

An Evaluation Study of Nai Udaan Scheme in India

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Abstract

“Nai Udaan” extends financial support to the notified minority candidates clearing preliminary examination conducted by Union Public Service Commission, Staff Selection Commission and State Public Service Commissions, CAPF to adequately equip them to compete for appointment to Civil Services in the Union and the State Governments and to increase their representation. The scheme envisages proactive measures for those communities that lag behind and have become increasingly marginalized. Conducted from August 2020 to November 2020, the major aim of the study is to find out the impact and efficacy of the scheme. The study was conducted on purposive random sampling basis covering six states, i.e. one from each of the NSSO classified geographical zones. A total of 315 beneficiaries were covered under the study. The Scheme was found attracting an insufficient number of potential beneficiaries due to its inadequate publicity. Lack of any information about the usage of funds from the beneficiary further makes it difficult to judge the performance of the scheme. The findings of the study are expected to help policymakers and programme implementing bodies to take appropriate corrective measures to make Nai Udaan more effective and thereby increasing the representation of minority communities in government sector jobs.

Keywords: *Nai Udaan, Scheme, Minority, Financial Support, Student, Education, India*

Introduction

Considering the Report of National commission on Religious and Linguistic Minorities, it was conceptualized that all communities and groups should have equal share in economic opportunities and employment. on the same lines, the scheme “Nai Udaan - Support for minority students clearing prelims conducted by Union Public Service Commission, State Public Service Commissions and Staff Selection Commission” was launched in the year 2013-14 by the Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India. The scheme also vouches for proactive and responsive measures for the communities that lag behind and are increasingly marginalized.

The scheme caters to minority communities which are notified as per section 2(c) of National Commission for Minority Act, 1992. Aligned with the Act, six minority communities have been identified namely (1) Muslims, (2) Sikhs, (3) Christians, (4) Buddhists, (5) Jains, and (6) Zoroastrians (Parsis). To improve the coverage of

the scheme even to the remote areas, the Management Information System (MIS) portal has been introduced w.e.f May, 2016. As such, the scheme intends to provide effective wings to six notified minorities for transforming their hollowed socio-economic conditions into a hopeful future. All in all, the scheme is an intervention in the form of a government program, aiming to help minority communities as notified under Section 2 (C) of National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, with earmarked targets of Self- employment and Wage employment, Recruitment to State and Central Services.

Under the scheme, the applications are invited from the target group clearing prelims examination conducted by UPSC, SSC, SPSCs in the prescribed format. The eligibility criteria and conditions of the scheme entail that the candidate should belong to one of the minority communities notified under section 2(c) of National Commission for Minority Act, 1992 and should have passed prelims examination conducted by UPSC, SPSCs or SSC, as given below in table 1.

Table 1: Examination-wise fixed slot of seats for providing the financial assistance

Exam	No. of Seats (Allotted)
UPSC (Civil Service, Indian Engineering Service and Indian Forest Service)	300
SPSC (Gazetted),	2000
Staff Selection Commission (Combined Graduate Level), CAPF for Group 'B' (Non Gazetted posts)	2000
SPSC (Graduate Level Non-Gazetted)	800
Total	5100

Source: Revised guidelines 01.04.2019 –Nai Udaan

The scheme also provides a clear quota of seat allocation per community, and per exam, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Community-wise fixed slot of seats for providing the financial assistance

Minority Community	Seats Allotted
Muslim	3723
Sikh	408
Christian	613
Jain	154
Buddhist	168
Zoroastrian	30
Total	5096

Source: Revised guidelines 01.04.2019 –Nai Udaan

To avail the benefits under the scheme, the total family income of the candidates from all sources should not exceed Rs.8 lakh per annum. The financial support can be availed by candidate only once. The candidate is not eligible to receive benefit from any other similar scheme of the central or state governments/UT administration. The eligible candidates are required to apply online through the portal of the scheme for availing the benefit within one month from the date of declaration of prelims exam results with all requisite documents. Thus, the scheme intends to comprehensively promote minority candidates clearing prelims examination by providing financial assistance. Under the scheme, 100% financial support through Direct Benefit Transfer is provided to the selected candidates by the Ministry. The financial support provided under the scheme is given below in Table 3.

Table 3: Rate of Financial Assistance

S. No.	Exam	Rate of Financial Assistance (Rs.)
1	UPSC (Civil Services, Indian Engineering Services & Indian Forest Services)	1,00,000
2	State PSC (Gazetted)	50,000
3	SSC (CGL) & (CAPF-Group B)	25,000
4	State PSC (Graduate level) (Non-Gazetted)	25,000

The vision of the 12th Five Year Plan clearly stated that the development of the country should proceed in a manner that it is inclusive and ensures broad improvements in the living standards of all classes and sections of the people. The scheme completely endorses this broad idea of national development, by fostering equity in the availability of resources for preparation for most prestigious examinations, conducted by the government for recruitment. This will trigger a chain reaction, increasing employability among the youth, belonging to minority communities. Historically, the values of nation building through inclusive growth and equitable access to opportunity was also envisaged in the report of Mandal Commission or the SEBC (Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Commission), constituted in 1979.

