

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT**  
**YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION: 2023-24**

*Prepared for:*

**JK Paper Limited**  
**Nehru House, 3rd & 4th,**  
**4, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg,**  
**New Delhi, Delhi 110002**

**Submitted By:**

Sigma Research and Consulting Pvt. Ltd  
C 23, First Floor  
South Extension Part I  
New Delhi 110049  
Tel : (+ 91 11) 41063450  
Email : [somayajulu.uv@sigma-india.in](mailto:somayajulu.uv@sigma-india.in)  
Web : [www.sigma-india.in](http://www.sigma-india.in)

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

|        |   |                                        |
|--------|---|----------------------------------------|
| BBA    | : | Bachelor of Business Administration    |
| BCA    | : | Bachelor of Computer Applications      |
| B.Des  | : | Bachelor of Design                     |
| B.Tech | : | Bachelor of Technology                 |
| CATI   | : | Computer Assisted Telephonic Interview |
| CGPA   | : | Cumulative Grade Point Average         |
| CSR    | : | Corporate Social Responsibility        |
| FY     | : | Financial Year                         |
| JKLU   | : | JK Lakshmipat University               |
| JKPL   | : | JK Paper Limited                       |

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*This provides a concise overview of the key findings, and strategic recommendations. It captures the essence of the impact assessment and highlights actionable insights.*

## 1.1 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Sigma Research and Consulting Pvt. Ltd. was entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the Impact Assessment of JK Papers Limited's (JKPL) CSR initiative on scholarship and fee waiver support provided to needy and meritorious students of JK Lakshmipat University (JKLU) for the academic year 2023-24. The project was awarded to Sigma based on its proven track record in executing high quality impact evaluations, especially in the domains of education, skill development, and CSR monitoring.

The present study aims to:

- ❖ Assess the tangible and intangible benefits of JKPL's educational support to students, especially those from financially constrained or first-generation learner backgrounds;
- ❖ Understand the extent to which scholarships have influenced students' academic performance, motivation, confidence, and future plans;
- ❖ Generate evidence-based insights that can inform JKPL's future CSR strategy and ensure better targeting, outreach, and support mechanisms;
- ❖ Provide students with centric feedback to enhance the design, delivery, and perceived value of the scholarship program.

This study is not just a monitoring exercise, but also as a chance to contribute to strengthening private sector investment in education through data driven learning. The assessment adopted **Computer Aided Telephonic Interviews (CATI)** methodology using a structured questionnaire. The study covered a representative 20% sample (48) out of 239 student beneficiaries to capture a diverse range of experiences and outcomes.

## 1.2 KEY FINDINGS

The scholarship has had a transformative effect on student beneficiaries' academic and personal trajectories. The most frequently cited outcomes include reduction in financial burden, enhanced academic motivation, increased time dedicated to studies, and improved access to extracurricular and co-curricular engagements. A significant proportion of student beneficiaries reported an elevated sense of purpose and commitment to long term academic and career goals as a direct result of the support received.

The project was found to contribute to the development of life skills, particularly in communication, leadership, and teamwork, an impact most visible among B. Des and BBA student beneficiaries. Although students in technical streams like B. Tech reported slightly less breadth in skill development, they nonetheless recognized the scholarship's role in enabling access to learning resources and fostering continuity in education.

The project enjoys near universal endorsement, with all the beneficiaries indicating they would recommend the scholarship to peers, underscoring its value, credibility, and student satisfaction. Suggestions for improvement revolved around enhancing financial coverage, streamlining the application process, and expanding ancillary support mechanisms such as mentoring and informational outreach.

In conclusion, the Scholarship Project emerges as a strategically designed CSR intervention that not only addresses financial barriers but also contributes substantively to students' educational resilience, personal growth, and professional readiness. The findings reaffirm the scholarship's longitudinal value and offer actionable insights for future iterations, replication, and scale up.

### **1.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommendations should be following action points:

- Ensure clearer and timely communication regarding eligibility criteria, scholarship renewal conditions, and performance benchmarks
- Provide early and clear information about the scholarship, through brochures, student orientation and digital platforms to ensure consistent understanding of the scholarship project among beneficiaries and families
- Consider adopting semester wise evaluation or recognition of non-academic efforts such as leadership, extracurricular achievements, and financial hardship

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

*This section outlines the background and objectives of the scholarship impact assessment and details the research design, sampling framework, data collection methods, and quality assurance processes adopted during the study.*

### 2.1 CSR INITIATIVE

JK Paper Limited (JKPL), as part of its commitment to inclusive growth and nation building, implements various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives aimed at promoting education, skill development, and social empowerment. Recognizing education as a key driver for long term change, JKPL has prioritized support for higher education among its CSR focus areas.

In the financial year 2023-24, JKPL partnered with JK Lakshmipat University (JKLU) to extend scholarships and fee waivers to 239 students, selected based on financial need and academic merit. This initiative was designed to remove financial barriers, encourage academic excellence, and help students achieve their educational and career aspirations.

By supporting students through such scholarships, JKPL aims to:

- ◆ Promote equitable access to higher quality education,
- ◆ Encourage retention and performance among students from diverse backgrounds,
- ◆ Enable a skilled and confident youth population contributing to the nation's progress.

This impact assessment was commissioned to evaluate the effectiveness and outcomes of the scholarship support provided during FY 2023-24.

### 2.2 OBJECTIVE OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. To assess the effectiveness of JKPL's CSR supported scholarship program in improving students' academic engagement, performance, and career aspirations.
2. To evaluate the extent to which the scholarship has reduced financial barriers and enabled students to pursue higher education without economic hardship.
3. To understand the personal and professional development outcomes resulting from the scholarship, including motivation, participation in extracurricular activities, and skill enhancement.
4. To examine beneficiaries' awareness, perceptions, and satisfaction with the scholarship process, including application, eligibility criteria, and communication mechanisms.
5. To gather suggestions and feedback from students for improving the scholarship program's design, communication, and outreach for future CSR initiatives.

## 2.3 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data for this impact assessment was collected through **Computer Assisted Telephonic Interviews (CATI)**. This method was selected for its efficiency, ability to reach geographically dispersed scholarship beneficiaries, and suitability for structured, time bound surveys. A structured questionnaire was administered to students over the phone by trained tele-callers, with responses directly recorded in a digital format.

## 2.4 TOOL DEVELOPMENT

JKPL initially shared an unstructured set of exploratory questions intended to guide the impact assessment. Sigma reviewed and restructured these inputs into a structured questionnaire, appropriate for CATI implementation, with clearly defined close ended, multiple choice, rating scale, and a few open-ended questions.

The tool was finalized in close consultation with the JKPL team, ensuring alignment with the project's objectives and information needs. The finalized tool was digitally projectd for use by interviewers.

## 2.5 TRAINING

To ensure high quality and standardized data collection, Sigma conducted a comprehensive training session for the team.

The training was designed to:

- ❖ Familiarize interviewers with the objectives and scope of the study
- ❖ Build their capacity to administer the structured questionnaire using CATI
- ❖ Ensure clarity in communication with scholarship beneficiaries
- ❖ Maintain consistency, neutrality, and professionalism during interviews
- ❖ Address anticipated challenges and prepare the team to handle refusals or non-cooperation

### Key Components Covered in Training

- ❖ **Introduction Script:** How to introduce oneself, explain the purpose, and seek informed consent.
- ❖ **Confidentiality Assurance:** Emphasis on protecting respondent identity and data privacy.
- ❖ **Neutral Interviewing:** Avoiding leading questions, bias, or assumptions during interviews.
- ❖ **Managing Non Response:** Strategies to handle call dropouts, refusals, or unclear answers.
- ❖ **Recording Responses:** Ensuring accurate, complete, and consistent data entry in CATI.
- ❖ **Call Etiquette:** Maintaining politeness, clarity, and professionalism throughout the interaction.

The training was led by Sigma's Senior Manager- Operations.

