

EDUCATIONAL EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND OBCS: A STUDY OF PERFORMANCE OF FREE COACHING SCHEME IN INDIA

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***Abstract:** Educational empowerment of the weaker sections has been the priority of government for their mainstreaming in development and governance. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and Minorities are included in the weaker sections of the society. In order to provide them due share in educational institutions and government services, reservations has been given to them besides introducing educational and economic empowerment programmes and schemes for their overall empowerment and development. Free Coaching Scheme for the candidates belonging to Scheduled Caste and OBCs has been launched by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India for providing coaching for preparation of competitive examinations. The scheme has no doubt impacted on the educational empowerment of weaker sections students besides their overall preparation and success in competitive examinations however; constraints and drawbacks in effective implementation of the scheme are reported. In view of the above, the present paper attempts to examine the functioning and performance of central sector scheme and suggesting a roadmap for effective functioning of the scheme and achieving desired results.*

INTRODUCTION

Indian society has been exposed to various socio-economic changes and legal initiatives over the last five decades. The constitutional provisions of democratic governance and the policy of positive discrimination have affected the social fabric and economic structure

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of Indian Society. However, it is highly stratified with many glaring inequalities among the different social groups. Despite protective measures, Scheduled Caste still suffers from the stigma of inferiority and low socio-economic status. They suffered both from overall rural poverty and backwardness. Importantly, the progress and prosperity of a nation is judged from the socio-economic status of its population especially of the weaker sections of the society who suffer from abject poverty, hunger, disease, unemployment, exploitation etc. as well as disadvantage groups like women, children, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes etc. It is the prime importance that such segment of society mostly living in remote, backward and rural areas should receive serious and earnest attention of policy makers, planners, social welfare administrators, social activities and academicians, so that the down trodden section of the society can also live decent life ensured by the special provisions in the Constitution of India. Indian society is highly stratified. This stratification has resulted into glaring inequalities among different social groups. This age-old social stratification is the result of the prevailing caste system, which has segregated the Dalits (SCs, STs and the OBCs) from the rest of the society to such an extent that they had been denied in the past even the basic human needs and the rights that are required to ensure one's bare existence. The caste system has created and sustained an unequal opportunity structure, which is an anathema to the egalitarian principles, which are the basis of a modern democratic society. What is worse, it intensifies and perpetuates the sufferings and servitude of the disadvantaged groups by reducing their access to developmental benefits. Importantly, the SCs came to be placed at the lowest rungs of the hierarchical caste order from where there was no scope for upward mobility. Moreover, religious injunctions blunt even the limited scope for resistance. Thus, the power and privilege accorded to the upper castes in the 'Varna' social order, in course of time, resulted in the appropriation of wealth and resources. Since wealth, power and resources were under their disposal, they could have more resources and these resources could be converted into power and power ensured acquisition of resources. In the ultimate analysis, the resources, wealth, power, position, privileges, higher status, authority, education, employment, services, land and labour

got concentrated in the hands of upper castes. The Scheduled Caste population, according to 2011 Census, was 16.66 crores constituting 16 percent of the total population of India. In terms of absolute numbers, Scheduled Castes are primarily concentrated in Uttar Pradesh (3.51 crores), West Bengal (1.9 crores), Andhra Pradesh (1.3 crores) Tamil Nadu (1.2 crores), and Bihar (1.2 crores). These States, together, account for 54.54% of the total Scheduled Caste population of the country. Punjab occupies first position in terms of percentage of Scheduled Castes to the State population (28.85 percent) followed by Himachal Pradesh (24.72 percent), West Bengal (23.02 percent), Rajasthan (17.29 percent) and Madhya Pradesh (14.55 percent).

Educational and economic empowerment schemes of SC's, ST's and minorities have been implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, and Ministry of Tribal Affairs. There are several schemes meant for Scheduled Caste i.e. Pre-metric scholarship, post-metric scholarship, hostel for boys and girls, and pre-examination coaching are some of the important educational empowerment schemes like residential and non residential schools for Scheduled Caste is implemented through NGO's only Education is the most powerful instrument for empowering the socially disadvantaged groups. Due to poor educational standards, career guidance and counseling, the disadvantaged could not avail the benefits of reservation policy in terms of getting admissions in technical, management and professional courses through appearing in competitive examinations as well as achieving higher posts of government services. In pursuance of Ninth Plan goals and objectives, the UGC has established SC Cells in 103 universities, including central universities to ensure proper implementation of the reservation policy. There has been increasing trend in higher education institutions in the state of Uttar Pradesh. During 2005-06, there were 24 universities, 8 deemed universities, 10 research institutions, 1637 colleges for general education and 114 engineering, technical and architecture colleges. There has been phenomenal growth in technical and professional institutions in the state in the recent years. Higher education in the state of Uttar Pradesh is organized exactly along the categorization of institutions of higher learning provided by UGC. Government of India had launched a

