Photo Credit:: © Nz Seasonal Wear PVT. LTD. sagwara (Rekha Kumari)

Scheme for Free RS-CIT Training for Women

Insights from Administrative Data & Scoping Interviews

IDinsight

Program Overview and Objectives

Objective

Operational since 2011-12, this program provides **basic computer training to women free of cost**. **Women who are 10th-pass and aged 16-40 years are eligible**.

Activities

Eligible women are required to **apply online**, based on which a shortlist is generated. The duration of the course is **3 months or a total of 132 hours**.

Administration

The **Directorate of Women Empowerment provides financial support** for the program. The training is **implemented through Information Technology Gyan Kendra (ITGKs)** that are licensed by the **Rajasthan Knowledge Corporation Limited (RKCL)**.

Desired Impact

Through the training, the program aims to **provide basic computer information** to women and **familiarize them in working with a computer**.

Methodology

Administrative Data Analysis	This involved **comparing the demographic characteristics of the beneficiary population**, like **geography, age, marital status, education level**, etc., as well as features of scheme delivery like the **distribution of ITGKs.**

Scoping Interviews	To obtain a **general overview of beneficiaries' experience**, we undertook **19 phone-based, qualitative interviews**. This was based on purposive sampling.
	Thus, beneficiaries were interviewed from the districts **Jodhpur, Nagaur, Jaipur, Baran, Jaisalmer, Jhalawar, Dungarpur, and Banswara** based on their varying status in terms of pass rates, beneficiary penetration, and center penetration.
	In addition, **representation was ensured from social categories** including general, SC, ST, OBC (creamy), and OBC (non-creamy), **marital status** (single, married, and widow), and **age**.

Executive Summary - Free-of-cost RS-CIT Training for Women

This report documents findings and suggestions for the free RSCIT training for women scheme based on administrative data and qualitative phone interviews with beneficiaries.

An analysis of the scheme's administrative data put forth 3 trends. **First**, the number of **women benefiting through the scheme grew by 12%** between 2019-20 & 2021-22. **Second**, on average, the **pass rate for people who sat for the exam has been high, at 85%. Third**, the **proportion of those who pass in the exam out of those who enroll was only 74% in 2021-22, while the proportion of those who appear in the exam is 87%**. This is an **investment loss of ~1.3 INR** since the first installment (1350 INR) is paid to RKCL once the beneficiary reports for classes.

1. **Insights from Administrative Data**
    a. **Age profile of beneficiaries has diversified over time**: The youngest age group of women (16-21 years) constitute the largest proportion of beneficiaries. Over time, more women from older age groups are being enrolled which may reflect increased demand and aspirations.

    b. **Pass rates are similar across age-groups, but additional support may be provided to women aged 36-40**: Pass rates are relatively lower among 36-40 year olds at 79%. Since digital literacy and access is relatively lower in this age group, additional support may be targeted towards them.

    c. **Potential to include more divorced or widowed women and provide study support to them:** Over time, more married women are enrolling for the scheme. However, **more divorced or widowed women may be mobilized**. Further, their **pass rates are relatively lower (~60% in 2020-21 compared to the 85% overall average)**. Study support may be provided through tuition, support in attending classes, etc.

    d. **Scheme has been successful in meeting social representation targets, but provide study support to beneficiaries from SC & ST groups**: proportion of beneficiaries across social groups is representative of their composition in the overall population and scheme guidelines for reservations. However, providing study support to SC and ST beneficiaries may be useful as their pass rates are comparatively lower.

    e. **Districts with greater center penetration also display greater beneficiary penetration**: Districts like Jaisalmer, Sirohi, Dhaulpur, and Pratapgarh (low beneficiary and center penetration), can benefit from expansion of centers. Further, greater support to students to uplift the pass rate may be provided in districts like Banswara (67%), Pratapgarh (73%), and Jhalawar (75%).

2. **Insights from Scoping Interviews:**
   a. **Awareness and Access**
      i. **Scheme awareness is good**. In addition to the certificate, IEC material should highlight skill building benefits, potential jobs, etc.
      ii. The RSCIT course is compulsory for government jobs. An effort can be made to provide beneficiaries with information on other jobs that are possible with the skills gained through this course.
      iii. **The financial subsidy provided through the scheme is helping women access the scheme**. 5 (of 19) beneficiaries interviewed indicated that they would not be able to do this course without it.
      iv. There may be **scope to expand the pool of women who can avail the course for free** given the high demand for it.

