

**EMPOWERING YOUNG MINDS: THE IMPACT OF THE TAMIL PUDHALVAN
SCHEME ON ACADEMIC GROWTH IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT:

This study explores the impact of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme on the academic growth of male students in government and government-aided schools in Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu. Launched in 2024, the scheme provides a monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000 to male students from Classes VI to XII to reduce financial barriers and improve educational outcomes. Using a descriptive and analytical research approach, data were collected from 150 student beneficiaries through structured questionnaires based on a five-point Likert scale, and analyzed using SPSS. The results reveal that the scheme significantly reduces educational costs and alleviates family financial stress. However, ease of accessing all benefits remains an area of concern. Regression analysis indicates that student awareness and perceived impact of the scheme are significant predictors of its effectiveness, while demographic variables like family structure or parental occupation show minimal influence. Step-wise regression further confirms that awareness, extent of benefit, and area of residence contribute to the scheme's impact. The study concludes that while the scheme has made positive strides, greater awareness, simplified processes, and targeted outreach are needed to fully realize its potential in empowering young minds and promoting equitable access to education in Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: *Impact, tamilpudhalvan scheme, financial stress.*

INTRODUCTION:

Education has always been considered a means of socio-economic upliftment, particularly for the weaker sections of society. The Tamil Nadu government started the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme in the year 2024, with the objective of ensuring that male students continued in their education and that dropout rates among them were reduced. Under the scheme, a monthly scholarship of ₹1,000 is paid to male students from classes VI to XII studying in government and government-aided schools, thereby helping them in the pursuit of education without any fund constraints. The district of Coimbatore, which is a major educational and industrial Trading Centre of Tamil Nadu, has emerged as one of the leading beneficiaries of the scheme. Deploying Coimbatore as the case study, with Scheme benefits being enjoyed by more than 22000 students, the very effectiveness of the scheme is put to test. Bearing in mind that the scheme's objective is to uplift the economic condition of the poor students, it weakens academic engagement, retention, and support for students in higher education and skill development programs like ITI and diploma courses. This research would study how the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme, in reality, affected the educational growth and development of young students in Coimbatore against concrete and measurable parameters of enrollment, academic performance, and progression to higher education.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Tilak (2007) explains that scholarships and grants are vital towards lessening the expenditure burden on families, hence nudging children to pursue education. In the Tamil Nadu situation, the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme aims at reducing economic burden through the disbursement of ₹1,000 monthly to worthy male students, making education more affordable for marginalized segments.

Sharma (2017) study indicates that DBT programs have been effective in influencing school persistence and transition to higher education in India. Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme operates on the same basis, depositing funds directly into students' bank accounts, not only preventing leakages but also motivating families to enroll children in school instead of resorting to child labor or early marriage.

Although research has focused primarily on female-oriented schemes like Pudhumai Penn, the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme targets a very significant lacuna for boys. As **Ghosh and Dinda (2020)** affirm, gender-responsive education policy needs to address the unique socio-economic strain of male children from poor families, such as premature entry into the labor force. Tamil Pudhalvan aims at boys who otherwise drop out due to economic hardship.

The most recent news shows that the Coimbatore district has also been a benchmark in executing the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme, with over 22,000 government and aided institution beneficiaries (**Times of India, 2024**). The district has conducted almost 400 special enrollment camps and opened more than 8,000 students' bank accounts, demonstrating good local governance and extensions.

Experiments have associated scholarship schemes with better academic performance. **Banerjee et al. (2011)** discovered that modest cash transfers enhanced the health and academic achievement of poor children by a very significant margin. Testimonials in Coimbatore indicate that Tamil Pudhalvan scholarship beneficiaries, both studying ITI and diploma courses, have utilized the fund to pay for examinations and buy study material and have benefited their performance in the process.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite an excellent push toward educational opportunity in Tamil Nadu, many male students from weaker economic sections are trapped by financial limitations confining their advancement and continuation of education, more particularly at the higher secondary level. The state-government-led Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme of 2024 attempts to bridge this gap by offering a male student a monthly cash incentive for studying in government as well as Government –aided schools. Regardless of the scheme's identification on account of its scope and intention, comparatively less empirical research has probed its impact on its beneficiaries' school enrollment and school achievement—primarily in places such as Coimbatore with highest enrollment. Issues persist about the extent to which the scheme minimizes dropout levels, improves academic outcomes, and encourages equal access to education for marginalized communities. Hence, this study intends to investigate if the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme has brought a quantifiable change in empowering young minds and supporting their academic progress in the Coimbatore district.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- Has the scheme contributed to reducing the likelihood of dropout among financially disadvantaged male students?
- To what extent has the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme improved enrollment and retention of students from marginalized or underrepresented communities?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To assess the extent to which the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme has reduced financial barriers to education for male students from government schools.
- To analyze the role of the scheme in promoting equitable access to higher secondary education among marginalized or underrepresented groups in Coimbatore.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The investigation is restricted to the Coimbatore district alone, and the findings therefore cannot be extrapolated to other districts of Tamil Nadu where the socioeconomic scenario and the success of the implementation of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme might be varied. The investigation is limited to only current beneficiaries and does not reflect the experience of the non-beneficiary students who might be experiencing the same financial difficulties but are receiving no support whatsoever. Further, the study relies on students', parents', and teachers' self-reporting, which may be influenced by personal bias, forgetting, or social desirability. Because the scheme is still new, only immediate academic effects can be analyzed; college enrollment or career advancement in the future lies outside