Objectives of the study

- i) To study the impact of financial assistance provided to beneficiaries related to self-employment and wage employment
- ii) To evaluate the effectiveness of structure, design and implementation mechanism of the scheme
- iii) To recommend measures to improve both effectiveness and outreach of the scheme.

Data and Methodology of the Study

The study design and methodology was prepared after thorough understanding of Nai Uddan. Thereafter, the schedules were pre-tested in and around Delhi. The schedules were also revised to incorporate feedbacks received from field. The study was conducted from August 2020 to November 2020. The study was conducted on purposive random sampling basis. The following six States/UTs were selected as per sampling framework namely West Bengal (EZ), Jammu and Kashmir (NZ), Tamil Nadu (SZ), Maharashtra (WZ), Assam (NEZ) and Uttar Pradesh (CZ).

Table 4 State-wise sample included in the study

S. No	NSSO Zones	Sampled States	Sample-Size Covered
1.	East Zone (EZ)	West Bengal	226
2.	West Zone (WZ)	Maharashtra	30
3.	North Zone (NZ)	Jammu Kashmir	6
4.	South Zone (SZ)	Tamil Nadu	14
5.	North East Zone (NEZ)	Assam	17
6.	Central Zone (CZ)	Uttar Pradesh	22
	Total		315

These six states were selected in consideration with highest number of beneficiaries from a state in each of the six geographically classified by NSSO. However, in the North East Zone Assam was selected over Mizoram due to a wider mix of minority communities among the beneficiaries. The information collected from the selected beneficiaries through the MS-forms. The answers of the respondents especially on expenditure pattern after coverage under the scheme were re-verified and validated to assess the on ground performance of the scheme.

Study Findings

Table 5 shows the impact of the financial assistance on the wage employment and self employment across the states selected for the study.

Table 5 Impact of Financial Assistance on Self Employment/ Wage Employment

State	Impact on Self/Wage Employment	No Impact on Self/Wage Employment	Total
Assam	-	17	17
J&K	-	6	6
Maharashtra	3	27	30
Tamil Nadu	-	14	14
Uttar Pradesh	-	22	22
West Bengal	1	225	226
Total	4	311	315

In West Bengal, out of 226 respondents, 225 beneficiaries found no impact of the financial assistance on self employment and/or wage employment, 1 beneficiary

candidate found positive impact of the scheme on self-employment. In Maharashtra, out of 30 beneficiaries, 27 candidates did not found any impact, only 3 beneficiary candidates found positive impact of the scheme on self-employment.. In Uttar Pradesh, out of 22 beneficiary candidates no candidate found any impact on self-employment and wage employment. In Assam, out of 17 beneficiary candidates, zero beneficiary found any impact of the financial assistance on self-employment and wage employment. In Tamil Nadu, out of 14 beneficiary candidates, zero respondents find any impact on self-employment. Also, in J&K, no beneficiary candidate found any impact on self-employment and wage employment.

Table 6 shows information about time taken by the ministry to provide the financial assistance under the scheme. Majority of the respondents replied that it took more than 150 days to provide with the assistance under the scheme. The exact details are recorded in table.

Table 6 Time taken by the Ministry to provide the Financial Assistance.

States	Less than 100 days		100 to 150 days		More than 150 days	
Assam	2	4.2%	6	18.2%	9	3.8%
J&K	1	2.1%	1	3.0%	4	1.7%
Maharashtra	13	27.1%	5	15.2%	12	5.1%
Tamil Nadu	2	4.2%	2	6.1%	10	4.3%
Uttar Pradesh	4	8.3%	4	12.1%	14	6.0%
West Bengal	26	54.2%	15	45.5%	185	79.1%
Total	48	15.5%	33	10.7%	234	73.8%

For more than 73% (234) respondents it took more than 150 days for receiving the benefits, after applying under the scheme. This included 3.8% from Assam, 1.7% from J&K 5.1% from Maharashtra, 4.3% from Tamil Nadu, 6% from Uttar Pradesh and 79.1% from West Bengal. Out of total respondents 10.7% (33) respondents said that they received the assistance somewhere between 100 to 150 days after applying under the scheme. This included 18.2% from Assam, 3% from J&K 15.2% from Maharashtra, 6.1% from Tamil Nadu, 12.1% from Uttar Pradesh and 45.5% from West Bengal. Out of total respondents only 15.5% (48) respondents admitted to receiving the assistance within 100 days after applying for the scheme. This included 4.2% from Assam, 2.1% from J&K 27.1% from Maharashtra, 4.2% from Tamil Nadu, 8.3% from Uttar Pradesh and 54.2% from West Bengal.

Table 7 indicates information about the medium of information through which the beneficiary was informed about the scheme.

Table 7 Medium of awareness about the scheme.