## 2.6 SAMPLING APPROACH

- **Sampling Frame:** The sampling frame comprised the full list of 239 student beneficiaries who received scholarships or fee waivers under JK Papers Limited's CSR initiative for the financial year 2023-24. This list was provided by the JKPL team and included student beneficiary details such as name, course, and contact information.
- **Sample Size:** A sample of **48 student beneficiaries** (approx. **20%** of total beneficiaries) was selected for the study.
- **Stratified Sampling:** The sample was proportionally allocated across four academic programs (B.Tech, B.Des, BBA, BCA) based on the total number of beneficiaries in each course.
- **Systematic Random Sampling:** Within each course stratum, student beneficiaries were arranged alphabetically and selected using a **cyclic systematic random sampling** approach. In case of non-response after three call attempts, the next student on the list was contacted using the same method to maintain the required sample.

## 2.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

- A team of 4 trained interviewers, under the supervision of Senior Manager, conducted the interviews over a period of 3 days.
- Calls were made at convenient times for students, and each respondent was provided with a brief introduction about the study, its purpose, and an assurance of confidentiality before beginning the interview.
- Up to three call attempts were made per student. In cases of non-response or refusal, replacement scholarship beneficiaries were selected using the same sampling process.

## 2.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISM



To ensure collection of reliable, accurate, and high quality data, Sigma adopted a multi layered quality assurance framework for the telephonic survey. The following quality measures were implemented:

## 1. Enumerator Training

One day comprehensive training was conducted for all the interviewers. The training focused on familiarizing the team with the objectives of the study, ethical considerations, administration of the structured questionnaire, and the use of CATI (Computer Assisted Telephonic Interview) software.

## 2. Structured Tool and CATI Programming

The questionnaire used for the survey was developed by Sigma based on an unstructured set of questions initially provided by JKPL. It was converted into a structured format in consultation with the JKPL team to ensure relevance, flow, and clarity. The final version of the tool was projected into a CATI platform, which helped enforce skip logic, reduce manual error, and ensure uniformity in data capture across all interviews.

### 3. Daily Monitoring and Supervision

Throughout the data collection period, Senior Manager- Operations was responsible for monitoring tele-caller performance and overseeing adherence to sampling protocols. The Sr Manager assigned calling batches and tracked daily progress.

## 4. Data Review and Quality Control

Each completed interview was reviewed for completeness and logical consistency. Open ended responses were screened for clarity, and codes were applied systematically during the analysis. Regular feedback was provided to callers to minimize repetitive errors and improve data quality on a rolling basis.

## 5. Ethical Compliance and Confidentiality

All beneficiaries were clearly informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the assurance of confidentiality. No personal identifiers were

shared or used beyond the scope of the study, and all data was stored and used strictly for research purposes.

## 2.9 SUMMARY OF OUTREACH AND STUDENT RESPONSE PATTERNS

The table 1 below presents the status of telephonic outreach made to student beneficiaries, selected as part of the sample for the impact assessment. The table gives the number and percentage of students under each category based on the outcome of the call attempts.

**Table 1: Summary of Contact Attempts and Response Status (N and %)**

| Response Category                            | N          | %          |
|----------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Agreed for Interview                         | 50         | 31         |
| Appointment Given                            | 25         | 16         |
| Refused / Partially Refused                  | 11         | 7          |
| Phone Not Connected                          | 41         | 26         |
| Phone Number Not Working / Wrong             | 4          | 3          |
| Phone Number Belongs to Others (Not Student) | 12         | 8          |
| Others                                       | 16         | 10         |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>159</b> | <b>100</b> |

Out of 50 student beneficiaries who agreed for the interview, 2 dropped out of the interview at the last moment, and those interviews were considered as non response and terminated at that point. Further analysis was made with 48 students.

## 2.10 SUMMARY OF SAMPLE SIZE ACHIEVED

Table 2 presents the distribution of student beneficiaries who participated in the telephonic survey, by gender and academic course. A total of 48 student beneficiaries were successfully interviewed as part of the impact assessment, comprising 33 male and 15 female student beneficiaries.

**Table 2: Distribution of Student beneficiaries Covered in Study by Course and Gender (N and %)**

| Course/<br>Gender | Male      |            | Female    |            | Total     |            |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                   | N         | %          | N         | %          | N         | %          |
| <b>B.Des</b>      | 7         | 21         | 3         | 20         | 10        | 21         |
| <b>BBA</b>        | 3         | 9          | 3         | 20         | 6         | 13         |
| <b>BCA</b>        | 2         | 6          | 0         | 0          | 2         | 4          |
| <b>B.Tech</b>     | 21        | 64         | 9         | 60         | 30        | 63         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>33</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>15</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>48</b> | <b>100</b> |

### 3. PROFILE OF STUDENT BENEFICIARIES

*This section presents academic characteristics of the student beneficiaries who participated in the study. It includes data on age, year of study, and scholarship type.*

#### 3.1 AGE OF STUDENT BENEFICIARIES

Table 3 presents the age distribution of student beneficiaries who participated in the telephonic survey, by gender and academic course. The majority of student beneficiaries (62%) are aged **20-21 years**, indicating that most student beneficiaries are in the **second or third year** of their undergraduate study. This trend suggests that the scholarship program plays a significant role in supporting students through the mid phase of their academic journey, potentially aiding in continuity, retention, and academic progression.

**Table 3: Age Distribution of Student beneficiaries by Gender and Course (N and %)**

| Age/<br>Gender<br>Years | Male |     | Female |     | B.Des |     | BBA |     | BCA |     | B.Tech |     | All |     |
|-------------------------|------|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----|-----|
|                         | N    | %   | N      | %   | N     | %   | N   | %   | N   | %   | N      | %   | N   | %   |
| 18                      | 0    | 0   | 1      | 7   | 0     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1      | 3   | 1   | 2   |
| 19                      | 6    | 18  | 5      | 33  | 1     | 10  | 4   | 67  | 0   | 0   | 6      | 20  | 11  | 23  |
| 20                      | 11   | 33  | 2      | 13  | 2     | 20  | 2   | 33  | 1   | 50  | 8      | 27  | 13  | 27  |
| 21                      | 11   | 33  | 6      | 40  | 6     | 60  | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 11     | 37  | 17  | 35  |
| 22                      | 4    | 12  | 1      | 7   | 1     | 10  | 0   | 0   | 1   | 50  | 3      | 10  | 5   | 10  |
| 23                      | 1    | 3   | 0      | 0   | 0     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1      | 3   | 1   | 2   |
| Total                   | 33   | 100 | 15     | 100 | 10    | 100 | 6   | 100 | 2   | 100 | 30     | 100 | 48  | 100 |

#### 3.2 AVERAGE AGE OF STUDENT BENEFICIARIES BY GENDER AND COURSE

The average age of the scholarship beneficiaries is approximately **20 years**, with **male students (Mean = 20.48)** being marginally older than **female students (Mean = 20.07)**. The **median age** is consistent at **20 years** across both genders, indicating a uniform central age trend. The **standard deviation** is low (around **1.08**), suggesting that most scholarship beneficiaries fall within a **narrow and consistent age range**, with limited variation.

**Table 4: Average Age of Student Beneficiaries by Gender**

|                       | Male  | Female | Total |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| <b>N</b>              | 33    | 15     | 48    |
| <b>Mean</b>           | 20.48 | 20.07  | 20.35 |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b> | 1.034 | 1.163  | 1.082 |
| <b>Median</b>         | 20.00 | 20.00  | 20.00 |

The average age across course streams ranges from **19.33 years in BBA** to **21 years in BCA**, with **B.Des and B.Tech** students averaging **20.7** and **20.4** years respectively. **Median age** is highest for **B.Des and BCA (21 years)**, while **BBA students** are comparatively

younger (**median 19 years**). The overall mean age across all students is **20.35 years**, with low standard deviations indicating a closely clustered age group.

**Table 5: Average Age of Student Beneficiaries by Course**

|                       | B.Des | BBA   | BCA   | B.Tech | Total |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| <b>N</b>              | 10    | 6     | 2     | 30     | 48    |
| <b>Mean</b>           | 20.70 | 19.33 | 21.00 | 20.40  | 20.35 |
| <b>Std. Deviation</b> | .823  | .516  | 1.414 | 1.133  | 1.082 |
| <b>Median</b>         | 21.00 | 19.00 | 21.00 | 20.50  | 20.00 |

### 3.3 ACADEMIC YEAR OF STUDENT BENEFICIARIES

The data highlights a clear concentration of beneficiaries in their **third year of study (71%)**, suggesting strong scholarship continuity into the later academic stages. In contrast, **second year students constitute only 17%** of the sample, while **final year students represent 13%**, indicating comparatively lower representation from these cohorts. This trend may reflect both academic retention and the scholarship's sustained impact over time.