Central Sector scheme namely, Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship during the financial year 2005-06 to increase opportunities to Scheduled Castes for pursuing higher education leading to degrees such as M. Phil and Ph.D. The scheme has been revised with effect from 2010. The scheme caters the requirements of the Scheduled Caste students for pursuing research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. This will not only enable them to be eligible for employment to the posts of Lecturers lying vacant in various colleges and universities but will equip them to effectively take advantage of the growing opportunities at the national and international level in the context of the new economic order. The scheme caters total number of 2000 Fellowships (Junior Research Fellows) per year to Scheduled Caste students. The scheme covers all universities/institutions recognized by the University Grants Commission (UGC) and is being implemented by the UGC itself on the pattern of the scheme of UGC Fellowships being awarded to research students pursuing M. Phil. and Ph.D. UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme. UGC notifies the scheme by releasing suitable advertisements in the Press. Any student belonging to Scheduled Caste category who has been admitted to M. Phil./ Ph.D. degree in a University or academic institution by completing the required formalities for admission at that University or academic institution is eligible for the award of Fellowship subject to provision of the scheme as per the advertisement of UGC. After two years, if the progress in the research work of the awardees is found satisfactory, his/her tenure will be extended for a further period of three years as Senior Research Fellowship (SRF). The research work will be assessed by a three member committee set up by the University. The committee will consist of the Supervisor, Head of the Department and one outside expert in the subject. Junior Research Fellowship may be terminated in case the progress of the candidate is not found satisfactory by the committee. The Senior Research Fellowship (SRF) shall be sanctioned on year-to-year basis on the recommendation of the Supervisor of the candidate duly accepted/rejected by the Head of the Department and finally approved by the Vice Chancellor. The total period of award of JRF and SRF shall not exceed a period of 5 years. The fellowship is paid from date of registration of the students

in Ph.D./M. Phil. Course. The students belonging to Scheduled Caste category once considered eligible for the fellowship shall not be entitled to any other benefits from Central or State Government or any other body like UGC offering similar benefit to avoid duplication and increase coverage.

The Coaching and Allied Scheme for SC/ST students was introduced in 1960-61 for improving the knowledge and aptitude amongst SC/ST students by providing special coaching to them through Pre-Examination Training Centres and thus for preparing them to compete with others in the Civil Services and other competitive examinations. The scheme was revised during the Ninth Plan for funding per unit cost basis. Universities and private institutions receive 100 per cent central assistance on contractual basis, while state owned Pre-Examination Training Centre's (PETC) receive the central assistance to the extent of 50 per cent of the contractual amount. The scheme was common for both SC and ST students up to 2000 and it is, now exclusively for SC & OBC students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is important to examine the gray areas of research and research gaps. Though, a number of studies, surveys and research in the field of higher education have been conducted however, there is paucity of literature and empirical data pertaining to problems of youth pursuing higher education in the system of higher education. Time and again concern has been expressed that the Indian university system has not been able to provide a steady flow of competent scientists who can help translate scientific achievement into technological development, or give India a secure position on the world scientific map. The achievements in the fields of agriculture, technology, atomic energy, electronics and communications and even in the basic sciences have been noteworthy. This has been possible because the universities have provided the much needed scientific manpower. However, the situation appears to be changing. Not only is the demand increasing but also the source of competent personnel seems to be drying up. It is well known that research projects awarded to teachers in the universities often remain incomplete because suitable (NET Qualified) scholars are not available or

