

The Role of Women Empowerment through Pudhumai Pen Scheme in Tirunelveli City

P. Indhu, S. Murugavarshini, B. Sakthi

Students, Commerce in Corporate Secretaryship

Sri Sarada College for Women (Autonomous), Tirunelveli Tamil Nadu, India

(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India)

Abstract: *The Pudhumai Pen Scheme, launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu, is a major initiative aimed at promoting higher education and empowering young women. By providing monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000 to girl students from government schools, the scheme helps to reduce financial burdens and encourages them to continue their studies. It has successfully improved enrolment, reduced dropout rates, and increased confidence and independence among female students. Moreover, it has motivated families to value education over early marriage, thereby fostering social change. The present study focuses on assessing the impact of the Pudhumai Pen Scheme in Tirunelveli city. The main objectives are to examine the scheme's role in promoting higher education, to assess its contribution to women empowerment through education, economic independence, and self-confidence, and to analyse the importance of financial assistance in reducing dropout rates among girl students. For the study, a structured questionnaire was prepared, and data were collected from 132 respondents using the five-point Likert scale technique to measure the level of satisfaction. The collected data were analysed using percentage analysis, simple ranking technique, and Likert scale analysis for better interpretation. The findings show that the majority of respondents belong to the age group of 20 years, and about 39% identified lack of awareness as a major challenge in accessing the scheme. Most respondents also reported facing delays in document verification while applying. Based on the results, the study suggests that regular review meetings should be conducted to ensure that the scheme's benefits reach the students effectively. Furthermore, skill development workshops and awareness programs should be organized in colleges to help students fully utilize the scheme and become more confident and job-ready. Overall, the Pudhumai Pen Scheme stands as a progressive effort towards women's education, empowerment, and social development in Tamil Nadu.*

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Higher Education, Gender Equality, Educational Empowerment, Dropout Reduction

I. INTRODUCTION

The Pudhumai Pen Scheme, launched by the Government of Tamil Nadu, is a progressive initiative aimed at promoting women's education and empowerment. The scheme primarily supports girl students from government schools who pursue higher education, especially in arts, science, commerce, and professional courses. By providing financial assistance of ₹1,000 per month until the completion of their graduation, the scheme seeks to reduce the financial burden on families and encourage more young women to continue their studies without interruption.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Revathy et.al, (2022) carried out a study on "THE GROWTH OF FEMALE EDUCATION IN TAMILNADU". The study investigates the enrolment rate of female in school education and higher education in Tamil Nadu. The study was based on secondary data which have been collected from magazines, journals and web portals. The study found the growth of enrolment rate of female in higher education shows a fluctuating trend over the years and the participation of female in the various composition of higher education is more than the male. This shows that the growth of educational level



among the female. As a result of study the literacy rate of women enrolled in higher education has grown, yet there is still a gap between the literacy rates of men and women.

Das (2022) made an effort to investigate that “SCHEMES/ROLE OF INDIAN GOVERNMENT, STATE GOVERNMENTS AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION (NGOs) TOWARDS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A BRIEF STUDY”. To identify the attitude of students towards Pudhumai Penn scheme. The researcher critically investigated the need of women empowerment and to study the government schemes for women empowerment. The primary data is collected through questionnaire method from students who have availed Pudhumai Penn Scholarship scheme. The researcher used a descriptive method and to analyse the primary data and secondary data from journals, magazines, and similar sources. The result shows that women empowerment schemes in India help to uplift women in every possible sphere. In this study, student’s perception and satisfaction towards Pudhumai Penn Scheme has been analysed and data have been obtained from the students in Tirunelveli.

Ali, S., & Rehman, S. U (2018) “Women Education in Pakistan: A Discursive Analysis”. The main aim of this paper is to analyse how women’s education in Pakistan is framed discursively across policy documents, social perspectives, and academic discourse. The authors seek to understand the ideological and linguistic constructions that influence educational opportunities and challenges for women in the country. The study uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), particularly drawing on Norman Fairclough’s approach, to examine educational texts, policy documents, and public discourses. This qualitative method allows the authors to uncover how language shapes social realities and power structures affecting women’s education.

