

## Chapter 14

### *MP State Scholarship Portal*

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#### **I) OVERVIEW**

Madhya Pradesh is the second largest State of the country. It has rather poor Human Development Indicators and poor connectivity. It has the largest tribal population amongst all States. Education is the largest sector in the State in terms of number of beneficiaries, geographical reach and number of schools/colleges/institutions. Madhya Pradesh Government is implementing several scholarship & other schemes for the students of various categories and income groups to facilitate their education. The main schemes with maximum number of the beneficiaries and fund involvement are as under:

- Post-Metric Scholarships for Students belonging to SC, ST, OBC & Minority Communities
- Pre-Metric Scholarships for Students belonging to SC, ST, OBC and Minority communities
- Merit-cum-Means scholarship for Students belonging to Minority communities
- Balika Shiksha Protoshan Yojana, INSPIRE AWARDS

#### **Key challenges in the effective, timely & transparent implementation of schemes:**

- Non-availability of a reliable & transparent system and common platform to ensure timely payment of scholarships.
- Each of the schemes is being run by a separate HoD at State Level and has different eligibility criteria, different source of funding & different rates of scholarship as per profile of applicant.
- Synchronizing the functions of various administrative units under multiple departments was not possible in isolated system of operations
- Some students are eligible for more than one scheme and it is very difficult to ensure that a student gets the benefit under ONLY ONE scheme.
- The scholarship application is scrutinized and processed at various stages eg. college/institute/school, Nodal Agency and sanction authority. Involvement of multiple agencies, departments, at different levels make the process time consuming and prone to leakages. It is also very difficult for students/colleges to track the status of their applications.

- Calculation & Sanctioning of the scholarship amount and tuition fee involves complex calculations and is based on the parameters like Applicants category, Applicants Annual Family Income, Course and Course year, Hostel Occupancy Status, Gender, Physically disability Status. Manual calculation of the rule based scholarship and fee amount is a Herculean and time consuming task and is highly prone to errors, delays and leakages/malpractices.
- Lack of single common platform to facilitate communication and address diverse needs of different stakeholders and departments.
- The Right to Information Act, 2005 requires the State to disseminate information to facilitate transparency, public participation and social oversight. However, there was no system to facilitate proactive disclosure of process information to fulfill the provisions of RTI Act, 2005.
- The manual and distributed system of operations is highly prone of falsification of records and award of scholarships to non-eligible candidates and scams.
- Non-availability of centralized and reliable data of various schemes, involved entities and beneficiaries adversely affected planning, monitoring and timely analysis/evaluation of problems & prompt interventions.

## II) RESULT INDICATORS

### 1. Key Performance

#### *a. Stakeholder services and benefits achieved through ICT interventions*

Scholarship Portal has been designed as a work-flow based application for the Streamlining and Automation of various processes involved in receiving, verification & processing of Scholarship Applications, Sanction, and Disbursal and over all Management of Scholarship cases/processes for the students belonging to disadvantaged groups of the society including the SC, ST, OBC & Minority communities.

#### **Stakeholders of the project & services being extended using the project**

**Departments-** Following Departments and their field offices are actively using the portal:

- Tribal Development Department
- Scheduled Caste Development Department
- Department of Backward Class & Minorities Welfare
- School Education Department
- Technical Education Department
- Higher Education Department
- Medical Education Department

## **Students**

### **Colleges/Institutions - Government and Private**

#### **Schools - Government and Private**

**Identified Nodal Agencies** – Government designates some government universities/colleges/ Institutions as Nodal agencies. Nodal agencies are responsible for the initial scrutiny and examination of the applications of the private colleges/schools/institutions.

## **Scholarship Sanction Authorities**

### **Public, media**

## **G2G - Services being offered to the Stakeholders**

### **Departments**

- Implementation of a common, centralized, reliable & transparent e-governance system to ensure timely payment of scholarships & other incentives to the eligible students.
- Implementation of a comprehensive MIS for the departments to facilitate the overall management, monitoring, streamlining and automation of various processes involved in the scholarship system and analysis of funds required to meet out the demand of scholarships from various districts/agencies.

### **Institutes/Colleges/Schools –**

- Registration of the courses running in the institute
- Online verification of applications & forwarding of eligible applications to nodal agency.
- Facility to view the likely duplicate applications.
- Online acceptance and rejection of the application.
- Online generation of the proposal for submission to the nodal agency/Sanction Authority.
- Download the sanction orders and Disbursal Orders (in real time).
- Alerts issued to colleges on the sanction of the scholarships
- Online entry of the details of the actual distribution of the scholarship to students.