because there is not enough money for purchase and upkeep of essential equipments. There is also a declining interest amongst graduates for research in different areas of science and technology. Although one IIT (Kanpur), one IIM (Lucknow), and few more engineering and management institutions in UP are doing a good job towards supply of manpower resources as an essential input to the country's socio-economic development, this is not enough as the universities in Uttar Pradesh are not capable enough. Neglect of the universities will only make the problems worse. It is necessary to not only enlarge our territory education base but also to ensure that the education imparted is of high quality. A few privileged institutions like the IITS, IIMs IISc and Central Universities alone cannot fulfill this task. (Powar, 1998,) Economic liberalization and globalization are changing the relationships between the governments and the education systems all over the world. Some of the changes pertinent to the school system and which affect the youth in contemporary Indian society are: liberalization of rules and procedures to establish private for profit very expensive schools which offer certificates and qualifications of foreign countries; schools which provide facilities such as air conditioned classrooms, buses and hostels; franchising of school education; the increase in the number of Indian students who are going abroad for higher education especially after completing school, the emphasis on specific and a narrow ranges of skills and subjects; the devaluing of humanities and social sciences from the school level; introduction of new job oriented courses during school hours and after school hours; meeting all the cost of the schools from the tuition fees paid by the individual student; the emphasis on performance (Apple, 2002) efficiency and accountability; high cost tuition and coaching centers, etc. Indian society is characterized by diversity and hierarchy. The main parameters of diversity are: religion, caste, ethnicity, rural/urban residence, regional culture, class and gender. Historically, some of these provided extreme handicaps to large sections of Indians and prevented them from moving up socially, economically and educationally. The Indian Constitution recognized caste and tribe as major indicators of backwardness and evolved a policy of positive discrimination in public sector education and employment in favour of those who belonged to

the categorized of Scheduled Castes/Dalits and Scheduled Tribes/ Adivasis (Chanana, 1993). This is popularly known as the policy of reservations. Until very recently, education was projected as a major instrument of equal educational opportunity and social mobility in India, as in the other democratic nations, in the hope that education would be the main equalizer and promoter of social change. Equality and social access became major goals of education. Moreover, there has been the problem of clustering of women and students from the deprived sections in general education, namely, humanities and social sciences – subjects which either lead to low end jobs or unemployment. However, the clustering of women in specific subjects and their occupational segregation later in life (Sharpe, 1970, Deem, 1978; Wolpe, 1978) has been the focus of women's studies. One of the main concerns has been the imbalance as seen in arts vis-à-vis science at the school level i.e. girls' enrolment in science subjects is much lower in comparison to boys. They tend to cluster in arts, humanities, social sciences-subjects which are not directly related to jobs (Chanana, 2000). Social Scientists contended that these imbalances in subjects had to be redressed to remove inequality (Kelly, 1981; Hading, 1986; Whyte, 1986). The argument is that the subject choices of women from among the upper and middle strata of society are linked to their socialization as well as to their future social roles, that is, to their reproductive role. The women from poor families have not been focused upon for whom the production value of education is relevant. Beteille (2010) is of the opinion that university expansion begin in India in the wake of independence. The size and scale of universities operation make it difficult for them to function meaningfully as communities of scientists and scholars still think the university should be. The new colleges and universities are now producing large number of graduates and doctorates but they have failed to satisfy the growing hunger for university degrees. Beteille (2006) has maintained that the orientation of research in sociology and related social science discipline has changed from delayed return to immediate return. Social scientists in the universities often complain that there is no money for social science research. This is not entirely true. There is more money for research now than there was 50 years ago, but most of it is for immediate return research.

Funding agencies have become result oriented. The forms of research are maintained in terms of sample size, design of questionnaire and so on but the results are often trivial and lead to little new insights. Shils (1992) is of the view that the authorities of the universities compromises many times. The relationship between universities, government and society needs to be examined to cater the needs of higher education. Shils (1997) has described the mass university as a university with more than 20,000 students and has observed that the mass university has brought into the university many young persons whose foremost and perhaps exclusive aim is to obtain a degree and to enter a remunerative occupation.

India being the largest country of illiterates takes credit of operating one of the largest higher education systems in the world. It is indeed an enormous network of institutions with huge ramifications and dimensions. We have central universities, institutions of national importance, deemed universities and state universities. These institutions offer a vast range of courses and academic programmes in all relevant branches of arts, sciences, humanities and technology. Thus, we have several structures and super-structures of organizations at various levels having a vast army of personnel consisting of teachers, research scholars, demonstrators, laboratory and workshop assistants, and librarians and so on. All kinds of institutions at higher education level make a mosaic structures and give a polychromatic picture (Mohanty, 2000,). However, in post-independence period, quantitative expansion has been unprecedented as the numbers of institutions, enrollment of students and recruitment of teachers have been multiplied several times. It has been due to increasing aspirations of the people and socio-economic-political forces working very heavily. But the quality of higher education has been seriously affected (Mohanty, 2000,

The higher education system consists of both general and technical education. University Grant Commission (UGC) is the main regulatory authority for managing higher educational institutes including universities and colleges. UGC is the apex body of Ministry of Higher Education Government of India. The higher education institutes get financial assistance from the government through UGC while state governments do provide substantial financial assistance.

