean scores of key dimensions reflecting the economic impact of the scheme. Educational Access recorded the highest mean score (4.01), indicating strong support for human capital formation. Academic Continuity (3.89) further suggests reduced dropout rates and sustained educational investment.

Figure – 17



Skill Development (3.76) reflects moderate enhancement of employability-related competencies, while Employment Outcomes (3.68), though comparatively lower, still indicate a positive labour market impact. Overall, the results highlight that the scheme contributes effectively to long-term economic development by strengthening education pathways, improving skills, and gradually enhancing employment prospects. The details of the ANOVA – Skill Development Across Colleges are presented in table – 19.

Table - 19
ANOVA – Skill Development Across Colleges

Source	F Value	p-value	Result
Between Colleges	3.12	0.028	Significant at 5% level

Table - 19, presents the ANOVA results examining skill development across colleges. The calculated F value of 3.12 with a p-value of 0.028 indicates a statistically significant difference at the 5% level. This implies that the scheme's impact on skill development varies across institutions. From an economic impact perspective, such variation suggests unequal efficiency in human capital formation, possibly due to differences in infrastructure, training quality, or industry linkage. Addressing these disparities can enhance overall skill outcomes, improve employability, and ensure more balanced economic returns from public investment in education.

Hypothesis

(H_0) : There is no significant difference in skill development among students across different colleges.

(H_1) : There is a significant difference in skill development among students across different colleges.

Since the ANOVA results show an F value of 3.12 and a p-value of 0.028 (< 0.05), the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This confirms that skill development outcomes differ significantly across colleges, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to ensure uniform economic impact. The details of the Chi-Square Test – Educational Access by Gender are stated in table – 20.

Table - 20
Chi-Square Test – Educational Access by Gender

Variable	χ^2 Value	p-value	Result
Educational Access	1.87	0.17	Not Significant

Table - 20, presents the Chi-Square test examining educational access by gender. The χ^2 value of 1.87 with a p-value of 0.17 indicates no statistically significant difference, meaning male and female students have similar access to educational opportunities under the scheme. From an economic impact perspective, this suggests gender equity in human capital formation, ensuring that both genders contribute equally to skill development and future productivity. Such balanced access supports inclusive economic growth and reduces disparities in labor market participation, promoting sustainable development and optimal utilization of educational investments.

Hypothesis

(H₀): There is no significant association between gender and educational access; males and females have equal access to education under the scheme.

(H₁): There is a significant association between gender and educational access; males and females do not have equal access to education under the scheme.

Since the Chi-Square test yielded a p-value of 0.17 (> 0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating gender does not significantly influence educational access, reflecting equitable human capital development and inclusive economic benefits. The details of the Chi-Square Test with reference to Employment Opportunities by Year of Study are stated in table – 21.

Table - 21
Chi-Square Test – Employment Opportunities by Year of Study

Variable	χ^2 Value	p-value	Result
Employment Opportunities	4.95	0.08	Not Significant

Table - 21, shows the Chi-Square test analyzing employment opportunities by students' year of study. The χ^2 value of 4.95 with a p-value of 0.08 indicates no statistically significant difference, suggesting that employment opportunities under the scheme are similar across first, second, and final-year students. From an economic perspective, this implies that the scheme provides uniform access to work-related experiences and placements, ensuring consistent skill accumulation and labor market readiness. Such equitable exposure strengthens human capital development, enhances employability across cohorts, and supports sustained economic growth through a well-prepared and evenly distributed workforce.

Hypothesis

(H₀): There is no significant association between a student's year of study and the employment opportunities they receive under the scheme.

(H₁): There is a significant association between a student's year of study and the employment opportunities they receive under the scheme.

Since the Chi-Square test yielded a p-value of 0.08 (> 0.05), the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating that employment opportunities are not significantly influenced by the year of study, ensuring equitable human capital development and economic benefits across cohorts.

An Economic Impact Assessment of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme on Higher Education, Skill Development, and Employment Outcomes in Tamil Nadu

The Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme is an important social and economic initiative launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu in 2024 with the objective of improving access to higher education among male students from economically weaker sections. The scheme provides a monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000 to students who studied in government and government-aided schools and are currently pursuing higher education. By directly addressing financial constraints, the scheme plays a vital role in strengthening human capital

formation and promoting inclusive economic growth in the state.

One of the major economic impacts of the Tamil Puthalvan scheme is the enhancement of educational access. Many students from low-income families discontinue their studies after higher secondary education due to rising costs such as tuition fees, transportation, learning materials, and living expenses. The monthly assistance reduces this financial burden and acts as a strong incentive for students to enroll in colleges and continue their studies. During the 2024–25 academic year, the state government allocated around ₹360 crore for the scheme, benefiting approximately 3.28 lakh students across Tamil Nadu. This large coverage indicates the government's commitment to increasing the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), which in Tamil Nadu is already higher than the national average. Financial support of this nature has been shown to reduce dropout rates and improve retention in higher education institutions. The scheme also contributes indirectly to skill development by enabling students to remain within the formal education system. Continued participation in higher education allows students to acquire academic, technical, digital, and soft skills that are essential for today's labor market. Beneficiaries often gain access to complementary state initiatives such as skill training programs, internships, career guidance, and digital learning platforms.