   b. **Scheme Activities**
      i. Most beneficiaries interviewed (17/19) received the books timely and free. **For grievances during registration, the department has set up a helpline number.** The **same may also be used post-registration for other complaints**.
      ii. There is scope to **simplify the material's language and structure**. Some beneficiaries (3/19) reported trouble in understanding it.
      iii. In terms of centre-based resources, all interviewed beneficiaries (19 of 19) said there were enough computers and teachers. To ensure that beneficiaries are well-informed, sharing exam-related information (timetable, center, etc.) via SMS may be useful.
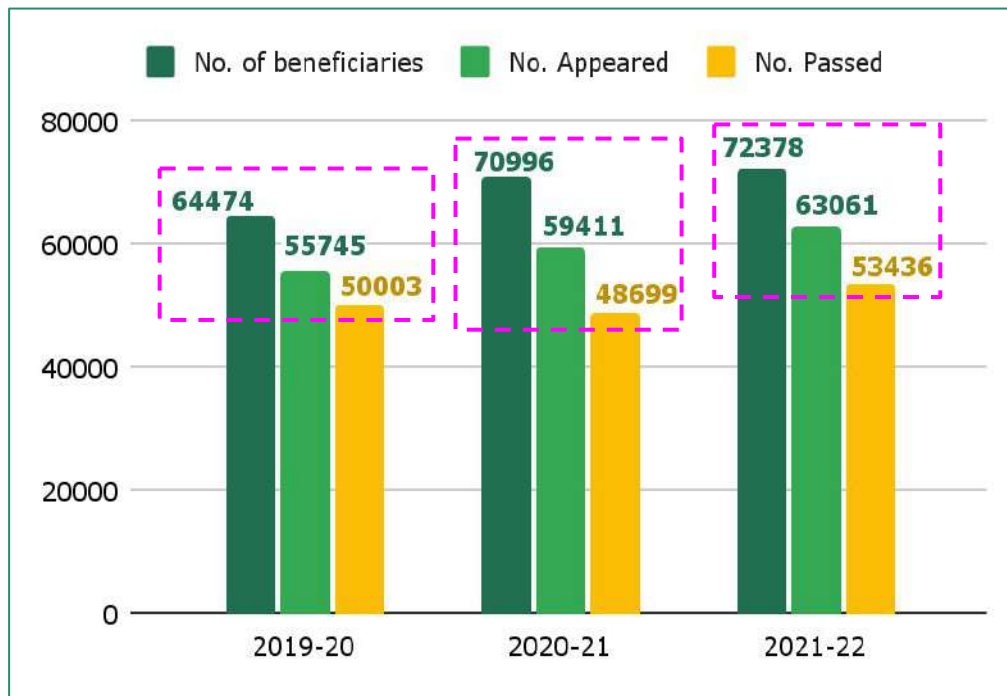
   c. **Knowledge gain and employability**
      i. While the scheme may increase employability (by providing a certificate), **orientation sessions may be organized to inform and counsel beneficiaries regarding jobs, applications**, etc.
      ii. In this regard, the department can **identify opportunities to connect beneficiaries with employers, create awareness around platforms (like the work-from-home portal) where they may seek jobs, or link them to job-based government programs**.

   d. **Digital literacy, women's empowerment, and employment**
      i. While the scheme increases digital literacy and use during the course, opportunities to sustain this must be explored. The government's program for free-of-cost smartphones will help.
      ii. The **department and RKCL can institute regular feedback mechanisms wherein phone-based surveys may be shared with beneficiaries** at the conclusion, 6 months, and 1 year following the course to collect feedback, whether they were able to find jobs, etc.

Insights from Administrative Data

Enrollment has grown; Potential to increase proportion who appear & pass

Bar chart legend: No. of beneficiaries, No. Appeared, No. Passed

Year	No. of beneficiaries	No. Appeared	No. Passed
2019-20	64474	55745	50003
2020-21	70996	59411	48699
2021-22	72378	63061	53436

Insights from the Data

The number of women benefiting through the scheme **grew by 12%** between 2019-20 & 2021-22.

On average, the pass rate[1] has been high, at **85%**. It was **89.7% in 2019-20** & **84.7% in 2021-22**.

However, the **proportion of those who pass in the exam out of those who enroll shows potential for growth**. This proportion declined from 78% to 74%, with a low of 69% in 2020-21. **This is an investment loss**.

In 2021-22, **13%** of those who had **enrolled in the scheme did not appear in the final exam**. This translates into a **loss of ~1.3 crore INR** since the **first installment of 1350 INR** is paid to RKCL once the beneficiary reports for classes.

1 The pass rate is the number of beneficiaries who passed the final exam as a proportion of those who appeared in the final exam.