OBJECTIVES:

- To examine the impact of the Pudhumai Penn Scheme on promoting higher education among girl students from government schools in Tamil Nadu.
- To assess how the scheme contributes to women empowerment through increased access to education, economic independence, and self-confidence.
- To analyse the role of the financial assistance provided under the scheme in reducing dropout rates among female students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Women empowerment plays a vital role in achieving gender equality and overall development. In Tamil Nadu, especially in Tirunelveli, many girls still face hurdles like financial problems, early marriage, lack of family support, and social restrictions that stop them from continuing higher education. To overcome these issues, the Tamil Nadu Government introduced the **Pudhumai Penn Scheme** in 2022, offering monthly financial help to girl students from government schools who pursue college studies. The main goal is to reduce dropouts, ease financial struggles, and motivate girls to complete their education. Though the scheme has been well received, its real impact on women’s empowerment in Tirunelveli—especially in education, confidence, and career growth needs to be studied. This study focuses on finding out how effectively the scheme helps in breaking social and economic barriers for women.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire were prepared for collecting data. Most of the questions are based on five-point Likert scale technique depending on the level of satisfaction. The sample size for the study constituted to 132 respondents in Tirunelveli city. The data were collected from respondents to fill forms.



IV. ANALYSIS

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS:

AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION

S.NO	AGE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Below 18 years	32	24
2	19 years	45	34
3	20 years	48	37
4	Above 25 years	7	5
	TOTAL	132	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

From the above table 4.1, it clears that out of 132 respondents, 24 percentage of the respondents are come under the age group of below 18 years, 34 percentage of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 19 years, 37 percentage of the respondents are between the age group of 20 years and 5 percentage of the respondents are lies under the age group of above 25 years.

Hence we concluded that most of the respondents are come under the age group of 20 years.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU THINK STUDENTS FACE IN THIS SCHEME

S.NO	PARTICULARS	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1.	Lack of awareness	52	39
2.	Complicated application process	35	27
3.	Delay in fund disbursal	27	20
4.	Lack of support from officials	18	14
	TOTAL	132	100

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

From the above table 4.15, it explains that the out of 132 respondents, 39 percentage of the respondents are select Lack of awareness by students are face in this scheme, 27 percentage of the respondents are select Complicated application process by students are face in this scheme, 20 percentage of the respondents are select Delay in fund disbursal by students are face in this scheme, 14 percentage of the respondents are select Lack of support from officials by students are face in this scheme.

Hence the majority 39 percentage of the respondent are select Lack of awareness by students are face in this scheme.

SIMPLE RANKING TECHNIQUES

OPINION TOWARD PROBLEM FACED BY APPLYING THE SCHEME:

S. No	Statement	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Mean score	Rank
1.	No clear instructions	51 (255)	37 (148)	22 (66)	18 (36)	06 (06)	511	II
2.	There is too much paperwork	55 (275)	30 (120)	22 (66)	17 (34)	08 (08)	503	III
3.	Technical/online issues	45 (225)	36 (144)	28 (84)	19 (38)	04 (04)	495	V



4.	Delay in document verification	63 (315)	32 (128)	21 (63)	09 (18)	07 (07)	531	I
5.	Lack of proper guidance	49 (245)	35 (140)	28 (84)	11 (22)	09 (09)	500	IV

Source: Computed data

Interpretation:

From the above table 4.18, it reveals that out of 132 respondents, Delay in document verification was ranked first with the mean score value of 531, No clear instructions place in second rank with the mean score value of 511, There is too much paperwork got the third rank with the mean score value of 503, Lack of proper guidance place in fourth rank with the mean score value of 500 and Technical/online issues place in fifth rank with the mean score of 495. Majority of respondents face the problem of Delay in document verification of applying this scheme. Hence the Delay in document verification got a first rank.

FINDINGS:

According to age wise classification, majority of the respondents are belonging to the age group of 20 years.

According to major challenges faced by students in the scheme, Majority 39 percentage of the respondent are select Lack of awareness by students are face in this scheme.

According to opinion towards problem faced by applying the scheme, majority of respondents are got a first rank face the problem of Delay in document verification of applying this scheme.

SUGGESTIONS:

To regular review meetings can be held to ensure the scheme benefits are properly reaching the students.

To the Pudhumai Pen Scheme should expand skill development workshops that help girls become more confident and job-ready after their studies.

To colleges can organize regular awareness programs to make students understand how the scheme supports their educational journey.

V. CONCLUSION

The Pudhumai Pen Scheme, launched by the Tamil Nadu Government, aims to promote higher education and empower young women. By offering ₹1,000 per month to girls from government schools, it helps reduce financial barriers and encourages them to continue their studies. The scheme has improved enrolment, reduced dropouts, and boosted confidence and independence among students. It also motivates families to value education over early marriage. However, issues like delayed payments, low awareness in rural areas, and limited financial support remain. Strengthening implementation and expanding the scheme's reach can make it more effective in promoting women's education and empowerment.

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