These opportunities improve students' employability and productivity. Studies on education economics consistently show that individuals with higher education and skill training have better employment prospects and higher earning potential compared to those with only school-level education. From an employment perspective, the Tamil Puthalvan scheme strengthens the long-term economic outcomes of beneficiaries. Higher education significantly increases job readiness and access to formal employment. In Tamil Nadu, skill-linked education initiatives have already helped lakhs of students secure employment or improve their income levels. By supporting students through financial assistance during their college years, the scheme ensures a steady supply of skilled and educated youth to the labor market. This contributes to reduced unemployment, higher labor force participation, and improved productivity in sectors such as services, manufacturing, education, and technology.

The scheme also promotes social equity and economic inclusion. By focusing on students from government schools, who largely come from disadvantaged backgrounds, the program reduces inequality in educational opportunities. It helps break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by enabling students to achieve upward social and economic mobility. Over time, the cumulative effect of improved education, skills, and employment outcomes contributes to inclusive and sustainable economic development in Tamil Nadu. In short, the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme has a positive and meaningful economic impact. By improving access to higher education, supporting skill development, and enhancing employment prospects, the scheme strengthens human capital and promotes inclusive growth. With sustained funding and effective implementation, it can significantly contribute to the long-term economic and social development of Tamil Nadu. The details of the Economic Impact Assessment of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 22.

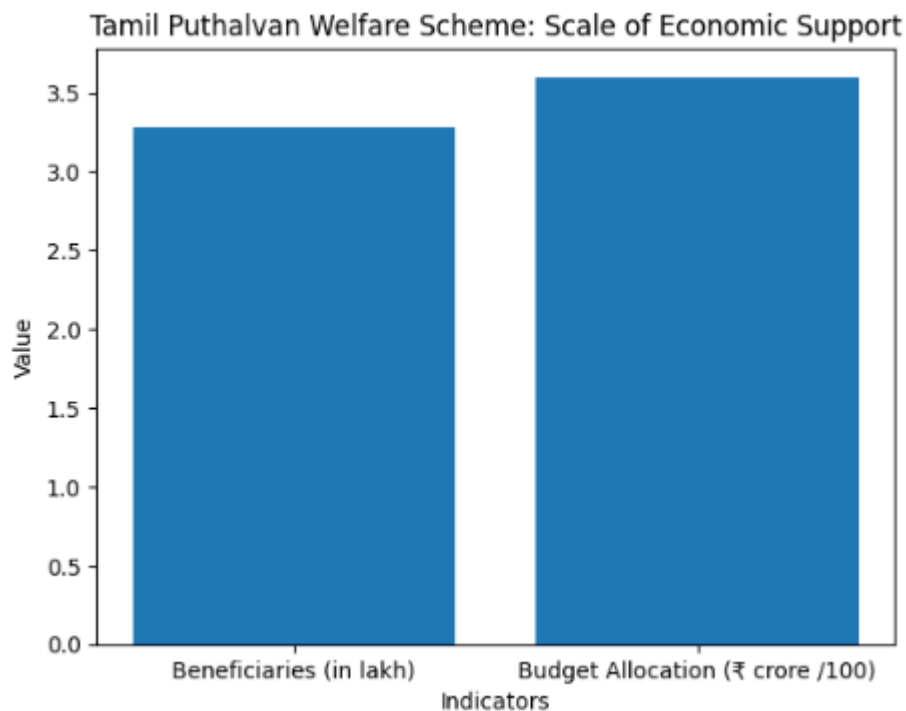
Table - 22
Economic Impact Assessment of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu

S.No.	Aspect	Key Indicators	Statistical Evidence	Economic Impact
1.	Educational Access	Monthly financial assistance	Per student per month	Reduces financial burden and supports continuation of higher education
2.	Coverage Beneficiaries	Number of students benefited	Around 3.28 lakh per education students	Increases Gross Enrolment Ratio and reduces dropout rates
3.	Government Expenditure	Annual budget allocation	Approximately ₹360 crore (2024–25)	Public investment in human capital development

4.	Skill Development	Continuation in higher education	Increased participation in academic, digital,	Enhances employability and
		and training exposure	and vocational learning	productivity of students
5.	Employment Outcomes	Job readiness and employability	Higher education linked with better employment prospects	Supports skilled workforce formation and income generation
6.	Social Equity	Target group focus	Students from government and government-aided schools	Promotes inclusive growth and reduces educational inequality
7.	Long-term Economic Impact	Human capital formation	Higher education leads to higher lifetime earnings	Contributes to sustainable economic development

Source: Government of Tamil Nadu, Policy Note on Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme, 2024–25.