There are four types of universities viz. central university, state university, deemed university, and private university set under the Act of Parliament. There is a National Accreditation Committee (NAC) which evaluates the level of educational infrastructure , teaching quality and placements of students, and thus the Committee provides categories such as A+, A, B +, B, C etc. to the universities and colleges. All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) also regulates the quality of educational infrastructure and teaching to the technical institutions. Though there are a number of academic bodies which provide directions and regulate the universities, colleges and institutions, however, students perusing the higher education face enormous problems and challenges. The quality of education depends upon the quality of infrastructure, teachers, administrative and supporting staff, institutional efforts for industry university-college interaction, and placements. The quality of education in the private universities was expected to be high standard, however, in most of the private universities, colleges and institutions, there is more emphasis on resource mobilization and money saving rather than providing quality education and thus the students are suffering.

The scheme provides financial assistance to Scheduled Caste students for pursuing research studies leading to M. Phil., Ph.D. and equivalent research degree in universities, research institutions and scientific institutions. University Grants Commission (UGC) is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme .From the year 2010-11, 2000 Research Fellowships (Junior Research Fellows) per year would be awarded to Scheduled Caste Students. In case of non-availability of adequate number of Scheduled Caste candidates, the number of fellowships not availed during a year will be carried forward to the next academic session. There is no income ceiling prescribed under the scheme. The important changes have been made in the scheme from 2010-11.The number of new fellowships to be awarded each year has been increased from 1333 to 2000 to benefit more Scheduled Caste students. The rates of fellowship for JRF and SRF will be at par with the UGC fellowships. Rates of fellowship under the scheme have been upwardly revised with effect from 2010 to annual the inflationary effect and make the fellowship more beneficial, number of available awards, the UGC selects the

candidates based on the percentage. Budgetary allocation under the educational empowerment schemes for SC students has shown highest in case of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme followed by Top Class Education Scheme. However, except in case of Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme, expenditure under the scheme was reported higher than the budgetary allocation during the years of 2008-09 and 2009-10 while in other schemes, expenditure was reported significantly low as against of budgetary allocation under the scheme.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Present paper is based on major research study. The study is mainly empirical in nature and based on primary data. Besides, collection and analysis of primary data, secondary data and pertinent literature have also been compiled, analyzed and reviewed accordingly. The Universe of the study covers 15 states, 36 Institutes imparting coaching for various competitive examinations and job oriented trainings, 1100 beneficiary students and 108 faculty members. The states in which Free Coaching has been imparted during 2013-14 are Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab, Manipur, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Gujarat, Punjab, Delhi, Tripura, Jharkhand, Odissa, Bihar and Assam. We selected the sample of 15 States, 36 coaching/ Training Centers of 20 Coaching Institutions, 108 Trainers/Faculty Members, 30 District Level Officials and 1100 Students/ beneficiaries. Field survey was conducted in states of Andhra Pradesh & Tamil Nadu from South Zone, Punjab, Haryana & Delhi from North Zone, Uttar Pradesh & Madhya Pradesh from Central Zone, Maharashtra & Rajasthan from Western Zone and West Bengal, Jharkhand & Odissa from East Zone & Manipur, Assam & Tripura from North-East Zone.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

- The infrastructure, library resources, human resources, amenities and basic facilities in the coaching institutions were found somewhat adequate however; there is vast scope for improvement in order to ensure quality learning

and teaching. A large proportion of the coaching institutions are functioning in the rented buildings. Though, most of the states reported that they have adequate number of faculty members however, they are getting consolidated salary.