**Table 6: Academic Year Wise Distribution of Student Beneficiaries by Gender and Programme (N and %)**

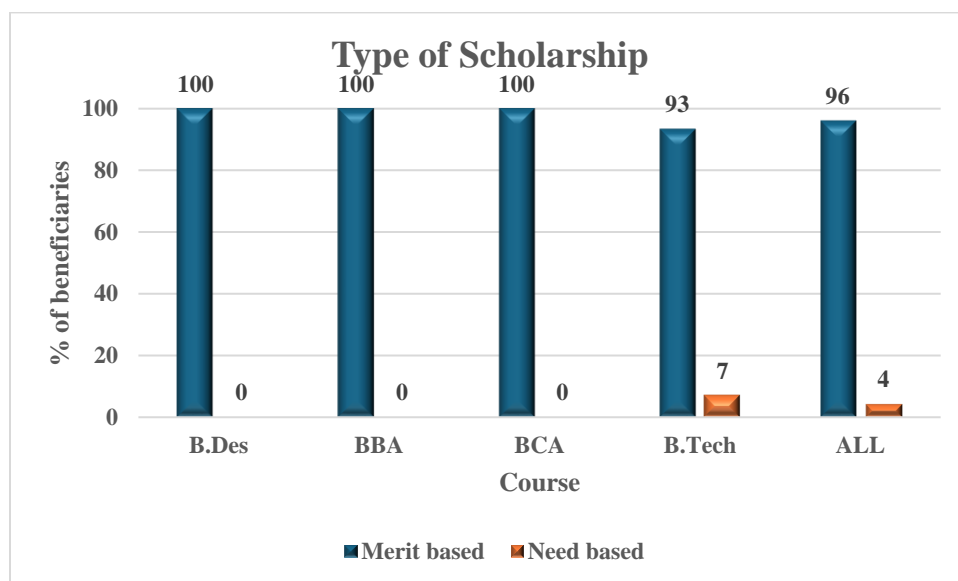
| Year/Gender       | Male |     | Female |     | B.Des |     | BBA |     | BCA |     | B.Tech |     | All       |            |
|-------------------|------|-----|--------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|-----|-----------|------------|
|                   | N    | %   | N      | %   | N     | %   | N   | %   | N   | %   | N      | %   | N         | %          |
| <b>2nd Year</b>   | 3    | 9   | 5      | 33  | 0     | 0   | 2   | 33  | 0   | 0   | 6      | 20  | <b>8</b>  | <b>17</b>  |
| <b>3rd Year</b>   | 26   | 79  | 8      | 53  | 10    | 100 | 4   | 67  | 2   | 100 | 18     | 60  | <b>34</b> | <b>71</b>  |
| <b>Final Year</b> | 4    | 12  | 2      | 13  | 0     | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 6      | 20  | <b>6</b>  | <b>13</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>      | 33   | 100 | 15     | 100 | 10    | 100 | 6   | 100 | 2   | 100 | 30     | 100 | <b>48</b> | <b>100</b> |

The findings suggest the scholarship plays a pivotal role in retention and continuation of academic engagement beyond initial entry, aligning with broader focused goals of ensuring continuity in higher education.

### 3.4 TYPE OF SCHOLARSHIP

These findings suggest that while academic merit remains the primary criterion for financial support, future iterations of the scholarship project could consider a more balanced model that integrates both merit and need based criteria to align with good global practices on inclusive education financing.

**Figure 1: Distribution of Student Beneficiaries by Scholarship Type and Course (%)**



## 4. KEY FINDINGS

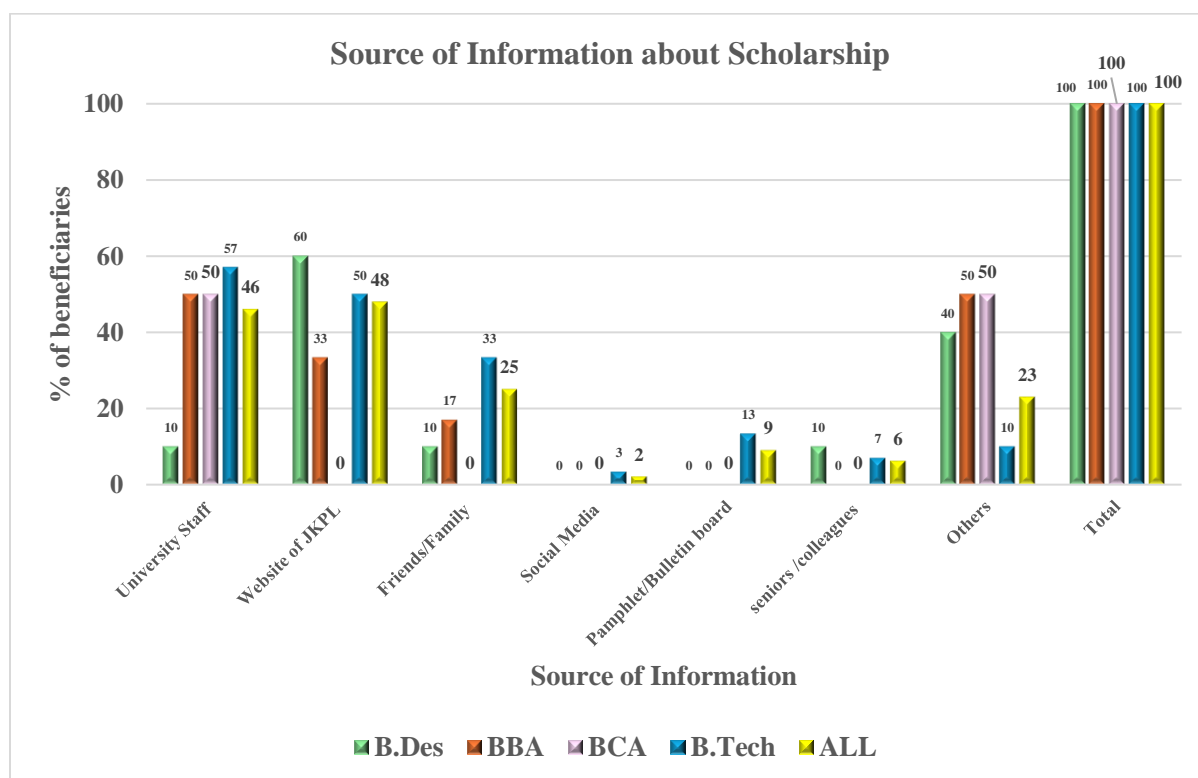
*This section synthesizes the core findings of the assessment across thematic areas such as academic impact, financial relief, personal development, and program perception. It draws on both quantitative data and qualitative insights.*

### 4.1 SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT JK SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The analysis indicates that student beneficiaries accessed information about the JKPL scholarship project through a diverse range of channels, with certain modes proving more effective across different academic disciplines.

The data indicates that university led channels, particularly communication by staff and the official website, are playing a central role in disseminating information about the scholarship project across academic streams. Additionally, peer networks and alternative sources are complementing formal outreach, reflecting a healthy blend of institutional and social awareness. This offers an encouraging foundation to further strengthen structured dissemination by enhancing digital visibility, empowering student ambassadors, and ensuring consistent, timely communication through multiple touchpoints, thereby expanding the project's reach and reinforcing trust among prospective beneficiaries.