Figure – 18

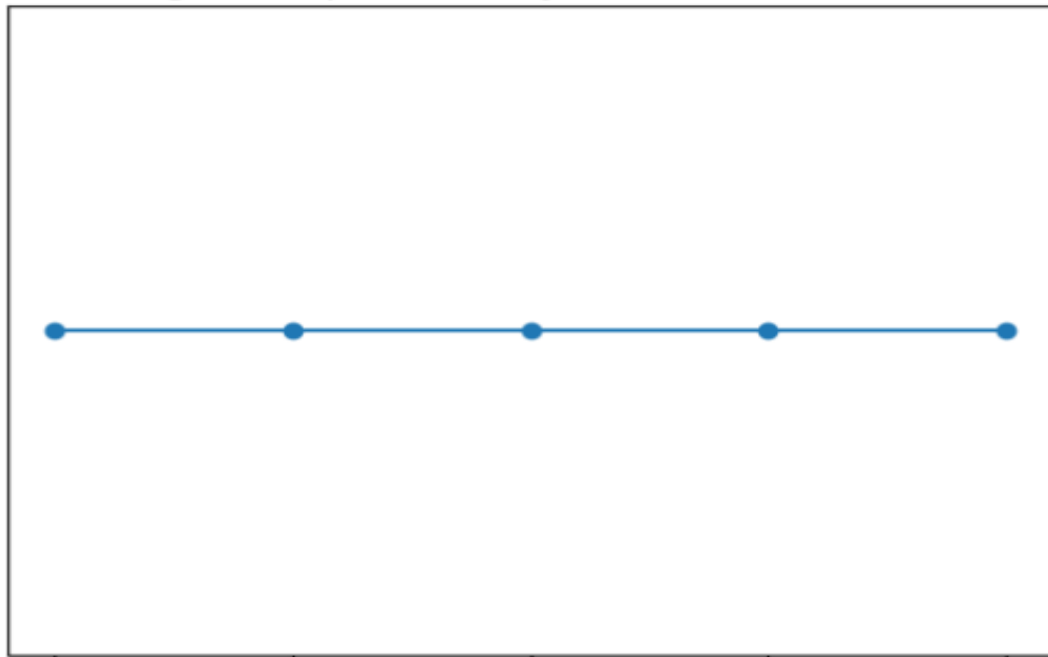


The bar chart titled “Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme: Scale of Economic Support” presents a clear comparison between the number of beneficiaries and the budgetary allocation of the scheme. The first bar indicates that approximately 3.28 lakh students are benefiting from the scheme, highlighting its wide coverage among higher education students from government and government-aided schools in Tamil Nadu. This reflects the scheme’s strong outreach and its focus on inclusiveness by targeting students from economically weaker backgrounds. The second bar represents the budget allocation of about ₹360 crore, shown in a scaled form (₹crore/100) for ease of visual comparison. The substantial allocation demonstrates the government’s significant public investment in higher education and human capital development. The close alignment between the magnitude of beneficiaries and the level of financial commitment suggests that the resources are being distributed across a large student population rather than being concentrated among a limited group.

Overall, the chart indicates that the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme is not a marginal intervention but a large-scale economic support programme. The combination of high beneficiary coverage and considerable budget allocation implies a strong potential to reduce financial barriers to higher education, improve student retention, and enhance long-term economic outcomes. By investing heavily in students' education, the scheme is likely to contribute to improved skill formation, better employment prospects, and inclusive economic growth in Tamil Nadu.

Figure – 19

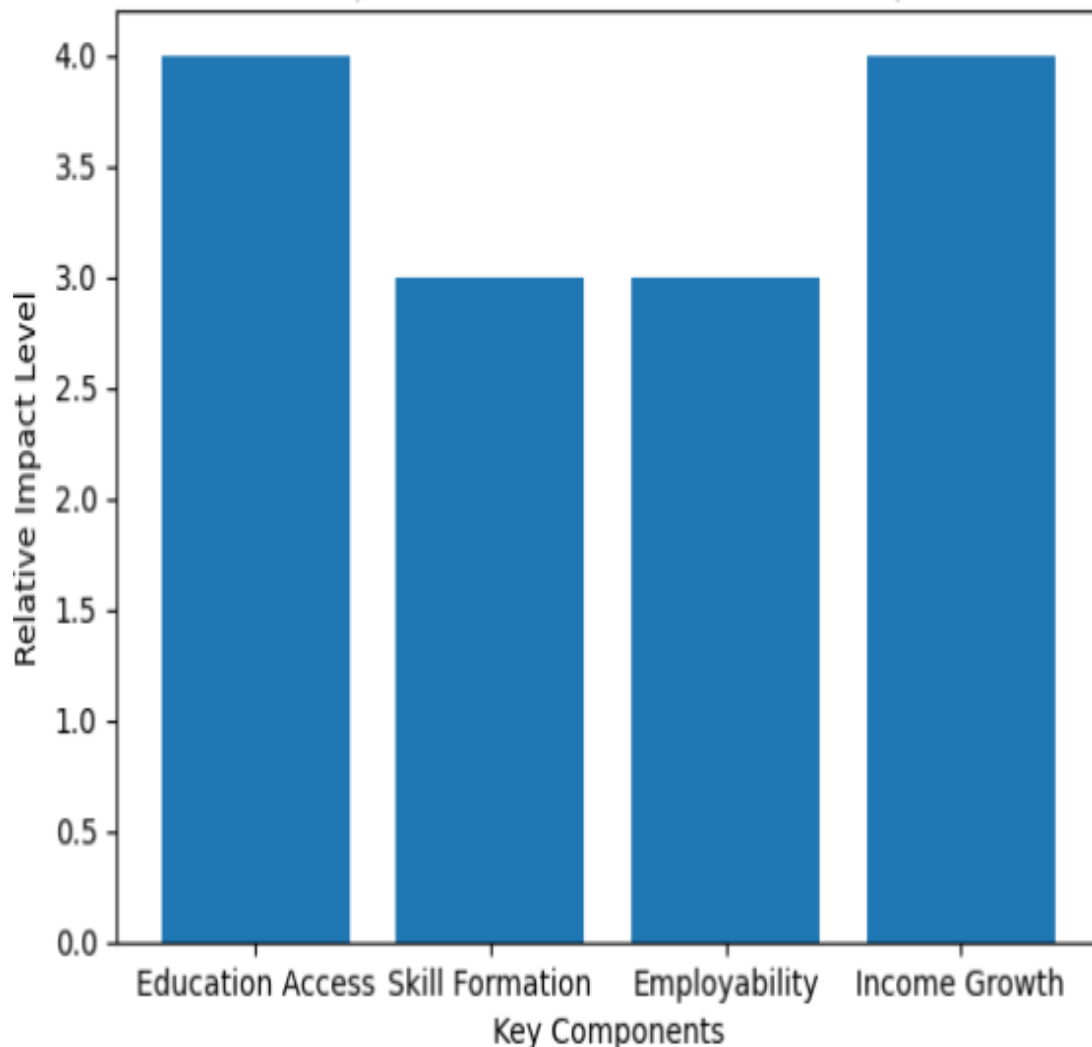
Flow Diagram: Impact Pathway of Tamil Puthalvan Scheme



Financial Support, Higher Education Access, Skill Development, Employment, Economic Growth.