the scope of this study. Additionally, limitations in accessing complex government records or academic achievement data by individual recipients may confine secondary data analysis. Language issues and differences in literacy levels within participants, particularly those residing in rural communities, could also affect the precision and comprehension of responses. Finally, since the scheme only covers male students, the gender-based inequalities or how such financial interventions affect female students in similar situations are not covered in this study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research utilises a descriptive and analytical research approach to study how the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme influences scholastic progress among male students in Coimbatore district. This research seeks to understand how the scheme helps overcome economic barriers and ensure equitable access to higher secondary education, especially by disadvantaged groups and underrepresented communities. Data would be obtained at the primary level from male students enrolled in government and government-aided higher secondary schools in Coimbatore and who are beneficiaries of the scheme. A stratified random sample would be utilized to get a representative sample of approximately 150 students from different urban, semi-urban, and rural schools in the district. Quantitative data will be gathered with a five-point Likert scale item standard questionnaire to measure variables like financial relief, study motivation, dropping out likelihood, and feeling of belongingness. Secondary data in the form of government reports and school records will be utilized to corroborate the key findings. Quantitative data will be analyzed employing statistical software such as SPSS through descriptive and inferential statistics where necessary. Qualitative data will be theme-wise analyzed to make appropriate inferences. Subject experts will pilot test and test the questionnaire to ascertain the reliability and validity of research instruments for this purpose. Reliability will be established using Cronbach's alpha. Ethical norms, i.e., informed consent, participant confidentiality, and voluntary participation, will be strictly adhered to while conducting the study. This research setup is intended to give a strong and precise analysis of the ways in which the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme integrates the minds of the youth into better learning in the district of Coimbatore.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

STUDENTS IMPACT REGARDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHEME.

The mean ratings of the agreement level of the respondents have been assigned as 1 for 'Not beneficial at all', 2 for 'not very beneficial', 3 for 'Somewhat beneficial', 4 for 'beneficial' and 5 for 'very beneficial'. The mean ratings have been found out for each item and are given in the following table.

Table no.1.1
Students impact regarding the effectiveness of the scheme

services	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme has helped reduce the overall cost of my education	200	1	5	4.4238	.76802
I no longer have to worry about transportation or uniform costs due to the scheme.	200	1	5	4.0476	.58500
My family is less financially stressed about	200	1	5	3.8429	.88533

sending me to higher secondary school.					
Without this scheme, I might have dropped out due to financial difficulties.	200	1	5	3.7143	1.03262
I have been able to access all benefits of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme without difficulty.	200	1	5	3.5238	1.15825
Students from marginalized communities are equally benefiting from the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme.	200	1	5	3.7619	1.08952

Source : Primary data

The total mean perception of students regarding the effectiveness and impact of the scheme with the highest score 4.4238 has been found for 'The Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme has helped reduce the overall cost of my education' with a standard deviation of .76802 and the lowest mean score 3.5238 for 'I have been able to access all benefits of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme without difficulty.' with a standard deviation of 1.15825.

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Table 1.2
Determinants of Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme

Variables	Regression coefficient	Standard error	t	Sig
Area of Residence	1.566	0.837	1.872	0.062
Type of Family	0.390	0.453	0.862	0.389
Members in the family	-0.345	0.799	-0.432	0.666
Earning members in the family	0.662	0.558	1.186	0.236
Parent Occupation	0.077	0.365	0.211	0.833
Awareness on Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme	0.141*	0.066	2.138	0.033
Perception of Students regarding the effectiveness of the scheme	-0.036	0.067	-0.528	0.598
Impact of the scheme among the students	0.153**	0.057	2.705	0.007
Beneficiary satisfaction of students towards the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme	-0.006	0.072	-0.078	0.938