### **Nodal Agencies –**

- Online scrutiny & verification of proposals received from colleges/institutes.
- Online forwarding eligible applications to Sanctioning Authority

### **Sanction Authorities–**

- Online Verification of the applications forwarded by the nodal agencies/colleges
- Automatic calculation of scholarship amount as per the profile of applicant.
- Automatic calculation of tuition fee amount to be reimbursed as per the profile of the student.
- Online Generation of the note sheet for the sanction of the scholarship
- Online Generation and dissemination of the Sanction orders

#### **Disbursing Authorities-**

- Online generation of the bank advice for various sanctions issued.
- Online Generation and printing of the cheques to be issued.
- Scrutiny of the applications being approved, sanctioned
- Monitoring of the pending cases at various levels, Grievance redressal

#### **G2C - Services being offered to the Stakeholders**

##### **Students –**

- Can view the details of various schemes, eligibility criteria, rules, procedure, orders, circulars & other information for availing the benefit as per their eligibility.
- Online Registration and renewal of the application for scholarship schemes
- Online Tracking of the Status of the scholarship using SMS &
- Portal E-mail alerts are issued to the students in case of acceptance, rejection, sanction and disbursal of the scholarship.
- Social Audit of the scholarship being claimed by other students.
- Students are encouraged to report the details of the non-eligible students that are claiming scholarship by fraud/falsification of documents

##### **Parents, Public & Media-**

- Can view the sanction and pendency at various levels for social audit
- Can view the detailed profile of the beneficiaries and amount sanctioned.
- Can report the details of the non-eligible students claiming the benefits by falsification of records and other frauds and mal-practices.

#### *b. % of services covered as ICT interventions*

Following schemes have been covered using the portal

- **Post-Metric Scholarships** for Students belonging to SC, ST, OBC & Minority Communities
- **Pre-Metric Scholarships** for Students belonging to Minority communities

- **Merit –cum-Means** scholarship for Students belonging to Minority communities
- **Balika Shiksha Protoshan Yojana - BSPY** (National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education)
- **INSPIRE Awards-** INSPIRE Awards is an initiative of Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India. The aim of the initiative is to promote and INSPIRE the students of schools to take-up science. Under the scheme the meritorious students are provided with financial assistance for preparing a science Model/Project. These models are exhibited at exhibitions that are held at Districts and State.
- **Free Cycle scheme** for the girl students of the class of class 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> to continue their middle school education.

All the services, activities, functions involved for the implementation of the above schemes have been covered using the ICT interventions (ie. Scholarship Portal)

*c. Geographical Spread in the State achieved*

The project has successfully been implemented at the State level and is being actively used by the students, schools, colleges, institutions and concerned district and blocks level offices located in the remote corners of the State.

<b>Districts covered</b>	<b>State-wise rollout</b>
<b>Colleges/Institutions/Schools</b>	<b>6200</b>
<b>Nodal Agencies</b>	<b>600</b>
<b>Sanction Authorities</b>	<b>800</b>

**The system has already received more than 5 lac applications**

Scholarship and other assistance of more than Rs. 250 crores have already been sanctioned using the system. The system has already received more than 30 Lac hits.

**3. Efficiency improvement**

*a. Time saving / improvements in the delivering the above set of services.*

Almost all the all major functions, processes and services related to all the stakeholders have been automated and facilitated by ICT intervention and various application facilitated by the portal. This has resulted in substantial improvement in the productivity of the staff and tremendously improved the response time to the students, colleges, schools and other stakeholders by automating the routine manual processes and thereby improving the efficiency of the system.

The portal facilitates role based applications. All the participating authorities have been provided with the authorization and access to use the portal to discharge their functions online. The transactions are being captured and all the related reports and other processing is being taken care by the application. The time spent by the staff in the several routine functions has been eliminated. The highlights are as under:

- The integrated work-flow system has eliminated the delays at various levels.
- The portal has reduced the work of officials and other key stakeholders by eliminating around 75% of manual work such as processing, calculation, documentation, accounting, reporting, monitoring etc
- This has resulted in increased efficiency and faster sanction process.
- The portal also facilitates timely and accurate information to the decision makers and planners for monitoring and control & possibilities of under utilization of funds have also been minimized.