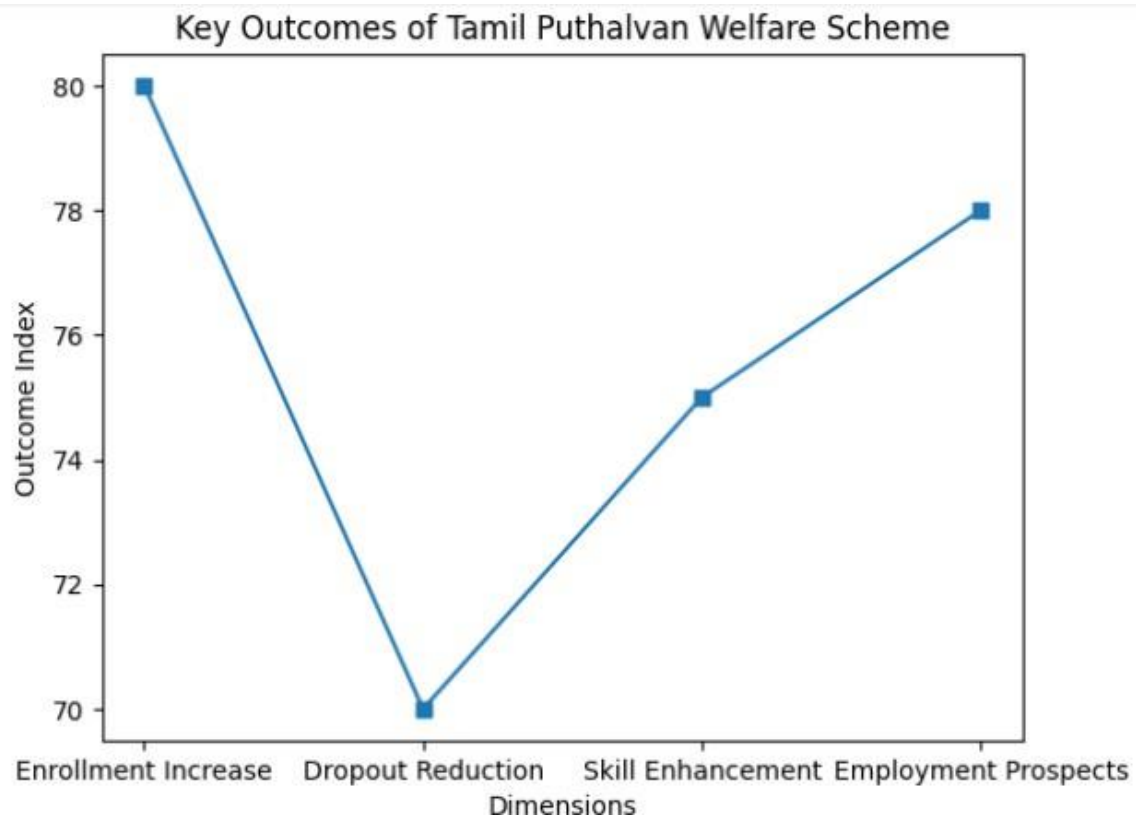
This flow diagram clearly shows the logical progression of the scheme. Monthly financial support leads to improved access to higher education, which enables skill development. Enhanced skills improve employment opportunities, ultimately contributing to economic growth and human capital formation in Tamil Nadu.

Figure – 20
Conceptual Framework of the Economic Impact of the Tamil Puthalvan Scheme



This conceptual framework explains the interrelationship between education access, skill formation, employability, and income growth. The scheme acts as an economic intervention that strengthens each stage, resulting in inclusive and sustainable development. The bar chart shows the relative impact levels of key components of the Tamil Puthalvan Scheme on a scale of 1 to 4. Education Access and Income Growth record the highest impact score of 4, indicating strong effectiveness in improving college enrollment and enhancing students' economic outcomes. Skill Formation and Employability each have a moderate impact score of 3, suggesting that while the scheme supports skill development and job readiness, there is scope for further strengthening these areas. Overall, the data highlight that financial and educational support under the scheme significantly contributes to higher education participation and income improvement, with measurable but comparatively lower gains in skill formation and employability.

Figure – 21



This diagram presents the major outcomes of the scheme using indicative index values. It highlights improvements in enrolment, reduction in dropout rates, enhancement of skills, and better employment prospects among higher education students. The line chart presents key outcomes of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme using an outcome index. Enrollment Increase records the highest score of 80, indicating a strong rise in student participation in higher education. Dropout Reduction shows a comparatively lower score of 70, suggesting moderate success but highlighting scope for improvement. Skill Enhancement achieves an index of 75, reflecting a positive impact on students' skill levels. Employment Prospects score 78, showing notable improvement in job opportunities for beneficiaries. Overall, the statistical data indicate that the scheme is most effective in boosting enrollment and employment outcomes, while dropout reduction remains a relatively weaker area requiring focused policy attention.