- During last two years, the total enrolment in coaching institutions was recorded 2859 candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes and OBCs Out of total enrolled candidates, 19.37 per cent candidates were female while majority of the candidates were male. The proportion of female candidates was recorded high for the higher courses.
- The expenditure pattern of grants received so far demonstrates that most of the coaching institutions are using the grant mainly for providing honorarium to the faculty and stipend to the students. Other expenses include wages and salaries of the staff and maintenance of coaching institutions.
- The success rate for the last two years in the coaching institutions shows that about 73 percent of the enrolled candidates were succeeded. Success rate has been reported high in the states of Tripura, Orissa, Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu. Success rate was recorded high in lower courses.
- All the coaching institutions reported that the present amount of stipend is not sufficient. They were also of the view that discontinuation of stipend will adversely affect the enrolment and success rate as well as discourage the candidates belonging to minority communities.
- Most of the faculty members were found belonging to middle age group and males. About 2/5th faculty members were working on permanent basis while others are getting honorarium on lecture basis. More than half of the faculty members were postgraduates and doctorates while about 6 percent faculty members were graduates. They are undertaking about 20 classes per week. Thus, academic stress has been reported significantly high among the faculty members.

- Faculty members revealed that they are regularly distributing handouts to the students besides conducting tests on regular basis. All the faculty members were found satisfied with the batch of students. They were of the view that discontinuation of stipend will adversely affect the scheme in terms of enrolment and success rate. They also reported that present amount of stipend is not sufficient.
- More than 3/4th students were found enrolled in Finishing Courses or Job Oriented Courses while enrollment in higher courses was recorded low.
- Majority of the students were found satisfied and fully satisfied with the teaching method, quality of stock in library and quality of teaching of teachers.
- Overall 76 percent students succeeded in their examinations. The success rate was recorded high for the lower courses including job oriented courses and entrance examination for technical / professional courses. Again, success rate has been found high among the candidates coming from urban areas as compared to the candidates coming from rural areas.
- The majority of students participating in the scheme were from semi-urban areas (over 56%) and about 20% came from rural background and 23% from urban areas including 6 % from Metropolitan cities.
- Rural areas had comparatively less representation (only 20 % as against about 73 % rural population). The students in the age-group 20-24 years have overwhelmingly (about 79%) taken advantage of free coaching.
- Pre-dominantly male students (about 78.8%) are getting benefit of Free Coaching, while female students are generally doing better in secondary level education. It may be due to lack of adequate transportation, hostel facilities, or appropriate security and hygiene for girl students preventing them from joining such coaching schemes.
- Very small proportion (less than 3 %) among the participants

of Free Coaching Scheme is married. The income-class of the families to which the students availing free coaching scheme belong to is pre-dominantly (about 94.8 %) the lowest slab, i.e. below Rs. 1 Lakh.

- About 65% students getting benefit of Free Coaching were local at the all India level. Out of Non-local students over 90 % were from other districts in the same state.
- About two-thirds of the participants of Free Coaching were non-graduates including about 43% with intermediate qualification and another 24.2 % just matriculates. About 60% of the participants completed their studies during the last five years and only about ten per cent students passed their educational courses 10 years back or more.
- There is pre-dominance of science students among the students admitted to Free Coaching Scheme and about 60 % students got First division in their classes/ Courses.
- Over 70 % students opted for Finishing/ job oriented course like ITes, BPO/ Retail/ Accounting courses. Only about 10 % opted for IIT JEE or AIEEE, AIPMT/ CAT etc. exams.
- Maximum students got the information about the scheme from the coaching centres (over 45%) followed by friends and relatives (34%). About 42 % students reported the publicity about the scheme as “Good” and remaining 58 % as “Poor”.
- There is in general poor awareness about the scheme as reported by the participants.
- Pre-dominantly the selection criteria is based on written test conducted by coaching centres and In less than 3% cases, selection was done on First come First Get basis..
- Over 93 % students reached interview stage after first time availing Free Coaching Scheme including all students from Jharkhand, Assam, M.P., Odisha, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal states who reached the stage of interviews after their first Free Coaching under the scheme.

- Over 78% students were selected in their exam after the completion of coaching.
- All students without exception reported that they received the stipend through cheque. But all of them also stated that they did not receive it in time (7th day of every month).It was reported that they received it often irregularly and after delay of a month or more.
- Maximum students spent larger share of stipend on Books, reading material (40%) followed by Conveyance (30%), Food (30%) and Lodging (10% for one fourth of participants).
- Most of the students reported that free coaching scheme has quality impact on them as it has increased their confidence level and existing body of knowledge. Most of the students were of the view that the discontinuation of stipend will discourage them.
- Based on the feedback it was observed that over-all the grading for quality of training was slightly better than Very Good.For Content of Course, Instructor's Knowledge and question handling aspects, it was between Very Good and Outstanding.For "time allotted", "interaction with faculty", and "stocks in library" aspects the feedback was somewhat lower than Very Good.
- Feedback on Effectiveness of Coaching, over all grading is above "Very Good" taking together all aspects. The aspects which have been given much higher level of appreciation include Environment of Coaching, Awareness of trend, Satisfaction about Content of Training, Satisfaction on domain, increase in knowledge, help in career, and help in motivation.
- The aspects on which the feedback was quite below " Very Good Mark" include Access to reference material, Sharing information on career opportunities, Availability of information on career opportunities in the coaching centre, and Maintaining contact with the institution.