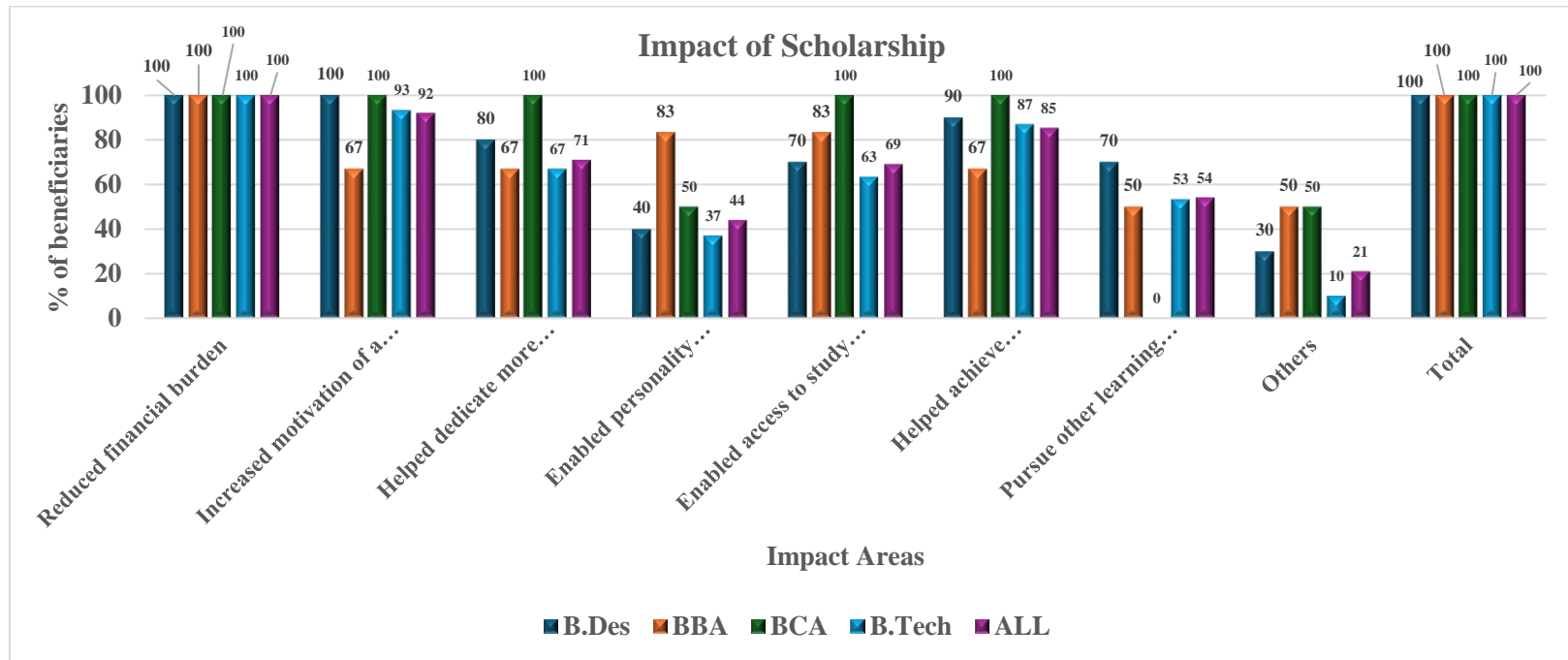
**Figure 2: Source of information about JK Scholarship program (%)**



## **4.2 IMPACT OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME**

The analysis of impact areas indicates that the scholarship project had a consistently positive influence across multiple dimensions of students' academic and personal development, with some variation across disciplines.

**Figure 3: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by Impact of Scholarship**



***\*Others:** Representative of college dance club, College event organizer, Leads clubs on technology for juniors, Pursuing online course on financial networking, Theatre, Art, Sketch, Pursuing graphic design course because of money saved due to scholarship, Cultural program volunteer*



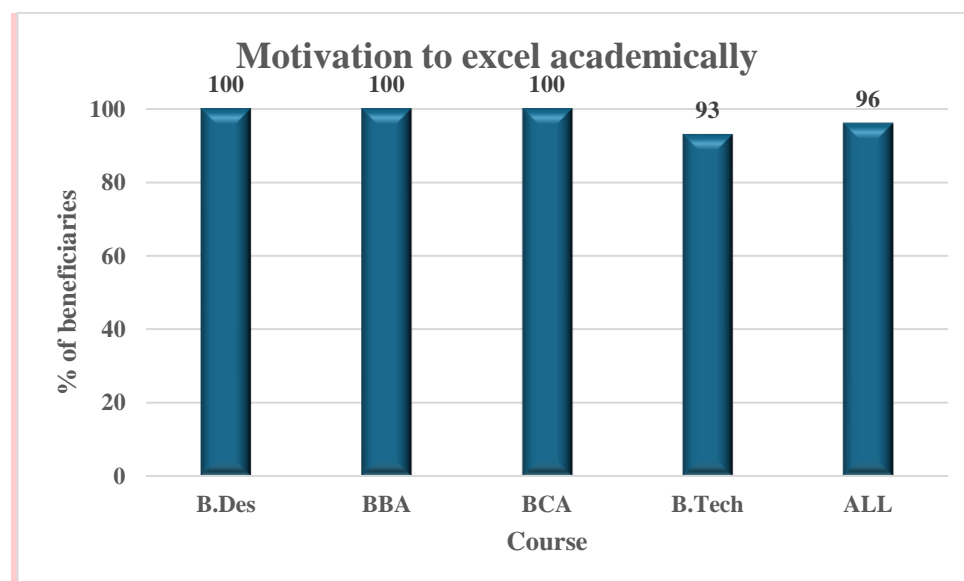
*"Receiving a scholarship at this stage of life feels like earning; we're supporting our families by reducing the financial burden while continuing our education.", B.Tech/23 student beneficiary.*

The findings suggest that the scholarship project has had a profoundly positive impact on recipients, with universal acknowledgment of reduced financial burden and substantial gains in motivation and goal achievement. A significant proportion of students also reported improved ability to focus on academics and enhanced access to learning and networking opportunities. While outcomes related to extracurricular participation and personal development were somewhat mixed, they remain notable, particularly among BBA students. These insights highlight the project's success in fostering educational continuity and personal growth. To maximize impact, institutions may consider incorporating structured extracurricular support, mentorship, and learning pathways that encourage holistic development alongside financial assistance.

### 4.3 MOTIVATION TO EXCEL ACADEMICALLY

The data reflect a near universal acknowledgement of the scholarship project's role in fostering strong academic motivation among students across all courses. This high level of intrinsic drive, particularly consistent across design, business, and computer applications students, underscores the project's effectiveness in encouraging sustained academic effort. The marginal variation in engineering suggests room for enhanced academic engagement strategies. Strengthening academic mentoring and recognition mechanisms could further amplify this already robust motivational impact.

**Figure 4: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by motivation to excel academically (%)**

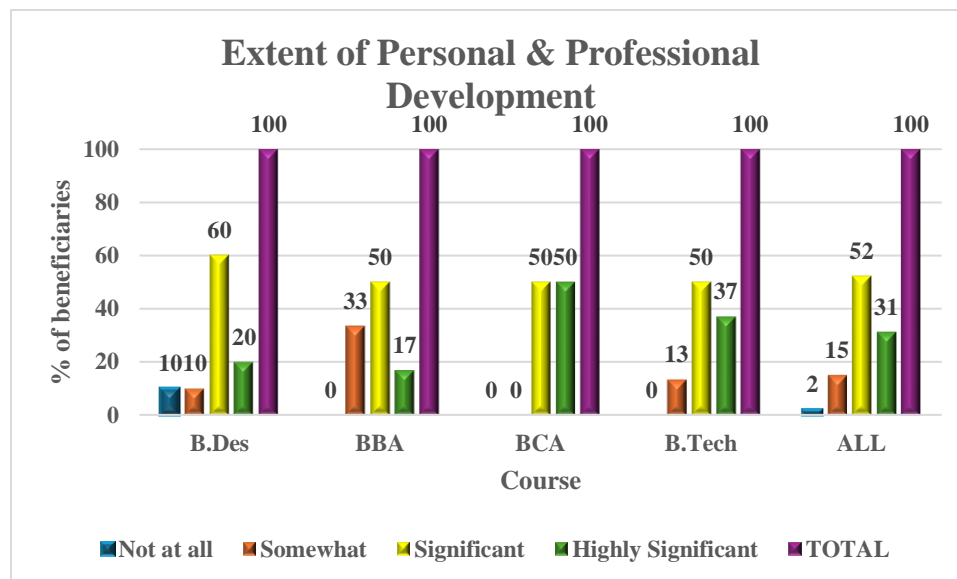


*"My name appeared in the college's Honors List for maintaining a CGPA above 8.5. I also received a certificate of recognition.", BBA/23 student beneficiary.*

#### 4.4 PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTION OF SCHOLARSHIP TO PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The data reflects a predominantly positive perception among students regarding the impact of the scholarship on their personal and professional development. A significant proportion of students across all courses rated the contribution of the scholarship as either “*Significant*” or “*Highly Significant*”.