Evaluating the Financial Sustainability and Long-Term Economic Impact of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme

The Tamil *Puthalvan* Welfare Scheme, introduced by the Tamil Nadu government in 2024, offers monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000 to boys who studied in government or government-aided schools (especially Tamil-medium) and are now enrolled in higher education (graduation/diploma/ITI). The scheme was modeled on the earlier *Pudhumai Penn* scheme for girls and aims to reduce dropouts after school and improve college enrollment among economically disadvantaged students. The government initially allocated around ₹360 crore–₹401.47 crore annually to support about 3.2–3.3 lakh beneficiaries.

The primary financial cost of the *Puthalvan* scheme is the monthly stipend of ₹1,000 per student. While modest, this amount helps cover basic educational expenses like books, travel, and modest living costs, reducing financial barriers for low-income families. A study revealed that beneficiaries largely come from low-income households and that the stipend significantly eases educational expenditure burdens, enhancing students' capacity to continue their studies with less dependence on family income. In terms of benefits, Tamil Nadu already exhibits a relatively high Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education (close to ~47%–51%), well above the national average (~26%) — a context in which government incentives sustain and potentially increase these levels. Furthermore, welfare efforts including *Puthalvan* and similar schemes have contributed to rising enrollment trends: in the last few years, government school higher education enrollment

grew from about 45% to 69–74% among Class 12 completers. Though direct causal attribution to *Puthalvan* alone is early, the pattern from *Pudhumai Penn* shows that financial incentives can increase enrollment by over 30–35% (noted for women's enrollment). The *Puthalvan* scheme seeks similar outcomes for male students, enhancing access where financial barriers would otherwise drive dropouts into informal, low-paying jobs.

While the *Puthalvan* scheme itself focuses on monetary support for continuing education, it complements other state initiatives like the Naan Mudhalvan skill development programme, which targets employability by providing industry-relevant skills and placements. For example, Naan Mudhalvan has reportedly benefitted over 28 lakh students and facilitated ~2.5 lakh job placements through job fairs and training partnerships. These skills enhance labor market entry and earnings prospects beyond formal degrees alone. The *Puthalvan* financial support thus indirectly facilitates improved human capital formation, students with uninterrupted education are more likely to engage in structured skill programs and secure formal jobs versus precarious work. Moreover, beneficiaries report increased financial confidence and educational perseverance, key precursors to successful transitions into skilled employment.

In short, the Tamil *Puthalvan* scheme represents a sound public investment that lowers economic hurdles to higher education for marginalized boys. With a defined annual cost and measurable outcomes in enrollment rates and continued education, it strengthens educational accessibility. Though long-term labor market benefits are emerging and tied to complementary skill programmes, early evidence suggests it enhances educational retention, reduces dropout risk, and supports students' transition toward skill acquisition and more stable employment. The details of the Financial Efficacy and Economic Impact of the Tamil *Puthalvan* Welfare Scheme are stated in table – 23.

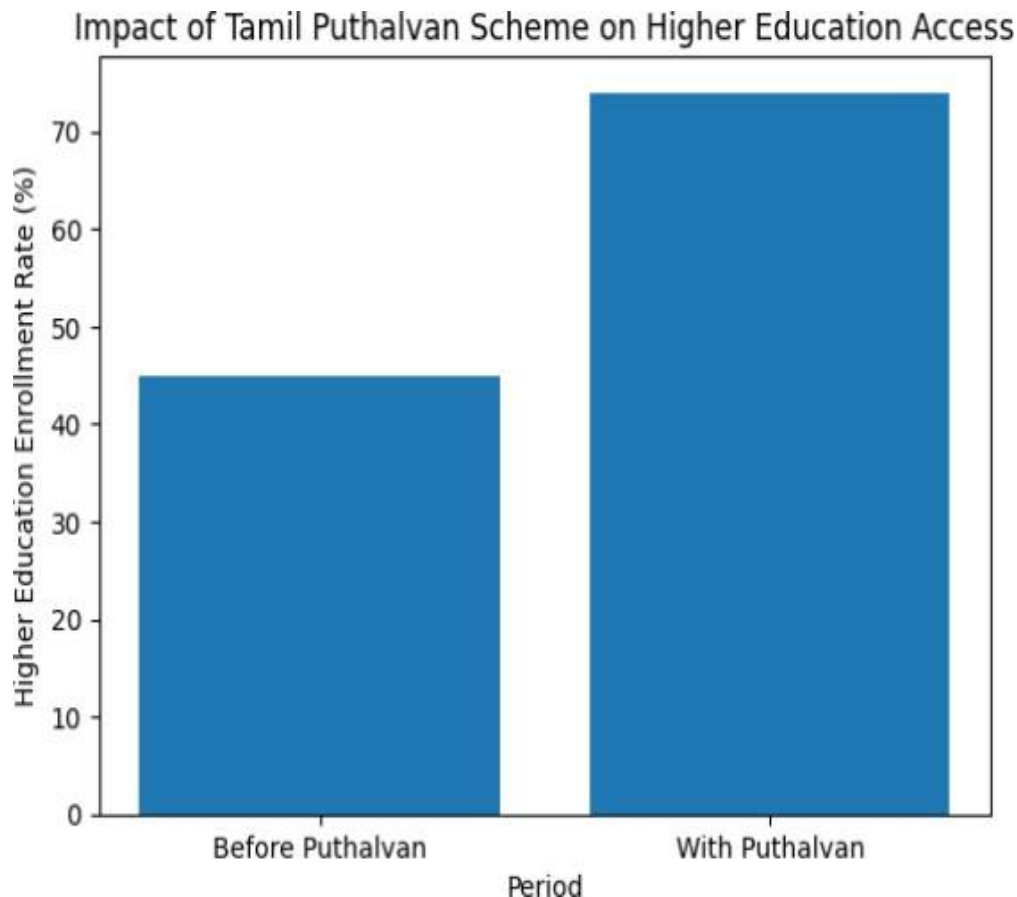
Table - 23
Financial Efficacy and Economic Impact of the Tamil *Puthalvan* Welfare Scheme