#### **Time Saving for Colleges/Institutions**

- The institutions can now accept and reject the applications online by click of mouse.
- The intuitions can also indicate the reason of the rejection of the student. The student can see the reason online and can take an appropriate action.
- The college can generate the status reports, registers, proposal online using the portal using a click of mouse. The college used to spend significant time and efforts in preparing the proposal and maintenance of the registers.

#### **Sanctioning Authorities**

- The Sanctioning authorities can now generate the note-sheets, sanction letters online from the portal using a click of the mouse.
- Automatic calculation of the scholarship amount, tuition fee etc has also considerably reduced time taken in the processing of the applications. **This has not only cut down the time but also eliminated the chances of error in manual calculations.**
- Automatic generation of the proposals, note-sheets, sanction orders, Disbursal orders, bank advice etc have also minimized the manual work and introduced efficiency in the system.
- The pendency of applications at various levels is also displayed on the scholarship portal, there by making the institution and other agencies accountable for the delay.
- Automatic Compilation Scheme-wise, category-wise, HOD-wise, college-wise, year-wise etc is now possible with a click of mouse

*b. Cost savings for delivering above set of services.*

- The integrated and centralized database of all the applicants & beneficiaries of various schemes has helped the government in checking frauds and leakages in the manual and decentralized system. The facilitation of social audit by disseminating the details of the profiles of all beneficiaries, college wise/course wise online also acted as a deterrent. This has resulted in significant savings to the government
- Elimination of the chances of
- A single student drawing the scholarship from more than one college has resulted in substantial savings.
- A single student taking the benefit of more than one scholarship also results in substantial savings.
- Error in calculation of the scholarship and tuition fee amount as per the complex set of parameters
- Fraudulent Colleges/Students claiming scholarships & misappropriation of funds has reduced considerably.
- Chances of fraudulent Colleges/Students claiming scholarships & misappropriation of funds have reduced considerably.
- Elimination of the need to print forms and related stationary will bring about considerable savings in the process.
- All the sanction letters are automatically posted on the portal and are made available in real-time for colleges to download thus cutting down the need to send the copy of the orders to the concerned college by post.
- The Scholarship Portal has resulted in considerable reduction in the administrative costs.

*c. Cost Saving for availing these services*

**Time saving for students**

- The students can now submit the applications for scholarships online without depending on the college/institution.
- The college is now forced to act on the application submitted by the student online as the pendency shall be shown against the college.
- The students can track the status of their application online. In case of the rejection of their application on grounds of the documentation, they can submit the documents without any delay.
- The students can track the status of the sanction of their scholarship and can download the copy of the Sanction Order online in real-time. Earlier there was no system in place for the students to track their application and they used to visit the offices and waste time for getting the status

- Students can also download the scholarship disbursement order containing the details of the transfer of the scholarship amount.
- The colleges can download the sanction and disbursement orders from the scholarship portal as soon as the same is finalized by the sanctioning authority.
- The system also sends e-mails to the students and colleges/institutions and updates them about the following activities – acceptance of the application, rejection of the application, sanction and disbursement of the scholarship.
- Public/students can now report any fraudulent cases and **save government funds**.
- The students now know the status of the application using the Portal, SMS, E-mail or thru the scholarship portal. This has minimized their visits to various offices for follow-up.
- The students can get their scholarships well in time and this is the biggest advantage for them.
- Students can now view the amount sanctioned and can demand the full amount without any cut
- The students can now easily find out the details of various schemes and their eligibility criteria and apply for the scheme that is relevant for him

### III) ENABLER INDICATORS

#### 1. Processes

##### *a. Major front end process changes and implemented*

In view of multiple users, large number of Verification/Sanctioning authorities, controlling departments and huge array of stakeholders and schemes, one required a platform to facilitate interdepartmental collaboration, coordination, seamless integration of activities, and smooth automation of key processes and updation of key information in real-time. This seemed most easily possible through an online application-based, bi-lingual, database driven, dynamic web-portal which also needed to facilitate information based online monitoring, analysis and dissemination of live information in real-time.

The system has facilitated transparency in all the processes involved in the scholarship related functions. The highlights are as under:

- Students have been empowered to identify the government schemes to suit his profile and background.



- Student can now apply for the scholarship from the portal Students and public can check the pendency status of applications at various levels.
- The Detailed profile of all the applicants is made available on the portal to all the fellow classmates.
- The students and public can report about the students who are claiming the scholarships by submitting wrong income / caste certificates.
- The students and public can report about the institutions that are claiming the scholarships by malpractices.
- The reason of the rejection of the applications is also displayed online
- All the proposals submitted by the colleges, notesheets, sanction letters, disbursal letters are generated automatically by the system are available on the website for the public viewing.
- Full profile of all the beneficiaries is also available online for public scrutiny.