**Figure 5: Distribution of Student Beneficiaries by Extent of Personal & Professional Development**

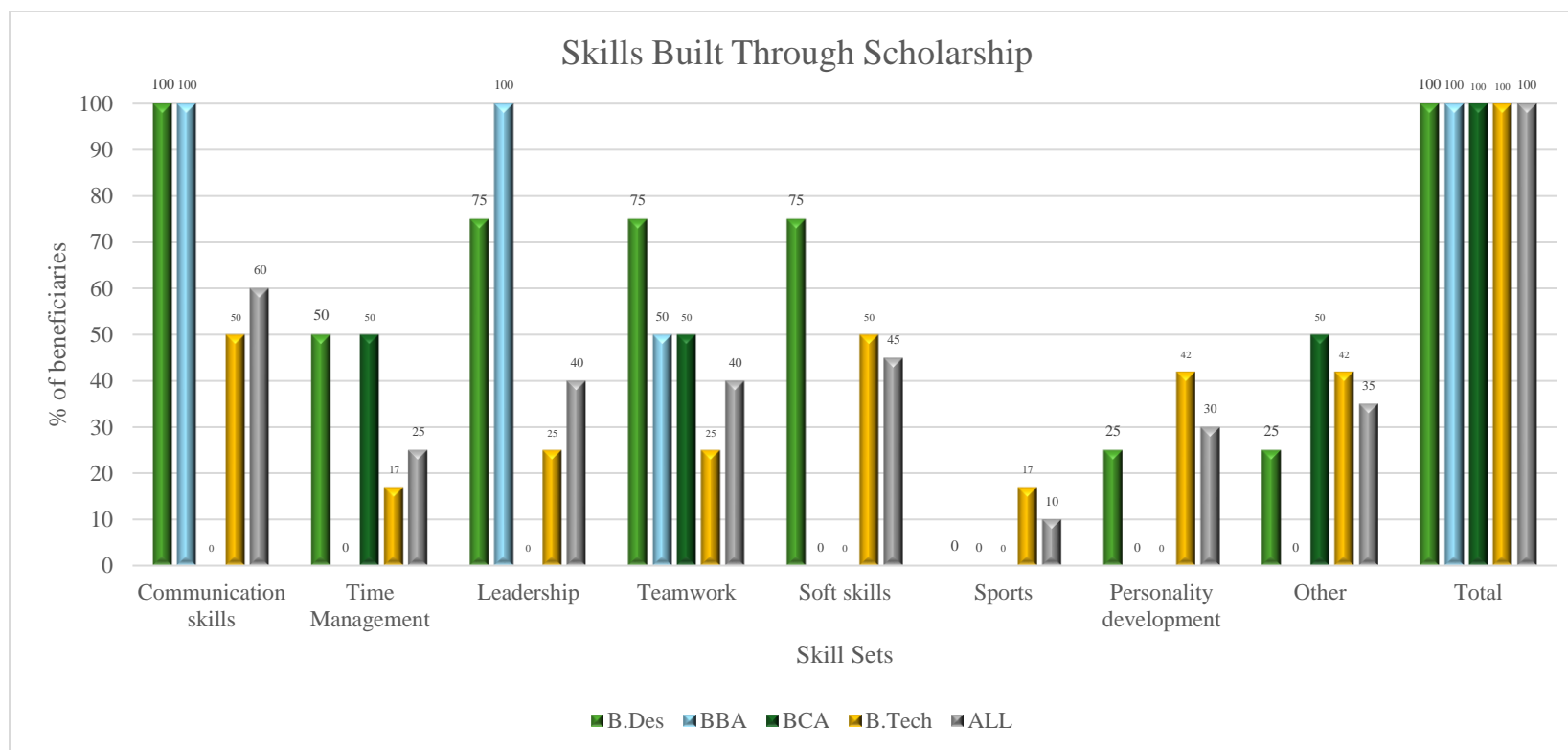


The data reflects a strong positive reception and affirms the project's effectiveness in addressing both financial and motivational needs. While a small proportion perceive the impact as limited, this presents an opportunity to enhance awareness, clarity of benefits, and individual support mechanisms to ensure that all beneficiaries fully realise the project's value.

#### 4.5 SKILL DEVELOPMENT ENABLED THROUGH SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT

The analysis reveals that the scholarship support extended by JKPL has enabled the development of diverse transferable skills among students across academic disciplines. However, the types and extent of skill development vary by course, indicating the differentiated experiences and opportunities accessed by recipients.

**Figure 6: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by Skills Built Through Scholarship Support**



***\*Others:** Coordination, Volunteering, Drama, Entrepreneurship, can utilize the money saved elsewhere and learn something new*

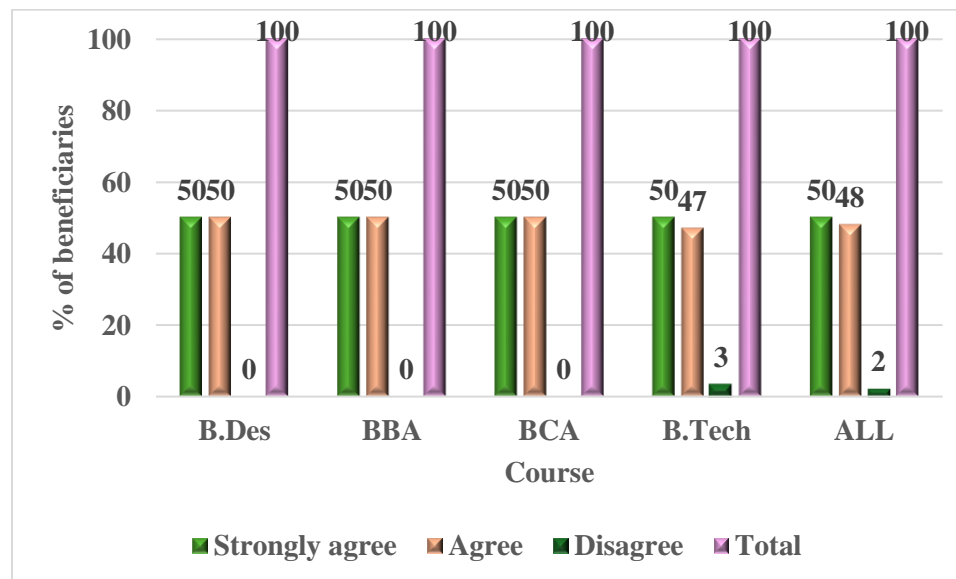
The scholarship project appears to have contributed positively to the development of key interpersonal skills, particularly in the domains of communication, leadership, teamwork, and soft skills. These outcomes indicate that beyond academic support, the initiative fosters holistic growth among students. However, the variation across disciplines suggests the need for more structured and inclusive opportunities, especially in areas like sports, personality development, and time management, to ensure equitable access to co-curricular benefits across all student groups.



*"The scholarship has enabled me to pursue skill development opportunities without worrying about costs."*, B.Tech/23 student beneficiary.