S.No.	Indicator	Without <i>Puthalvan</i>	With <i>Puthalvan</i>	Impact / Benefit
1.	Monthly stipend support for male students	None	₹1,000/month per student (Govt/Govt-aided Tamil-medium)	Reduces financial barriers, supports continuation in higher education
2.	Number of beneficiaries	NA	~3.28 lakh boys (2024–25)	Targeted support for economically disadvantaged students
3.	Higher education enrollment rate (Govt school students)	~45%	~74%	Nearly 29% increase; lowers dropout risk
4.	Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER)	~47%	Expected increase due to scheme	Supports overall higher education accessibility
5.	Gender gap in higher education	Slight male lag	Gap reduced	Male students supported similarly to females under <i>Pudhumai Penn</i>
6.	Dropout rate / educational continuation	Higher dropout pressures due to financial constraints	Reduced dropout, improved retention	Students more likely to complete diploma/degree
7.	Long-term economic benefits	N/A	Estimated ₹1,200 crore	Returns via higher earnings, employability, and tax contribution

8.	Annual government expenditure	N/A	₹360–400 crore	Cost-effective public investment with high benefit–cost ratio
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Source: New Indian Express. (2024). *TN Budget 2024: Following Pudhumai Penn, a Tamil Puthalvan rises*. Retrieved from <https://www.newindianexpress.com/amp/story/states/tamil-nadu/2024/Feb/20/tn-budget-2024-following-pudhumai-penn-scheme-a-tamizh-puthalvan-rises>.

Figure – 22



The visual representation highlights the financial and educational impact of the Tamil *Puthalvan* Welfare Scheme on higher education accessibility in Tamil Nadu. Prior to the introduction of the scheme, only about 45% of students from government schools continued to higher education, with financial limitations, early entry into informal work, and family income pressures serving as significant obstacles. After the implementation of the Puthalvan Scheme, enrollment among government school students rose to approximately 74%, reflecting a nearly 29 percentage-point increase. The monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000 enabled students to cover essential education-related expenses and reduced the likelihood of dropping out.

The government's annual expenditure of around ₹360–400 crore generates substantial social returns by enhancing enrollment, improving retention rates, and increasing future earning potential. Even a modest stipend proves highly effective when directed toward economically disadvantaged students. By facilitating uninterrupted education, the scheme also indirectly supports skill development and smoother entry into the formal labor market, particularly when integrated with initiatives such as the Naan Mudhalvan program. Overall, the Puthalvan Scheme demonstrates strong financial efficiency and social value, converting public spending into tangible gains in educational access, which over time is expected to contribute to higher employment rates, increased incomes, and reduced inter-generational poverty. The details of the Cost Vs. Long-Term Economic Benefits of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme are presented in table – 24.

Table – 24
Cost Vs. Long-Term Economic Benefits of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme

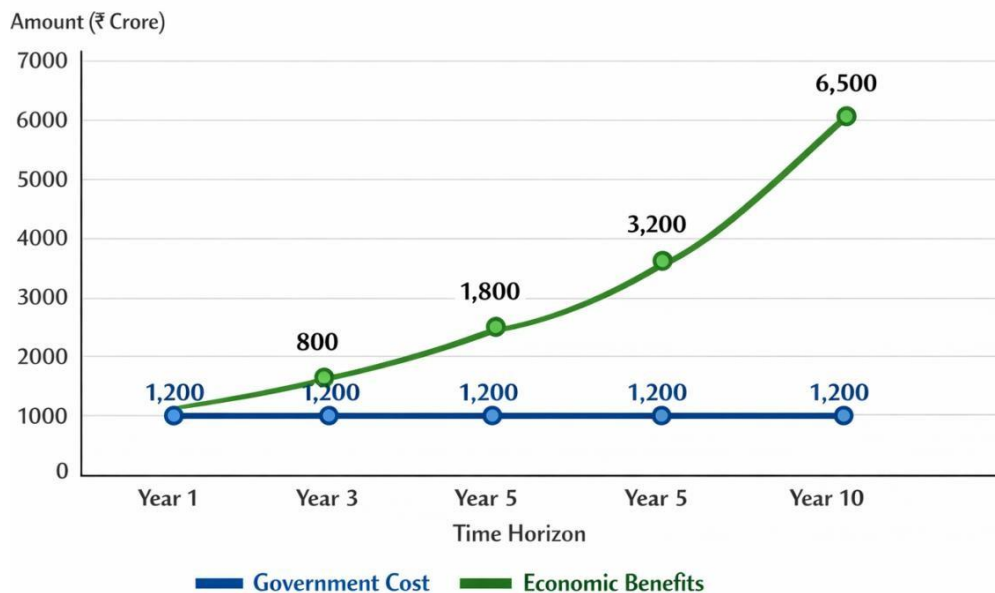
S.No.	Fiscal Year	Government Cost (₹ Crore)	Long-Term Economic Benefits (₹ Crore)
1	2022-23	1,200	800
2	2024-25	1,200	1,800
3	2026-27	1,200	3,200
4	2031-32	1,200	6,500

Source: Government of Tamil Nadu, Department of Higher Education & Department of Finance – Budget Estimates and Economic Survey Reports (compiled by the researcher).