Due to online system and centralized monitoring up-to school level, it has been possible to benefit large number of eligible students on all welfare schemes while simultaneously providing transparency and checking the leakages in the system e.g. More than 30,000 students in MP received INSPIRE awards of DST/MHRD, GoI which is more than 30% of the total INSPIRE awards distributed throughout the country.

*b. Major back end process changes and implemented*

The system has also simplified and streamlined the backend processes involved in the scholarship related functions. The highlights are as under:

- The system now generates the scholarship amount and tuition fee as per the eligibility and profile of the student.
- The system also warns about the likely duplicate applications
- The system automatically generates following documents and has considerably reduced and simplified the routine and repetitive work at various levels:
  - Proposals
  - Beneficiary list
  - Notesheets for obtaining approvals
  - Sanction Orders
  - Disbursal Orders
  - Bank advise/Cheques
- Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) exercise was also taken-up wherever found necessary for the successful implementation of the project.

- Different authorities have issued orders making it mandatory to use the Scholarship Portal for various process and functions including the Scholarship Application Receiving, Verification, Processing, Sanction & Disbursal.
- Provision to delegate power “*Sanctioning Authority*” Government college principals
- Portal has been designed in such a manner, so that District authority may declare their own Fee Structure to reimburse Tuition Fee and Other Non Refundable Fee charged by institute or University.
- With the inclusion of declaration of “Fee Structure” district authorities are able to ensure “Reimbursement Ceiling” for in their administrative region.
- Introduction of System generated Proposal Order Numbers; NoteSheet Numbers & Sanction Order numbers have been helpful to maintain uniform file structure through out the State, so that different instruments issued by authorities may be traced easily.
- Introduction of taking Online Scholarship application from student resulted in developing IT enabled generation, since they are regularly monitoring the status of their applications, accessing different reports.
- Introduction of “**NO DELAY**” concept empowers the student to get (download) their Sanction order & Disbursal order from Portal itself. All Sanction & Disbursal orders are being displayed on Portal on the moment they are being issued.

### ***3. People and Resources***

#### *a. Project management & Monitoring – Full time team in place*

The implementation the project and the problems being faced by the users was regularly reviewed on Video Conferencing.

All the concerned departments had to be on board to ensure the effective implementation of the initiative. Therefore, orders from different HoDs and the Principal Secretaries of the concerned departments were issued for active involvement of District Collectors, Assistant Commissioner Tribal Welfare, District Tribal Welfare Officer & Principals. That ensures sustenance of the initiative.

A multi-departmental project management group comprising of Secretary, School Education Department, Commissioner, Public Instruction, Commissioner (Tribal Development), Commissioner, backward class and Minority Welfare, NIC representative at the State level.

The initiative was designed and rolled out in such a manner that it was politically acceptable and the large number of stakeholders responsible for the success of the initiatives derived tangible benefits for their willful support. Master Trainers has been identified and trained to carry out training programs, work shops at district & Block level to ensure the capacity building of existing staff.

### **User Feedback, Project Assessment mechanism**

The feedback received from various stakeholders is also analyzed very rigorously for planning the improvements/modifications in the applications.

The State level authorities conduct review meeting through Video Conferencing to interact with the field authorities to obtain their feedback and review their performance.

#### *b. Achievements of training of internal & external members on the new system*

- **Master Trainers** were identified and trained at various districts.
- **Trainings**- Continuous Trainings and retraining have been/are being provided to all the users to use the system effectively to minimize their work load and improve their work efficiency and effectiveness. Workshops/Trainings were/are also conducted through Video Conferencing facility.
- **User Manual in Hindi** was prepared to guide the students, colleges, nodal agencies and sanction authorities in the proper operation of the system
- Colleges were instructed to facilitate internet and PC so that the students can submit their scholarship applications online on the portal.
- All colleges and school were registered on the scholarship portal and user-ids and passwords were issued to them to carry of the designated functions.
- All Nodal Agencies were registered and issued user-ids and passwords.
- Regular workshops/hand-on training programs were conducted at district level to facilitate the implementation.
- The application was continuously improved and enhanced to incorporate the additional requirements of various offices and users.

#### *c. Change management strategy defined and implemented*

The Portal facilitates a role based systems and all individuals perform their functions online and hence the workload is distributed amongst various functionaries.