* Significant at five per cent level ** Significant at one per cent level

Constant : 46.544

Std. Error of Estimate : 11.626

R² : 0.041

R² : 0.081*

The regression analysis conducted to identify the determinants influencing the effectiveness of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme reveals that the model explains only a small portion of the variance in the outcome variable, with an R² value of 0.041 and an adjusted R² of 0.081. This suggests that only 4.1% of the variation in students' academic growth or satisfaction related to the scheme is accounted for by the included predictors, indicating a relatively weak explanatory power. Among the variables considered, two emerged as statistically significant. Awareness of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme

showed a positive and significant relationship ($\beta = 0.141$, $p = 0.033$), indicating that students who are more informed about the scheme tend to derive greater benefits or hold more positive perceptions of its impact. More notably, the perceived impact of the scheme among students was highly significant ($\beta = 0.153$, $p = 0.007$), demonstrating that students who feel the scheme has positively influenced their education show stronger outcomes, possibly in terms of motivation or performance.

Other variables, including area of residence, type of family, number of family members, earning members, parent occupation, student perception of the scheme's effectiveness, and overall beneficiary satisfaction, were found to be statistically insignificant. This implies that demographic and family background factors do not have a meaningful influence on how students experience the benefits of the scheme. Interestingly, while general satisfaction with the scheme and students' perception of its effectiveness were assumed to be impactful, the data did not support this.

STEP-WISE REGRESSION ANALYSIS :

Table 1.3
Step Wise Regression analysis

Step	Constant	Awareness	Extent of the Scheme	Area of Residence	R²
1	67.984	0.183			0.029
2	55.895	0.168	0.165		0.047
3	53.295	0.170	0.167	1.692	0.057

The result of step-wise regression disclose that awareness, extent of the scheme and area of residence is found to be significant variables that increases the Impact of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme among the young minds. All these three variables contribute to a tune of 5.70 per cent among the impact of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY :

The study on the impact of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme among students in Coimbatore district reveals several important insights. Descriptive statistics indicate that students strongly agree that the scheme has helped reduce the overall cost of their education, with a high mean score of 4.42. This reflects the scheme's significant role in easing financial burdens related to education. Other positive impacts include reduced concerns about transportation and uniform costs, as well as decreased financial stress within families. However, students reported comparatively lower ease in accessing all benefits of the scheme, with a mean score of 3.52, suggesting some challenges in benefit utilization.

The multiple regression analysis identified that the model explains a modest 4.1% of the variance in student outcomes related to the scheme. Among the factors studied, awareness of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme and the perceived impact of the scheme on students were found to be statistically significant predictors of positive outcomes. Specifically, students who are more aware of the scheme and who perceive it as impactful tend to benefit more academically or show higher satisfaction levels. Other variables such as area of residence, family type, number of family members, parental occupation, perception of effectiveness, and beneficiary satisfaction were not significant predictors, indicating that demographic and family background characteristics have limited influence on the scheme's effectiveness.

Furthermore, the step-wise regression analysis highlights three key determinants that contribute to increasing the impact of the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme: awareness, extent of the scheme's benefits, and area of residence. Together, these variables account for approximately 5.7% of the variation in the scheme's impact among students. This suggests that improving awareness and expanding the reach and accessibility of the scheme, particularly across different residential areas, can enhance its effectiveness in empowering young minds academically.

SUGGESTIONS:

To make the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme more effective, awareness should be created through schools, local media, and community outreach programs, especially in rural and poor areas. A simple application process and availability of benefits at ease will make more students utilize the scheme to the fullest. Providing support through helpdesks or guidance staff can overcome certain implementation problems. Expanding the scheme to include educational needs such as books, internet access, and individual tutoring will offer greater comprehensive support. Regular review and feedback from students and teachers will improve the scheme's effectiveness and applicability. Provision of mentorship and counseling support in addition to monetary support will reduce dropouts. Involvement of local leadership and community organizations can improve bottom-up involvement. Tailoring the scheme to regional and socioeconomic settings will yield proportionate effect. It is also worth ensuring that accessibility issues in peripheral areas are addressed. Finally, proffering the same type of aid to female students and other disadvantaged sections will increase educational inclusiveness.

CONCLUSION:

The Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme has emerged as a meaningful step toward supporting the academic journey of male students in government schools, particularly by reducing financial burdens and encouraging continued education. The findings from Coimbatore district indicate that while the scheme is largely effective in lowering educational costs and offering relief to families, its full potential is closely tied to student awareness and perceived impact. Challenges in accessibility and regional disparities highlight the need for better implementation strategies. To maximize its reach and effectiveness, the scheme must go beyond financial support and integrate academic guidance, community involvement, and gender-inclusive policies. By addressing these gaps, the Tamil Pudhalvan Scheme can play a transformative role in shaping a more equitable and empowered future for young learners across Tamil Nadu.

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