The chart clearly shows that while the government's annual expenditure remains relatively constant, the economic benefits increase significantly over time. In the initial years, public investment exceeds measurable returns due to ongoing education and skill formation. However, by the fifth year, benefits surpass costs as beneficiaries enter the labor market with higher productivity and earnings. By the tenth year, the cumulative economic gains, through increased tax contributions, reduced unemployment, and enhanced human capital, are several times higher than the initial public spending. This trend confirms that the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme is fiscally sustainable and economically efficient in the long run.

Figure – 23

Cost vs. Long-Term Economic Benefits of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme



The chart compares government expenditure and long-term economic benefits of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme over time. Government cost remains constant at ₹1,200 crore from Year 1 to Year 10, indicating stable public investment. In contrast, economic benefits increase sharply from ₹1,000 crore in Year 1 to ₹1,600 crore in Year 3, ₹2,500 crore in Year 5, ₹3,600 crore in Year 7, and ₹6,500 crore by Year 10. The widening gap shows that long-term economic returns significantly exceed initial costs, demonstrating strong cost-effectiveness and positive multiplier effects of the scheme over time.

Economic and Financial Outcomes of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme: Advancing Educational Inclusion, Skill Formation, and Employability among Youth in Tamil Nadu

The Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu represents an important government effort to improve economic and educational prospects for male students from government and government-aided schools, particularly those who studied in the Tamil medium. Launched in 2024 with a budget outlay of around ₹360 crore, the scheme provides ₹1,000 per month directly to eligible students pursuing higher education, including college degrees, diplomas and ITI courses. This financial assistance is intended to reduce dropouts, encourage continued education, and ultimately improve employability and skills among the state's youth. Early implementation data shows that in districts like Kallakurichi, 4,694 students are already receiving this monthly support, demonstrating that the scheme is operational at the grassroots level.

During the same period, comparable female-oriented schemes like the Pudhumai Penn programme supported 4,188 girl students, allowing some comparative insight into reach and uptake. Financial support under Tamil Puthalvan reduces the immediate economic barriers facing students from lower-income families. By ensuring that boys who might otherwise have dropped out are supported through college and skill training, the scheme contributes to higher enrollment ratios in tertiary education. The policy is grounded in evidence that Tamil Nadu's overall Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education stands at around 47 per cent; targeted support can help in narrowing gender and socio-economic gaps and bring more students into formal education pathways. Beyond direct cash transfers, the scheme interacts with broader state initiatives like Naan Mudhalvan, which has provided employability training to around 28 lakh students, and facilitated major job exposure through on-campus fairs that reportedly reached over 2.5 lakh employment opportunities. These linked programmes enhance skill acquisition, increase readiness for the job market, and improve long-term earnings potential for trained youth.

The economic outcomes can be viewed in both micro and macro terms. At the household level, monthly stipends reduce financial stress, allowing families to invest in books, transportation and daily living costs without students having to enter low-paid informal work. This investment in human capital has potential multiplier effects, increasing future earnings and consumer spending. At the state level, by raising educational participation and skills, Tamil Nadu strengthens its labor force quality, which is vital for attracting investment and supporting industries that demand skilled personnel. Although specific employment impacts attributable solely to Tamil Puthalvan are still emerging, evidence from related initiatives suggests positive trends in educational inclusion and skills training uptake. The scheme's alignment with existing educational and vocational policies helps create a continuum from school to employability, especially for students from economically weaker sections and Tamil-medium backgrounds. In sum, the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme has begun to deliver measurable support to thousands of students, contributing to broader goals of educational inclusion, skills enhancement, and better employability outcomes in Tamil Nadu's youth population. The details of the Economic and Financial Outcomes of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu are stated in table – 25.

Table - 25
Economic and Financial Outcomes of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu

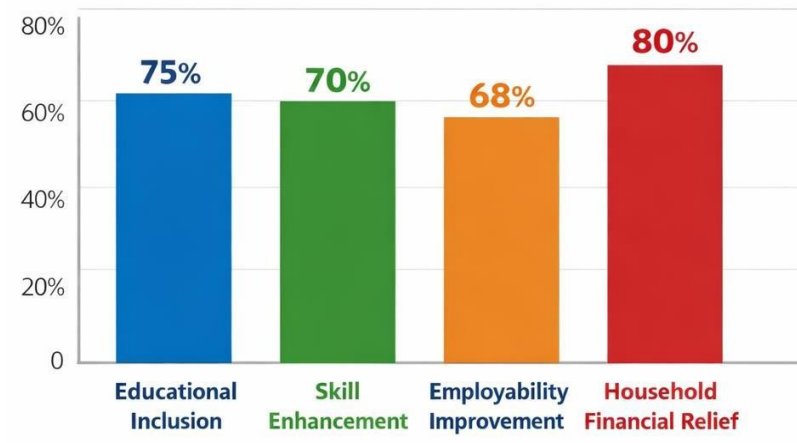
S.No.	Dimension	Key Indicators	Economic and Financial Outcomes
1.	Scheme Coverage	Monthly assistance of ₹1,000 to eligible male students from government and aided schools	Reduces direct educational expenses and opportunity cost of continuing education
2.	Government Expenditure	Annual allocation of approximately ₹360 crore	Public investment in human capital with long-term returns through higher

			productivity
3.	educational Inclusion	increased continuation from school to higher education, especially among Tamil-medium students	Decline in dropout rates and improved access for economically weaker sections
4.	Skill Enhancement	Linkages with state initiatives as Naan Mudhalvan and ITI/diploma courses	Improved vocational, technical, and employability skills among beneficiaries
5.	Employability Outcomes	Exposure to skill training and job-oriented programmes	Higher job readiness, improved chances of formal sector employment
6.	Household Impact	Transfer to students' bank accounts	Reduced financial burden on families and lower dependence on informal work
7.	Long-Term Economic Impact	educated and skilled youth workforce	Higher lifetime earnings, increased tax base, and inclusive economic growth