#### 4.6 PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF SCHOLARSHIPS IN ENSURING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

**Figure 7: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by Perceptions on the Role of Scholarships in Ensuring Educational Equity**

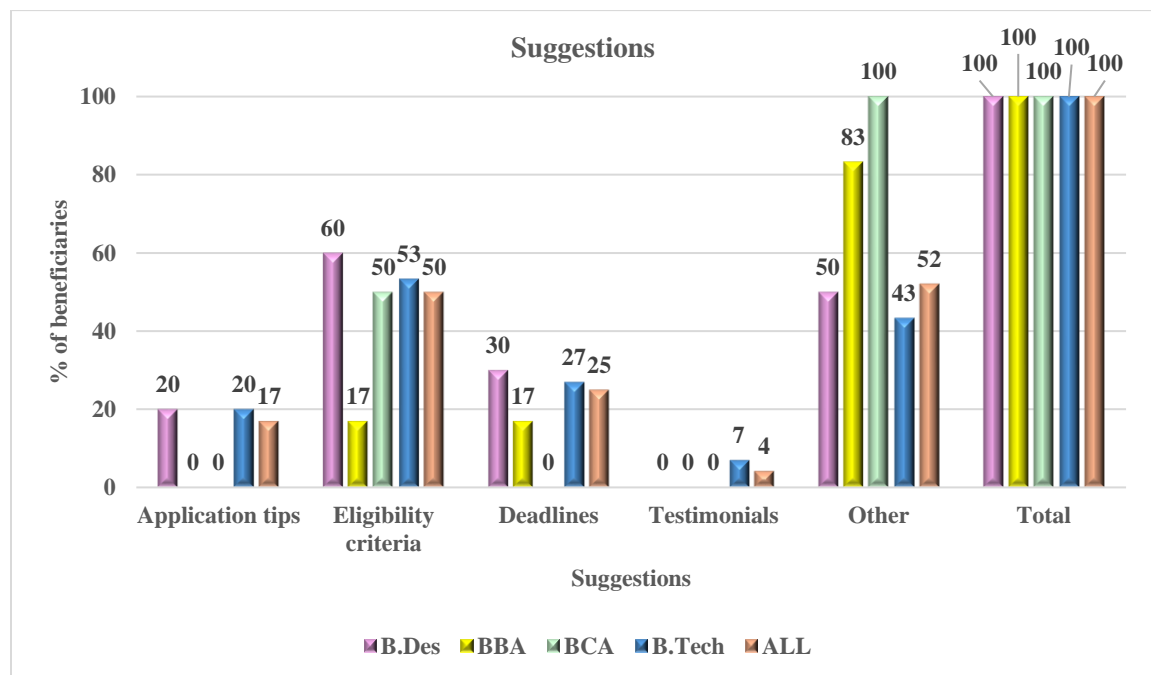


The data reflect a broad consensus among students on the value and effectiveness of the scholarship project, with nearly all scholarship beneficiaries either strongly agreeing or agreeing with its positive impact. The overwhelmingly affirmative responses across all academic disciplines underscore a high level of satisfaction and endorsement of the project's design and implementation. This widespread approval highlights the scholarship's relevance, accessibility, and motivational value, suggesting that current practices are largely effective, with minimal dissatisfaction among beneficiaries.

#### 4.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR ENHANCING SCHOLARSHIP AWARENESS AND ACCESSIBILITY

The responses indicate that students seek greater clarity and support regarding eligibility criteria and deadlines, with half of the scholarship beneficiaries highlighting the need for improved communication on these aspects. This signals an opportunity to enhance student outreach by expanding the content scope and delivery methods: particularly through targeted guidance on application processes and eligibility norms.

**Figure 8: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by Suggestions to Enhance Scholarship Access**



***\*Others:** Criteria to maintain scholarships must be specified, Administration team should inform in detail, Criteria must be informed to students well in advance so that they may work harder, Easier process, Mention clearly on brochure*

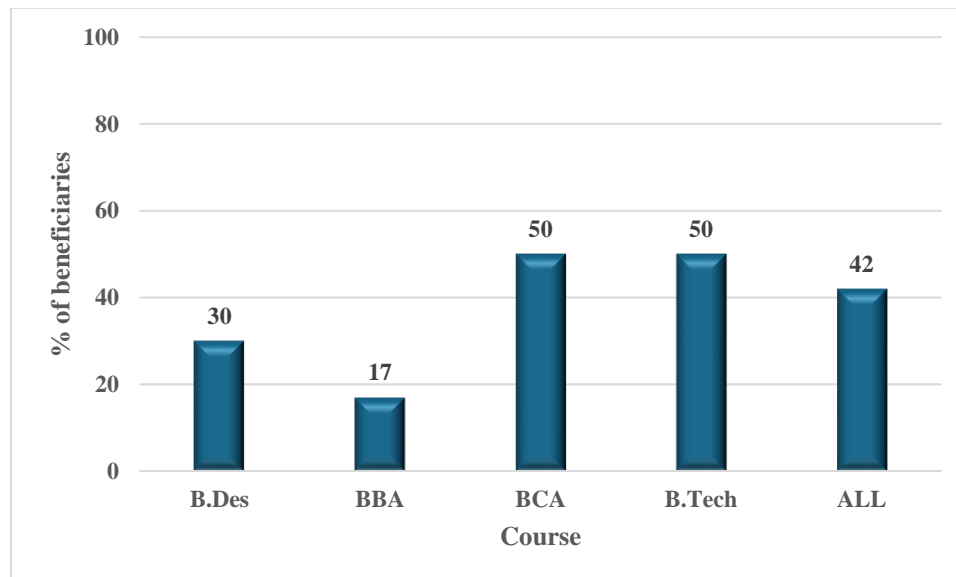
- Provide information about eligibility criteria for clarity
- Guidance for filling up application
- Clear information about the timelines
- More diversified, customized, and student centric communication strategies that go beyond generic messaging.



*“Although the scholarship information is on the website, not everyone reads it. The university should take proactive steps to communicate the details through brochures, orientation, and regular updates.”, BBA/23 student beneficiary*

## 4.8 SCHOLARSHIP OPENING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

**Figure 9: Distribution of Course wise Beneficiaries by Opinion on Scholarship opening up New Opportunities**

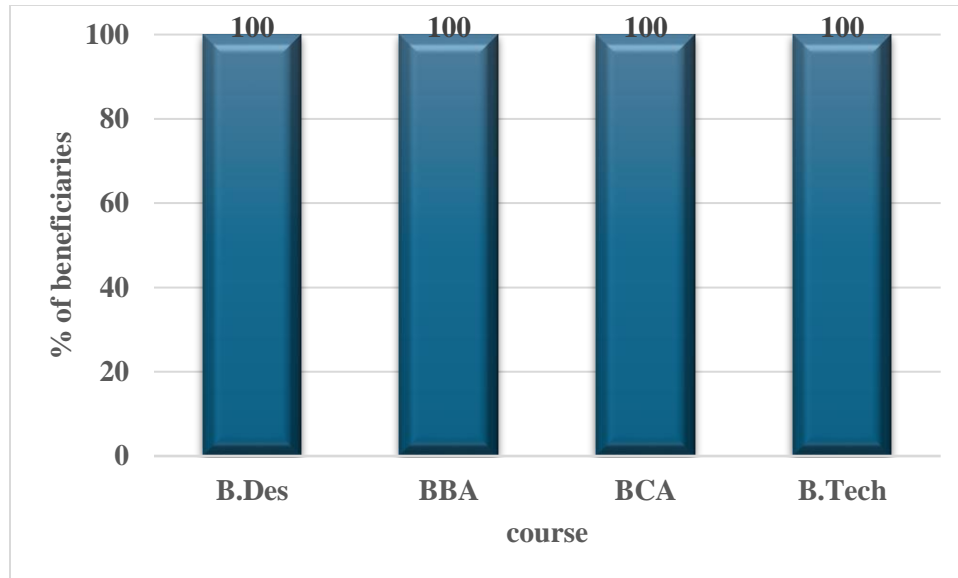


The data suggests that less than half of the students perceive scholarships as enablers of new opportunities such as internships or research. While a notable proportion of BCA and B.Tech students see such benefits, the perceived impact remains limited across most projects, indicating a potential area for enhancing the linkages between scholarships and professional development avenues.

## 4.9 WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The data presented in Fig 11 indicates universal endorsement of the JKPL scholarship project across all academic streams. **All the student beneficiaries (100%) from B.Des, BBA, BCA, and B.Tech** mentioned that they would recommend the scholarship to other students.

**Figure 10: Distribution of Course Wise Student Beneficiaries by Willingness to Recommend Scholarship Project**



This unanimous positive response indicates scholarship's perceived credibility, relevance, and impact. It underscores not only the project's effectiveness in addressing financial needs but also its role in enhancing academic motivation, personal growth, and career aspirations.