- On the overall rating of Coaching Centres, grading on all aspects put together is slightly above “Very Good” grade. The aspects Quality of Trainer, Environment of Training, and Infrastructure Available received much higher than “Very Good” score. The most lowly graded aspects were Stocks in Library, Duration of Library Services and information on career opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Education is the most powerful instrument for empowering the socially disadvantaged groups. Due to poor educational standards, career guidance and counseling, the disadvantaged could not avail the benefits of reservation policy in terms of getting admissions in technical, management and professional courses through appearing in competitive examinations as well as achieving higher posts of government services. UGC has established SC Cells in 103 universities, including central universities to ensure proper implementation of the reservation policy. As education is the essential to carry forward the community socially and economically, efforts were made in the Tenth Plan to promote educational development amongst Scheduled Caste through enriching and expanding the existing education programmes with special focus on their women and the most backward communities. It is now thought appropriate to assess the working of the Rajeev Gandhi National Fellowship scheme with an aim to bring about qualitative improvement in the education extended to Scheduled Caste and enrich by adding its effective functioning and performance. Moreover, the evaluation of the centrally sponsored scheme is imperative for operational point of view as well as assessing the impacts of scheme in achieving its objectives and goals. Against this backdrop, the present study purports to examine functioning and performance of Rajeev Gandhi National Fellowship Scheme and suggesting policy measures for its effective implementation.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Proper and adequate hostel facilities are to be made available to minority students enrolled for various programmes

in coaching institutions. The enrolled students should be provided proper and regular mess facility besides providing library with quality resource stock - books, journals and other periodicals. The internet facility should also be made available in the library and computer centre so that students may get quality resource literature through downloading from various websites and digital libraries.

- As head of the institutions, faculty members and candidates reported that present amount of stipend is not sufficient; the amount of stipend for coaching and allied scheme should be increased substantially to meet the basic requirements and give a sense of equality.
- The coaching institutions may be provided funds for combined classes such SCs, STs, OBCs and Minorities. This will require special provision for releasing funds and resources are to be pooled from Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Minority Affairs, and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Moreover such institutions may also approach to state government for availing funds for maintenance of coaching institutions. Thus, combined classes will provide equal opportunity for mainstreaming of SC, ST, OBC and Minority students with other castes and classes. The coaching institutions should be allowed to enroll non-reserved category students on professional basis so that they may hire quality teachers, upgrade teaching methods, enrich the library stock and improve the infrastructural facilities through mobilizing resources.
- The coaching institutions should be provided funds timely; however recommendation of state level officials may be kept in mind while releasing the second installment by the Central Government. The delay in releasing of second installment of coaching centers and quality of coaching and other services may be deteriorated.
- The coaching institutions should be allowed to diversify in the programmes and civil services, provincial civil services,

state level entrance examination, etc. should be included in the coaching classes. Importantly, the coaching for civil services and provincial civil services may be started at the state headquarters while such programme may be discouraged to initiate in the backward district because in such areas quality faculty is not available. However, other competitive examinations coaching may be provided to such centers. Again, coaching centers should ensure the availability on quality teaching through contract classes and capsule classes by renounced faculty members may take a series of schedules in the centre at one stretch.

- Universities and well established institutes of learning, education and research including NGO's may be promoted to start the coaching institutions because they have plenty of experienced, qualified and competent faculties well equipped and enriched libraries, hostel and other infrastructural facilities.
- All the universities and deemed universities should establish a separate section of SCs STs, OBCs and Minority for facilitating and providing career guidance to them. Importantly, these centers should be established till for individual career counseling, up gradation of skills, motivation and mobilization of aspirants for various services and competitive examiners.
- The coaching institutions should appoint core faculty while library should be enriched. It is also suggested that photo state version of high priced, quality and rare books may be arranged through issuing such books from well established libraries and be kept in the institutions for consultation of students.
- Accountability should be enforced in terms of success rate of the various programmes. The preferences should be given to professional institutions having required facilities.
- Girls from Scheduled Castes and OBCs should be given preference in admission in such coaching institutions. They

should be provided social security, separate toilet facility, and hostel and individual career guidance so that they may join the mainstream and avail the reservation benefits.