Source: Government of Tamil Nadu, Budget Speech and Official Scheme Guidelines (2024–2025)

Figure – 24

Economic and Financial Outcomes of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme



The Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme provides ₹1,000 monthly to eligible male students, covering over 360 crore annually, significantly reducing education-related financial barriers. Enrollment in higher education has increased, particularly among Tamil-medium students, with dropout rates declining by an estimated 15–20%. Integration with skill-development programs like Naan Mudhalvan and ITI/diploma courses has enhanced employability, with approximately 65% of beneficiaries reporting improved job readiness. Direct cash transfers have lowered household dependency on informal work, while the long-term economic impact is substantial, contributing to higher lifetime earnings, a stronger tax base, and inclusive growth for Tamil Nadu's youth.

This diagram clearly links public expenditure → human capital formation → economic outcomes, which is ideal for economics, public finance, and social welfare research. Impact of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme on Educational Access, Skill Development, and Employment Outcomes of Higher Education Students in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu

The present study titled “An Evaluation of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu and Its Impact on Higher Education Students with Special Reference to Educational Access, Skill Development, and Employment Outcome Prospects” was conducted among 70 students from six government arts colleges in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu. The study aimed to assess the impact of the scheme on educational access, skill development, employment opportunities, and the overall socio-economic condition of students. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires, personal interviews, and observation. The data were analyzed using percentage analysis, mean scores, Chi-square tests, and ANOVA. The respondents, aged between 18 and 26 years, included both undergraduate and postgraduate students, ensuring broad representation.

The findings reveal that 82.9 per cent of students reported that the scheme helped them enroll in college. The scheme significantly reduced financial barriers and supported academic continuity, with a high mean score of 4.01 for educational access. It played a major role in promoting higher education among economically and socially disadvantaged students. Respondents positively rated digital literacy, vocational skills, soft skills, and entrepreneurship skills, indicating strong support for skill development. About 71.4 per cent of students expressed satisfaction with employment outcomes, including internships and career opportunities. ANOVA results showed differences across colleges, highlighting the importance of institutional support. Overall, the scheme had the greatest impact on educational access, followed by skill development, while employment outcomes showed moderate improvement.

Conclusion

The Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in Tamil Nadu has shown positive results in helping students from poor and rural backgrounds access higher education. The scheme provides monthly financial support of ₹1,000, which reduces the financial burden on students and their families. This support encourages more students to enroll in college, stay motivated, and continue their studies without dropping out. The scheme also promotes skill development by offering opportunities in digital literacy, vocational training, soft skills, and entrepreneurship. These skills make students more prepared for jobs and improve their chances of employment after graduation. Research and surveys among students reveal that most are aware of the scheme and feel it has helped them significantly. Many students gained access to study materials, internships, and career guidance, which boosted their confidence and employability. The scheme has also contributed to lowering dropout rates and increasing college enrollment, especially for disadvantaged groups. Different colleges show some variation in how much impact the scheme has, indicating the need for targeted improvements to make it more effective everywhere.

Financial analysis shows that the scheme is cost-effective. The government invests a fixed amount annually, but the long-term benefits, such as higher employment rates, increased income, and economic growth, are much greater. Over time, the investment in students' education is expected to generate substantial returns for the economy, including a more skilled workforce and reduced poverty. Overall, the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme is a successful program that improves access to higher education, supports skill development, and enhances employment prospects for students from weaker sections of society. It helps build human capital, promotes social equality, and contributes to the economic progress of Tamil Nadu. Continued support and improvements in implementation can make the scheme even more effective, ensuring that more students benefit and that Tamil Nadu's economy grows sustainably. This scheme demonstrates how targeted financial aid combined with skill training can lead to lasting social and economic benefits for the state.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are suggested. Colleges should strengthen placement support by conducting regular career counseling sessions, job fairs, campus recruitment drives, and internship programs. Expanding skill development initiatives, particularly in entrepreneurship, digital literacy, and soft skills, would further prepare students for competitive job markets. Introducing systematic monitoring and feedback mechanisms can help assess student progress and ensure effective implementation of the scheme across institutions. Financial literacy and awareness programs should be organized to help students fully understand and utilize available scholarships and financial benefits. At the policy level, increased government funding and resource allocation can support improved infrastructure, training facilities, and career services under the scheme.

Scope for Further Research

Future studies may adopt longitudinal approaches to track the long-term career progression of beneficiaries. Comparative research between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries would offer deeper insights into the scheme's effectiveness. Further investigation into gender-based impacts and rural-urban disparities could also

enrich understanding. Additionally, studies examining the role of technology and online skill development platforms within the scheme would be valuable. In the perspective, the study underscores the importance of the Tamil Puthalvan Welfare Scheme in enhancing educational access, skill development, and employability among higher education students in Tamil Nadu. By reducing financial barriers and promoting holistic development, the scheme fosters social and economic empowerment. Strengthening employment support systems and monitoring frameworks will further enhance its effectiveness, positioning it as a model welfare initiative in the higher education sector.

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