*"For students who can't afford a degree in Design, I would strongly recommend JKLU. The scholarship, combined with quality faculty and low fees, makes it an excellent choice.", B.Des/23 student beneficiary.*

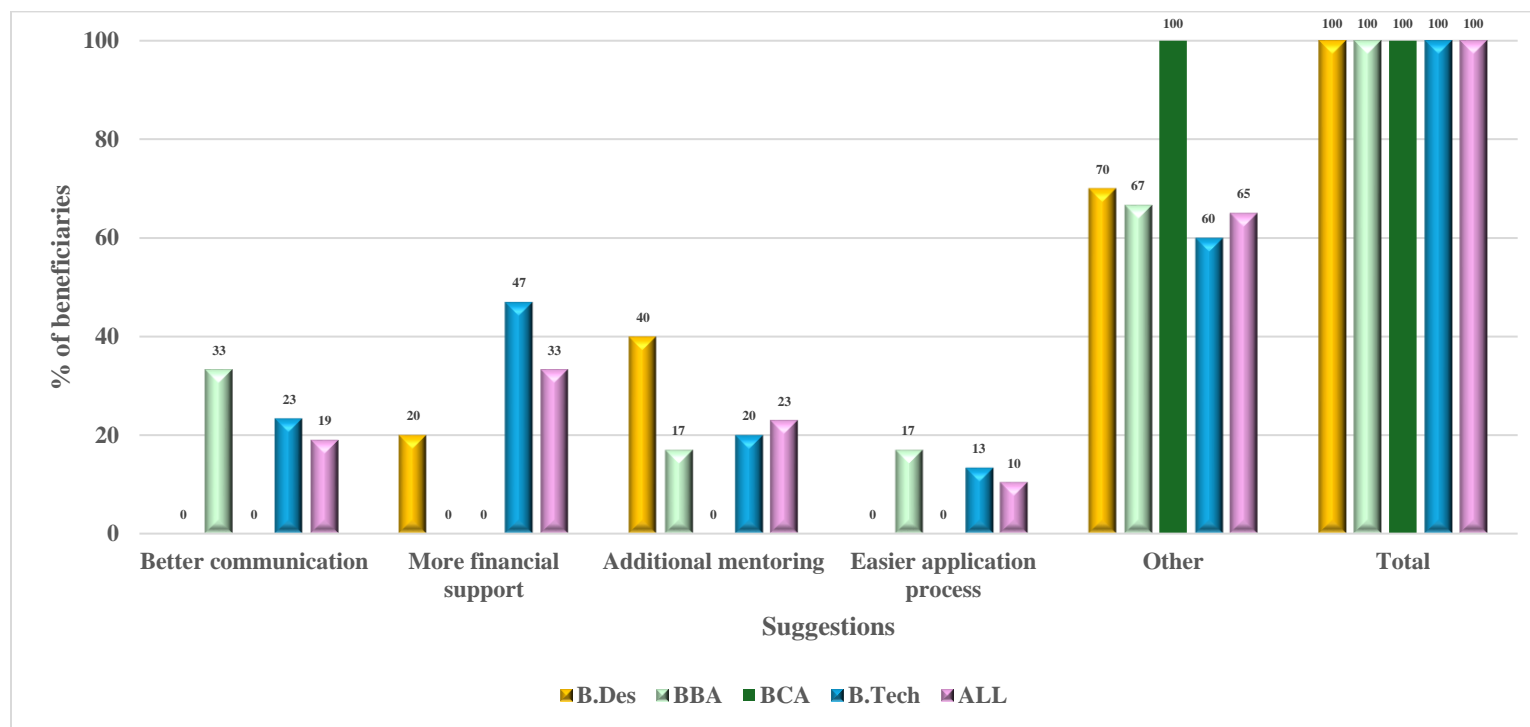


Such consistent support across diverse academic disciplines highlights the project's broad applicability and student satisfaction and presents a compelling case for its continuation and potential scale up. From a CSR perspective, this level of endorsement positions the JKPL scholarship as a high value, student approved intervention that contributes meaningfully to educational equity and opportunity.

#### **4.10 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME**

The suggestions given by the student beneficiaries cover a range of ideas to enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of the JKPL scholarship project.

**Figure 11: Distribution of Couse Wise Student Beneficiaries by Suggestions to Improve Scholarship Programme**



*\*Others: JKLU entrance test based scholarship, Maintain uniform criteria throughout, Relaxation in eligibility criteria, Advertisement, Hostel fee waiver along with scholarship, Provide more need based scholarships*

The responses indicate that better communication emerged as an important area for improvement, particularly among BBA students. This highlights the need for more transparent and timely information dissemination regarding scholarship processes, eligibility, and continuation criteria. Additionally, additional mentoring support was recommended by a noticeable share of students across streams, suggesting that structured guidance could enhance both academic outcomes and scholarship retention.

The call for greater financial support, especially pronounced among B.Tech students, suggests that current assistance, while impactful, may not sufficiently address the financial realities of all students. Moreover, the suggestion for a simplified application process, though less frequent, points to potential administrative hurdles faced by students. Together, these findings underscore the value of targeted improvements in communication, mentorship, and financial design of the scholarship project.



*“I found out in my third year that the scholarship is based on credits and CGPA. If this had been explained earlier, I would have worked harder from the start. It must be told to all students in the first year.”*, BBA/23 student beneficiary

## 5. CONCLUSION

*The conclusion summarizes the overall impact of the scholarship program, drawing attention to its strengths and areas for refinement.*

### **Overview of Scholarship Impact**

There is consistently a positive influence on student beneficiaries outcomes across academic, personal, and professional domains.

The scholarship has played a catalytic role in promoting educational equity, academic persistence, and holistic development. Student beneficiaries across all academic streams acknowledged the financial relief provided by the scholarship, which enabled them to pursue their studies with reduced stress and greater focus.

The scholarship not only served as a financial instrument but also emerged as a critical enabler of aspiration and ambition, with many student beneficiaries attributing their ability to pursue higher education and career goals to the support they received.

### **Strengthening Academic Commitment**

The scholarship project increased their academic motivation and enabled them to dedicate more time to their studies. The students across streams felt that scholarships are essential to ensuring equal access to education.

The fact that all the student beneficiaries would recommend the project to their peers is a strong endorsement of its relevance and efficacy.

The project also fostered significant academic continuity, with most beneficiaries being in the second or third years of their academic journeys. This affirms the scholarship's role in supporting students not only at the point of entry but also in sustaining progress toward degree completion.

### **Skill Development and Broader Opportunities**

The scholarship contributed substantially to the development of various skills, particularly among student beneficiaries in B.Des and BBA projects. Communication, leadership, and teamwork emerged as the most cited areas of skill enhancement. Student beneficiaries also reported growth in soft skills and personality development, further supporting the view that scholarships can act as platforms for wider youth empowerment.

Although technical streams showed slightly lower levels of skill diversification, B.Tech student beneficiaries recognized the scholarship's support in providing access to academic resources and co-curricular opportunities. This suggests a need for tailored value add components such as mentorship, peer learning, or industry exposure to maximize holistic outcomes.

## **Suggestions regarding Areas for Improvement and Student Beneficiaries Feedback**

While the overall feedback was highly positive, students provided actionable suggestions for improving the scholarship project.

Need for greater transparency and clarity in scholarship eligibility and continuation criteria, with several calling for relaxation in CGPA thresholds and more equitable consideration of financial backgrounds. Improved communication from the university, especially during the admission process, and recommended wider publicity of the scholarship program to enhance awareness among prospective students.

Scholarship assessments should include holistic parameters, such as co-curricular performance and current academic efforts, rather than relying solely on past academic records.

### **Final Reflections**

The JKPL scholarship initiative at JKLU represents a successful model of CSR that yields high impact results in educational equity and youth development. By targeting both merit and need based criteria, the project has succeeded in creating an inclusive space for students from diverse backgrounds to thrive. Its influence extends beyond academics, shaping student confidence, aspirations, and long-term trajectories.

Continued investment in such projects, alongside thoughtful integration of mentoring and information access, will not only enhance individual student journeys but also contribute to broader institutional goals of inclusion, excellence, and employability. The findings provide a compelling rationale for replicating and scaling the scholarship framework within and beyond JKLU.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

*This section outlines strategic and operational recommendations aimed at enhancing the design, outreach, and effectiveness of the scholarship program. The suggestions are based on evidence generated through the study.*

A review of qualitative feedback from scholarship beneficiaries reveals a consistent and constructive demand for greater flexibility, clarity, and equity in the scholarship project's eligibility and renewal criteria.