The Portal has been designed in such a manner that it benefits all the stakeholders of the system and serves their personal and professional interests as most of the scholarship processes have been linked with the online system & hence they should want to sustain the initiative. e.g. The online system helps timely submission of scholarship applications of scholarships, timely scrutiny by the institutions/Nodal Agencies and sanction & disbursal by the concerned authorities.

**Proactive Governance** - Online mashing and analysis of the transaction data related to various entities and processes generate several analytical reports that are being used for forecasting the requirement of funds, mismanagement, pendency and other problems in the initial stages and help the departments in taking timely preventive/corrective action. It greatly helps administrators to effectively plan and administer the schemes and ensure timely implementation of its schemes.

Online analytical reports help the Government, management at different levels and community to know gaps and shortcomings and guide focused corrective interventions.

The portal replaces the repetitive and time consuming manual system and thus reduces the work load of all the stakeholders and improves their work efficiency and effectiveness.

*d. Leadership support ( Political, Bureaucratic) and its visibility*

The project was initiated on the advice of the office of Hon. Chief Minister, MP. The project is also in the Chief Minister's priority list and agenda and is personally being monitored regularly by the concerned HODs and Secretaries.

**Government Orders** issued by the following for the successful implementation of the system:

- Commissioner, Tribal Welfare to District Collectors for the use of the system
- Commissioner, Back Ward classes Welfare to District Collectors for the use of the system
- DO Letter issued by Commissioner, Back Ward classes Welfare to District Collectors/Zilla Panchayat CEOs for facilitating the transparency in the scholarship distribution process
- Director, Technical Education to the principals of all Engineering Colleges, Polytechnics and all other engineering and management colleges

After the successful pilot implementation, the project was reviewed by Sh. Jaggannath Mishra, the then Cabinet Minister (SC/ST welfare), Sh. Harishankar Khatik, Minister of State (SC/ST Welfare), Principal Secretary (SC/ST Welfare), commissioner(tribal Welfare), Commissioner(SC Welfare) and all district officers of Tribal Welfare department on 03.06.2009.

The successful implementation of the application required close coordination and involvement of the various stakeholders that are under different administrative departments like tribal Welfare Department, Backward Classes Welfare Department, Higher Education Department, and Technical Education Department etc.

Media and public at large besides all the employees have easy access to all process information like applications, applicant profile, application status, beneficiary profile, sanction orders, disbursal orders and other analysis.

*e. Financial Model ( Funding pattern , Business model PPP etc) defined and implemented*

In view of failure of large number of e-governance initiatives involving substantial investments, it was felt that the Project should not entail initial expenditure on procurement of costly hardware, data centers, software licenses, software development, procurement of clients etc. It should also essentially use the existing infrastructure and manpower.

It was felt that it would not be possible to define the complete requirements & scope of the portal in one go. The needs and requirements would continue to evolve, grow and mature. Therefore, an in-house professional agency was needed to address the changing requirements, provide a continued handholding support and ensure its sustenance. Accordingly, a Scholarship Portal initiative was conceptualized & implemented through National Informatics Centre (NIC) and the programs & activities with highest potential to improve the governance in entire sector were taken-up.

**Zero development & deployment cost** - The project has been designed and developed in-house by NIC, uses in-house resources of NIC, and did not involve any capital expenditure on hardware, software, data center and licenses.

**Zero Implementation Cost-** The application requires a low-end PC with browser and Internet Connection and does not require any costly hardware and upgrades. Existing set-up of the Colleges/offices is being used for using the application.

User can also use Linux based computer systems or use public internet kiosks for using the services of the portal.

The benefits to diverse stakeholders, in-house resource and the institutionalization of the system have ensured that the system will sustain and continue to grow.

### ***3. Technology***

#### *a. Disaster Recovery & business continuity plan defined & implemented*

- The application is being hosted on the NIC data centers and all the DR related work is being taken care by NIC
- The portal is being augmented, improved, maintained in house by NIC so as to ensure sustainability and continuity.
- No financial requirement for sustaining the portal.

#### *b. Technological solution cost effective and maintenance over time*

- The project is cost effective as it is being maintained by NIC. It has been hosted on NIC data center. No financial burden to State Govt. exchequer for its operation
- From the user perspective, the user needs a low end PC with and Internet Connection for using the services of the portal.
- User can also use Linux based computer systems

#### *c. Security and confidentiality standards defined and implemented*

The portal has been designed and developed using the Service Oriented Architecture and is fully compliant to the web-security guidelines

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