Age profile of beneficiaries has diversified over time
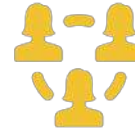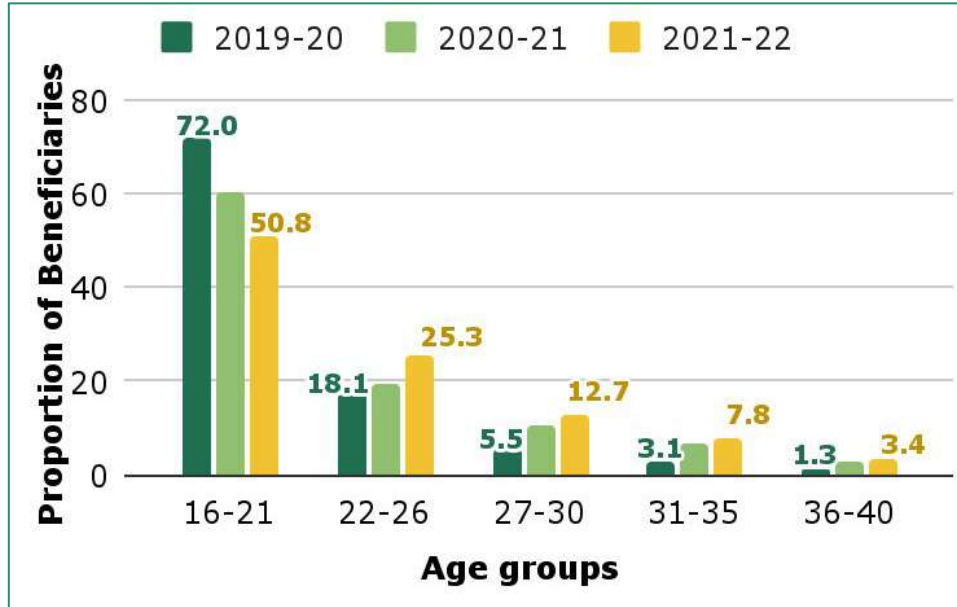
The **youngest age group of women (16-21 years)** constitute the **largest proportion of beneficiaries** in the last 3 years.

However, this proportion has declined over time as **more women from older age groups are being enrolled**. This may be a **reflection of increased demand and aspirations** among young and middle-aged women.

Women aged 15-24 comprise 19.2% of Rajasthan's female population, while those aged 25-39 constitute 23.3%. (Census 2021 estimates)

Similar age-wise pass %, but consider support to women aged 36-40
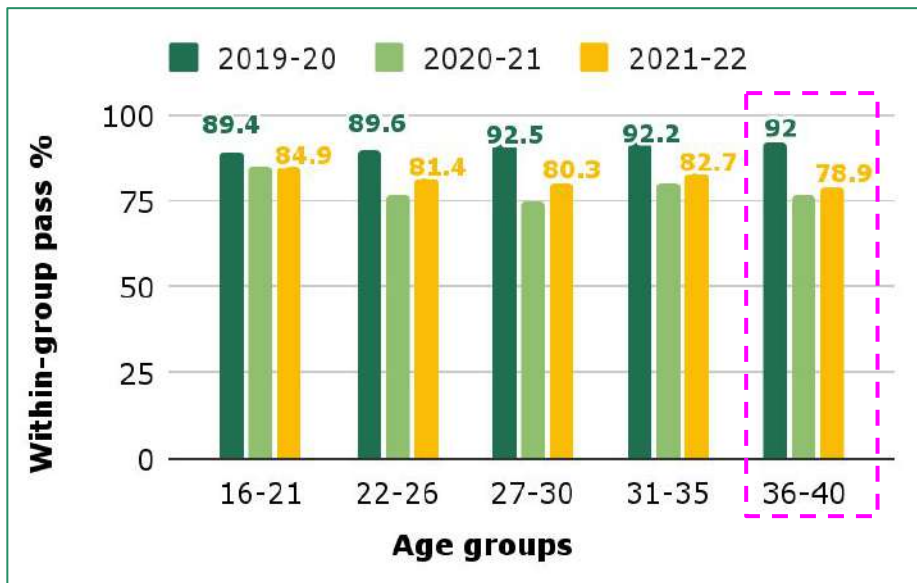
Pass rates are **similar across age-groups**, with only minor differences observed as age of beneficiaries increases.
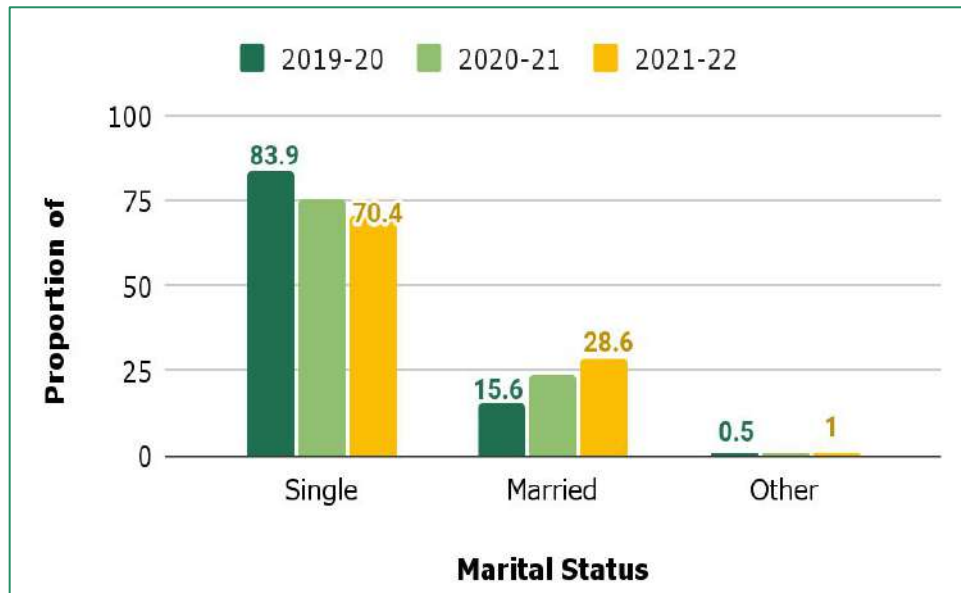
However, pass rates are **relatively lower among 36-40 year olds**. Since digital literacy and access is relatively lower in this age group, **additional support may be targeted towards them**.

