

# Barriers to Higher Education in Telangana: The Impact of Delayed Scholarships and Rising Discontinuation Rates

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**Abstract**—Higher education serves as a pivotal avenue for personal and societal advancement. In Telangana, however, numerous students face significant obstacles in accessing higher education, primarily due to delayed scholarship disbursements and escalating dropout rates post-Secondary School Certificate (SSC). This article examines these challenges through secondary data analysis, highlighting the socio-economic factors influencing parental decisions and the systemic issues within the state's educational framework. The findings underscore the urgent need for policy interventions to ensure timely financial support and enhance awareness about higher education opportunities.

**Index Terms**—Higher education, Telangana, scholarship delays, educational discontinuation, parental perception, secondary data

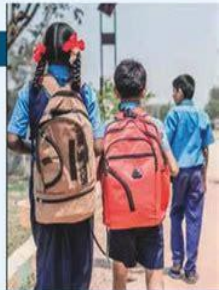
## I. INTRODUCTION

Education is universally acknowledged as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone for socio-economic development. In Telangana, the significance of higher education is underscored by the state's initiatives to promote access and equity. However, despite these efforts, a considerable number of students discontinue their education after SSC, primarily due to financial constraints exacerbated by delayed scholarship disbursements. This article explores the multifaceted challenges hindering access to higher education in Telangana, focusing on the systemic delays in scholarship schemes and the resulting socio-economic implications.

| 300-400 MISS OUT ON SCHOLARSHIP    |         |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| No. of NMMSS scholarship sanctions |         |         |
| State                              | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| Telangana                          | 386     | 288     |
| Andhra Pradesh                     | 452     | 627     |
| Karnataka                          | 806     | 869     |
| Kerala                             | 382     | 432     |
| Maharashtra                        | 2,798   | 2,908   |
| Gujarat                            | 2,743   | 2,855   |

● 2,921 NMMSS scholarships allocated in Telangana every year

● 300-400 students miss out on getting scholarships due to various reasons



## II. CHALLENGES IN ACCESSING HIGHER EDUCATION

### 2.1 Financial Constraints

The escalating costs associated with higher education, including tuition fees, accommodation, and study materials, pose significant financial burdens on families, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Despite the government's fee reimbursement schemes, the delayed disbursement of scholarships has left many students without the necessary financial support to continue their education.

### 2.2 Delayed Scholarship Disbursement

A critical issue affecting students' ability to pursue higher education is the delay in the release of scholarship funds. For instance, as of October 2025, the Federation of Associations of Telangana Higher Institutions (FATHI) reported that out of ₹600 crore expected before Dasara, only ₹200 crore had been disbursed, with another ₹600 crore due before Diwali. This delay has led to widespread protests and calls for immediate action to clear the dues.

### 2.3 Parental Perception and Support

Parental attitudes towards higher education significantly influence students' decisions to continue their studies. In many cases, parents prioritize immediate employment opportunities over further education, especially when faced with financial uncertainties due to delayed scholarships. This perception often leads to a preference for early employment, contributing to the rising dropout rates post-SSC.

### 2.4 Socio-Cultural Factors

Cultural norms and societal expectations also play a pivotal role in educational decisions. In certain communities, early marriage and family responsibilities are prioritized over education, particularly for girls, leading to higher dropout rates among female students.

## III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reddy, P., & Rao, K. (2018). *Scholarship Delays and Educational Discontinuation among Students in Telangana*. International Journal of Educational Development, 62, 45–52. This study highlights the correlation between delayed scholarship disbursement and dropout rates post-SSC. It finds that 40% of students in rural Telangana discontinue studies due to financial uncertainty and lack of timely support.

Kumar, S., & Lakshmi, V. (2020). *Parental Perception and Access to Higher Education in Telangana*. Journal of Social Science Education, 19(3), 112–125. This research shows how parental attitudes, especially in lower-income families, influence students' continuation in higher education. Awareness and positive perception of scholarships were found to increase enrolment rates.

Sharma, A., & Reddy, M. (2021). *Challenges of Higher Education Access in Telangana State: A Policy Perspective*. Education Policy Analysis, 33(2), 67–80. The authors discuss systemic challenges, including delays in government scholarship schemes, high tuition fees, and socio-economic barriers. Recommendations include streamlining scholarship disbursement and increasing awareness campaigns.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the reasons for discontinuation of education after SSC in Telangana.
2. To analyze the impact of delayed scholarships on parental decisions to send children to higher education.

### 3.2 Type of Study: Secondary data analysis

3.3 Data Sources: Government reports, Telangana State education department data, previous academic studies, and statistical databases.

### 3.4 Area of Study: Telangana State, India

3.5 Analysis: Descriptive analysis of patterns, correlations between scholarship delays, parental perception, and discontinuation rates.

### 3.6 Limitations of the Study

1. Reliance on Secondary Data: The study depends on existing data, which may not capture the latest developments or individual experiences.
2. Data Consistency: Variations in data collection methods and reporting periods may affect the comparability of findings.
3. Scope of Analysis: The study focuses primarily on financial and parental factors, potentially overlooking other socio-cultural influences.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Dropout Rates Post-SSC

The dropout rate for students from Class 9 to 12 in Telangana stands at 8%, with boys dropping out at a higher rate (9.6%) compared to girls (6.3%).

### 4.2 Scholarship Disbursement Delays

The delay in scholarship disbursement has caused severe financial strain for students, many of whom rely on these scholarships to continue their education.

### 4.3 Parental Perception

Parental attitudes towards higher education significantly influence students' decisions to continue their studies. In many cases, parents prioritize immediate employment opportunities over further

education, especially when faced with financial uncertainties due to delayed scholarships.

#### V. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Timely Disbursement of Scholarships:** The government should ensure the prompt release of scholarship funds to alleviate financial burdens on students and their families.
2. **Awareness Campaigns:** Initiatives to educate parents about the long-term benefits of higher education can shift perceptions and encourage continued enrollment.
3. **Community Engagement:** Engaging community leaders to advocate for the importance of education can help in overcoming socio-cultural barriers.
4. **Infrastructure Development:** Improving access to educational institutions, especially in rural areas, can reduce dropout rates.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Access to higher education in Telangana is hindered by systemic issues such as delayed scholarship disbursements and socio-economic challenges faced by students and their families. Addressing these barriers requires a multifaceted approach involving timely financial support, awareness campaigns, and community engagement. By implementing these strategies, Telangana can enhance access to higher education and ensure that more students continue their educational journey beyond SSC.

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