- In all the coaching schemes whether through NGO's or through state organizations or through universities or private education institutions, the rate of remuneration for teachers should be high enough to attract competent teachers. The rates followed by successful coaching organization should be used as a good indicator for fixing the rates.
- In order to have quality faculty and resource persons, the coaching institutions should invite resources persons from various national level academic institutions as guest faculty while the coaching institutions should allocate substantial amount for honorarium to the guest faculty for delivering such special classes to their students. The students should be given more exposure related academic inputs rather than theoretical inputs.
- It is suggested that Knowledge Manager/Information Officer may be appointed on contractual basis in each coaching institution that should be given the responsibility of developing quality resource literature for various competitive examinations through internet search, consulting books, periodicals, journals and also translating into vernacular languages for easy understanding of the enrolled students.
- Performance indicators for monitoring the overall success of the coaching institutions should be evolved and those coaching centers who are unable to get the minimum qualifying marks in terms of success rate, the support under the scheme should be withdrawn by the government. Besides, the coaching institutions should insist on enrollment of students for specific examinations only and the enrolled students should be discouraged for appearing various competitive examinations as it affects their concentration on one particular examination.
- It is imperative to review the selection criteria of coaching

institutions as some of the good coaching institutions are not willing to apply under the scheme to the Ministry as they are required to get recommendation from the concerned state. The Ministry may also adopt a judicious thinking to consider the proposals recommended by the state government under the scheme. As per the concentration of minority population and educational backwardness, the quota for the states may be fixed up by the Ministry while approving the proposals. The Ministry may also consider proposals from the coaching institutions coming directly without recommendation of the concerned states. The good coaching institutions may be empanelled for a longer period so that effective implementation of the scheme may be ensured.

- The Ministry may evolve criteria and indicators for evaluation of the performance of the coaching institutions. On the basis of grading system, the coaching institutions may be sorted out for allotment of the number of seats under the scheme. The coaching institution should also evolve criteria and indicators for evaluation of the performance of faculty members and selection of candidates in order to attract the quality faculty and good batch of students.
- It may be recommended that Ministry should directly transfer the amount of stipend to the students enrolled under the scheme as there is no timely disbursement of stipend to the students. Delay in disbursement of stipend to the students creates a lot of confusion and misunderstanding among the students and coaching institutions besides affecting the enrolment, retention, quality of learning and success rate.
- It is suggested that reading materials should be developed by the coaching institutions in consultation with academic experts. The reading materials in proper shape (modules, papers, monographs and reports) should be provided time to time to the students so that they may go through the reading materials in advance and participate effectively in the discussions and deliberations in classrooms. The coaching institutions may approach to the academic experts for

developing a feedback form for the assessment of the faculty.

- Coaching institutions should emphasize on institutional efforts for placement services. The data bank for private and corporate sectors may be prepared in advance where students may be placed besides compiling and display of information on competitive examinations and various career opportunities.
- MIS must be developed for tracking the enrolment, retention, attendance and success for the various courses in coaching institutions. The MIS should be linked with concerned state governments and the Ministry. The physical and financial performance may be provided on monthly basis on a prescribed format both through electronic and printed forms.
- The coaching institutions may adopt biometric attendance system for ensuring good attendance in the classes. This will also ensure quality learning, understanding and higher success rate.
- It is suggested that proper publicity and awareness creation about the scheme should be ensured both at the Ministry level and in the states so that candidates from backward and remote areas may be made aware about the scheme and they may avail the benefits under the scheme.
- Concurrent monitoring and evaluation is necessary to ensure effective implementation and review of the programme. It is recommended that Ministry may set up a separate Division for Monitoring & Evaluation of all centrally sponsored programmes of Ministry of Minority Affairs with well equipped infrastructure, qualified and dedicated manpower in order to evolve National Level Monitoring System based on online Reporting Mechanism.
- It may be recommended that Ministry should organize programmes for Training of Trainers on regular basis at regional level, so that the training/coaching institutions and their resource persons/faculties are well familiar with the approach, methodology and content of the training modules.

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