### 1. Relaxation in Eligibility Criteria

- Many students advocated for more inclusive and flexible eligibility norms.
- Students suggested more leniency where academic performance is marginally below thresholds.

### 2. Reassessment Based on Holistic Criteria

- Some students called for case-by-case review considering financial need, personal improvement, and consistency.
- Recommended a committee to holistically evaluate borderline or exceptional cases.
- Suggested factoring in extracurriculars, personal challenges, and non-academic responsibilities.
- A few students emphasized improved background checks to ensure aid reaches truly deserving candidates.

### 3. Communication and Transparency

- Lack of clarity around eligibility, especially CGPA calculations, was a common concern.

- Students demanded better communication before admission and clearer documentation.
- Information is often accessed only through persistent inquiry, disadvantaging new or unaware students.

#### **4. Stability and Predictability of Criteria**

- Frequent changes in criteria created confusion and uncertainty.
- Strong suggestion to fix scholarship criteria at the time of admission and maintain them throughout the course duration.

#### **5. Alternative Assessment Mechanisms**

- Proposed JKLU-administered tests as fairer alternatives to 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> board marks.
- Emphasized evaluating current skills, motivation, and performance at university level over past academic scores.

#### **6. Promotion and Outreach**

- A few students stressed the need for wider promotion of scholarship options.
- Highlighted that lack of awareness can lead to exclusion of deserving candidates.

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## **3<sup>rd</sup> Party Impact Assessment Report**

**Youth Entrepreneurship Development Project (YEDP) project**

**Project Period: FY 2023-24**

**Implemented by BYST in Rayagada, Odisha**

***Impacted Assessment Conducted by:***

***NPRDA, Odisha***

***Report submitted to:***

***JK Paper Ltd.***

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**Regd Office:**

**At- Bada Raghunathpur (Gohiria Square), PO- Madanpur, District- Khurda, Odisha, India, PIN-752054**

**Address for communication:**

**N1 A/2, IRC village Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khurda, Odisha-751015**

**Phone: +91-8249341515 / +91-7327093232**

**Email: [nprda@nprda.com](mailto:nprda@nprda.com) Website: <https://nprda.com>**



## **Background**

YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (YEDP) is one of the pioneer interventions of JK Paper's Corporate Social Responsibility initiative. The project is implemented through Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) in Rayagada, Odisha.

BYST is a not-for-profit organization that assists disadvantaged Indian youth in transforming business ideas into viable enterprises under the guidance of a mentor.

**Inspired by HRH The Prince of Wales and founded in 1992**, BYST was the first organization to replicate The Prince's Trust's youth entrepreneurship support model globally outside the UK.

BYST supports underprivileged young entrepreneurs by supplementing financing based on a requirement assessment conducted by mentor selectors - Rs.3 lakhs being the current average, with an upper limit of Rs.50 lakhs. In addition to financial support, entrepreneurs receive a host of business-related services, including training, business plan development, monitoring, mentoring, and networking. They are nurtured until they become self-sufficient and capable of contributing to society through the creation of wealth and employment.

The project named YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (YEDP) was implemented across project villages. In the project financial year 2023-24, the project mobilised 10,689 youths for awareness generation; out of which 3,189 youths were counselled for Business Idea Generation. Further on, 629 through STEP (Smart training for Enterprise Planning). Finally, the project was able to facilitate loans through banks and provided mentoring support to 165 entrepreneurs. The project was able to train and accredit 119 mentors to support these entrepreneurs.

Out of 165 supported entrepreneurs; 20 micro-enterprises were contacted; 19 reported their businesses were 'Struggling Startups' when they were contacted and engaged by the BYST-J K Paper Programme Rayagada team. The direct implication is that for most struggling micro-enterprises/grassroots enterprises, it is not feasible to record a rebound in their fortunes within the first few months/first year of receiving a bank loan.

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At- Bada Raghunathpur (Gohiria Square), PO- Madanpur, District- Khurda, Odisha, India, PIN-752054

### **Address for communication:**

N1 A/2, IRC village Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khurda, Odisha-751015

Phone: +91-8249341515 / +91-7327093232

Email: [nprda@nprda.com](mailto:nprda@nprda.com) Website: <https://nprda.com>



## **NP Research and Development Agency Pvt. Ltd. (NPRDA)**

Another related point to be noted in this context is that of the twenty (20) enterprises contacted, the bank loan disbursement for as many as twelve (12), amounting to Rs. 41.43 L (over 70%) happened in Q4 of FY24, that is, the January-March 2024 quarter. The project has not only supported the targeted youths in providing support and training but also facilitated providing seed capital as well as convergence with government schemes to improve avenues of opportunities. In addition, the project also supported the targeted youths in handholding, mentoring, and on the business technical and intelligence support to make the enterprises more vibrant and sustainable.

### **Methodology**

NPRDA used a telephonic cross-sectional survey design for the assessment to understand effectiveness of the intervention. We randomly selected 20 samples from the beneficiary details shared by the BYST for the study. The study focused on key outcomes that the intervention could achieve over the project period.

The respondents were interviewed about the process of their engagement with the programme, participation, understanding about the enterprise, finance of the enterprise. The subject of enquiry focused around these areas to understand the nuanced approach that the intervention adopted to make the programme effective.

### **Key findings**

Evidence shows that the project was able to cater to the needs of communities in general by creating an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, a market place and youth focused programme. The youths were found to be now engaged in micro-enterprises which has helped not only the targeted beneficiaries but also motivated other youths in the community leading to the foundation getting requested to support

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#### **Address for communication:**

N1 A/2, IRC village Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Dist- Khurda, Odisha-751015

Phone: +91-8249341515 / +91-7327093232

Email: [nprda@nprda.com](mailto:nprda@nprda.com) Website: <https://nprda.com>



them in starting an enterprise. This simply reflects effective approach of the intervention.

Survey reflects that the entrepreneurship intervention is diverse in terms of type of enterprises promoted by the foundation. The diversity gave an ample opportunity to the foundation to further their understanding about what worked and what didn't in the project context. In addition, the support provided also influenced participants' ability to understand entrepreneurship, given their continued engagement and managing the total revenue from sale (source: *telephonic interview with young entrepreneurs*).

Findings suggest that those who are into the enterprise, reported to be in their respective business for an average period of 5 months or more, giving an indication that the engagement and motivation by the project team had a lasting effect on the youth entrepreneurs. In addition, the engagement from the implementation side helped the youth in getting motivated and keep an interest in investing time and energy in the enterprises (Source: telephonic interview with young entrepreneur).

The study found that average total turnover for the period reported was Rs. 3,16,700/- (SD: 4,21,641.04). This reflects that the intervention could able to make these young micro-entrepreneurs into full-fledged business owners managing huge sum of rupee in their business operations.

The average monthly turnover of an entrepreneur was Rs. 91,723.48 (SD: 115983). This reflects on an average, each entrepreneur was able to achieve a net revenue from sale of more than Rs. 3000 per day. However, the standard deviation reflects that the total turnover data has higher degree of variance, meaning there were enterprises which made high revenue from sales and at the same time there were entrepreneurs who made smaller revenue from sales with reference to average sales reported by the young entrepreneurs.

Most of the respondents were found to be into grocery store business (Kirana store) with an average of Rs. 1,65,667/- (SD:145563.88) as revenue from sale. The second most preferred enterprise found as running fancy store. Those involved in the fancy store business has an average turnover of Rs. 6,97,500/- (SD:432726). Both the grocery and fancy store operation found to be running through the year under the

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Phone: +91-8249341515 / +91-7327093232

Email: [nprda@nprda.com](mailto:nprda@nprda.com) Website: <https://nprda.com>



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assessment period.

The findings suggest that BYST's work was directed towards reducing poverty and bringing economic opportunity for youth by directly contributing to *SDG 8 and SDG 1* directly and partly to SDG 10.

Given the engagement between BYST and young entrepreneurs, as a continued approach, the foundation shall think of continuing support these young entrepreneurs through their entrepreneurship journey with additional handholding support with a clear exit plan. The prolonged handholding support will ensure that these enterprises are resilient to shocks and can absorb shocks on their own. In conclusion, JK Paper CSR initiative to support these entrepreneurs showed a positive effect on the youth in terms of not only getting self-employment but also managing business operations in volume.



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