Medium of awareness about the scheme	Count of Medium	
Coaching Institute	28	8.89%
Friends	203	64.4%
Ministry Website	56	17.78%
Print Media	10	3.17%
Family/Relatives	12	3.81%
Social media	6	1.90%
Total	315	100%

The above table represents that out of 315 respondents, maximum number i.e. 203 (64.4%) of the candidates got to know about the scheme from their friends, followed by 56 (17.78%) of the respondents from the website of the Ministry. Those who got information from coaching centres constituted for 28(8.89%) respondents and only 3% came to know from their relatives. Another 3% got to know about the scheme from print media, approximately 2% from social media, 0.32% from state government website and college notice boards. There is no beneficiary response about the awareness created by means of conference and workshops, training program, capacity building program conducted by MoMA. This represents the feeble approach towards the awareness about the scheme and coverage of beneficiaries.

Table 8 shows information about the number of *divyangjan* beneficiaries covered under the scheme.

Table 8 Physical status of the beneficiaries.

Physical Status	Number of beneficiary candidates
Abled	314
Divyangjan	1
Total	315

Table 8 represents the physical status of the candidates who have qualified the prelims of any of the specified examinations and received the assistance under the scheme. Out of 315 respondents, there was only 1 *divyangjan* applicant who was provided the financial assistance under the scheme in the year 2019-20. The only *divyangjan* beneficiary covered under the study was from the state of Assam and has qualified Assam PSC prelims. The respondents selected were chosen at random. This depicts the fact that *divyangjan* candidates are far from the reach of the scheme.

Table 9 shows information about input use efficiency of the scheme for 5 years.

Table 9 Expenditure per beneficiary

Year	Actual Expenditure (in Rs. Crores)	No. of beneficiaries	Input Use Efficiency
2015-16	3.97	1071	0.0000428
2016-17	4	858	0.0000214
2017-18	6.18	1427	0.0000230
2018-19	6.72	1187	0.0000176
2019-20	8.02	1539	0.0000191

The actual expenditure on the scheme has increased from Rs. 3.97 crores in the year 2015-16 to Rs. 6.18 crores in 2017-18 and further to Rs. 8.02 crores in the year 2019-20. The number of beneficiaries covered under the scheme has also increased from 1071 in 2015-16, to 1427 in 2017-18 and further to 1539 in 2019-20. As per the information declared publicly by the ministry, the input use efficiency has followed an unstable trend, which is depicted in the figure. The number of beneficiaries however has remained well below the set target of 5100 per financial year.

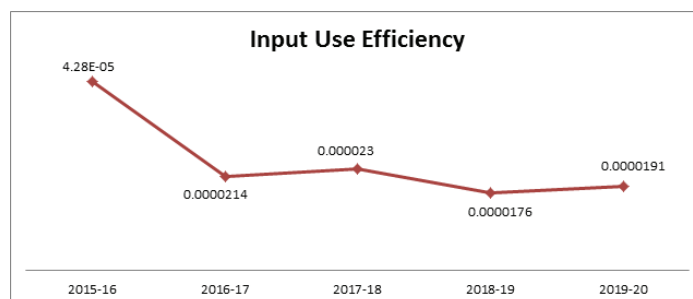


Figure 1 Input Use Efficiency

Conclusion

NaiUdaan is one of the major initiatives of the Government of India towards socio-economic development of the minorities. The government has been spending crores of rupees in order to increase the representation of minority communities in public sector jobs. The major findings of the study include (1) 234 out of 315 of the respondents said that it took over 150 days for the Ministry to provide with the financial assistance, (2) More than 60% respondents were informed about the scheme by their friends, (3) Though the scheme guidelines clearly mention a target of up to 5100 beneficiaries per year; the number of beneficiaries for the year 2019-20 was only 1539. This implies that the scheme is underperforming in the terms of achieving the targets set according to the

scheme guidelines. (4) As per the sample included in the research, the proportion of *divyangjan* beneficiaries was less than 0.33% of the total sample. (5) There is no grievance redressal mechanism for the beneficiaries, this leads to gap between the demand and the supply side, (6) Only 1% respondents felt that the onetime benefit had an impact on self employment and/or wage employment. The findings of the study are expected to help policymakers and programme implementing bodies to take appropriate corrective measures to make the programme more effective and thereby increasing the participation of minority communities in public sector jobs. Based on the findings of the study, the policy makers can take into account the following recommendations for better output in the years to come. (1) Timely remittance of financial assistance to enhance the success rate of the beneficiary candidates in the Mains examination. (2) With the increasing advent of technology and the deepening of digital infrastructure across several parts of the country, the awareness aspect of the scheme along with the mode of application should be gradually digitized by means of social media platforms. (3) Restructure the unutilized quota to other communities/exams through a periodic review. This needs a thorough follow up action to analyze the number of applications received community wise for availing the assistance. (4) Providing a fix number of seats to *divyangjan* from minority communities in order to improve their participation. The Ministry can also

include *divyangjan* from majority community in order to boost their morale. (5) Setting up an effective grievance redressal mechanism will ensure transparency and accountability. Such a mechanism which builds the trust of the beneficiary seems to be missing. (6) The scheme should aim at capacity building and leadership skills of the beneficiaries, over and above providing financial support. This would lead candidates/awardees under the scheme to build upon their potential for some other examination in future to create a long term positive effect.

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