In general, the **pass rates are highest for the year 2019-20 (dark green bar) as it incorporates data on re-attempts** which is not the case for other years.

Potential to include more divorced and/or widowed women

2019-20   2020-21   2021-22

Single: 83.9, 75, 70.4
Married: 15.6, ~23, 28.6
Other: 0.5, ~0, 1

Marital Status

Over time, **more married women are enrolling for the scheme** and their representation has gone up.

There are 71% currently married, 25% single, 2.3% widowed, and 0.7% divorced or separated women of 15-49 years of age. (NFHS-5)

While the **scheme guidelines include that divorced and/or widowed women may be given priority**, an **effort can be made to mobilize more such women** in line with their composition in the population.

Provide study support to divorced and/or widowed beneficiaries
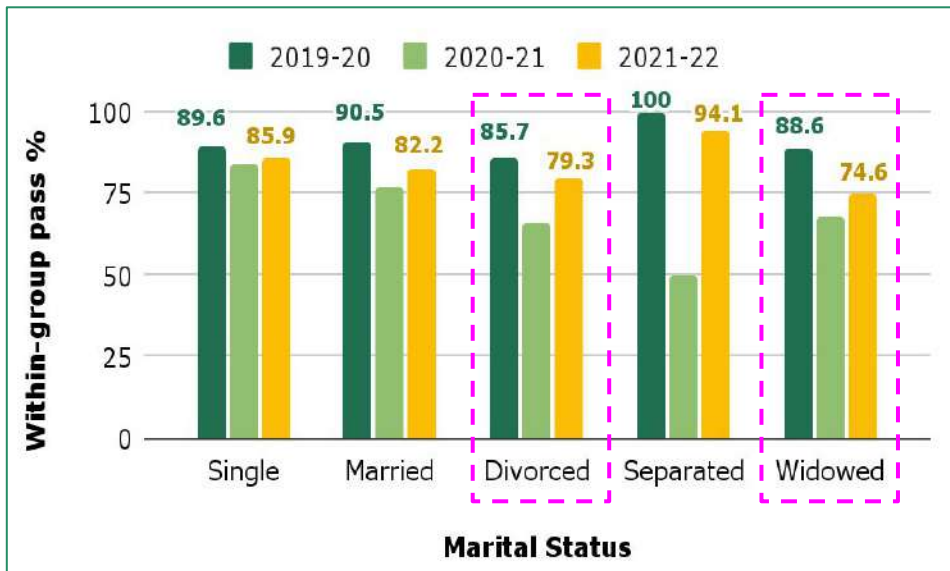
Pass rates are quite **similar among women who are married or single** (constituting nearly 99% of beneficiaries in 2021-22).

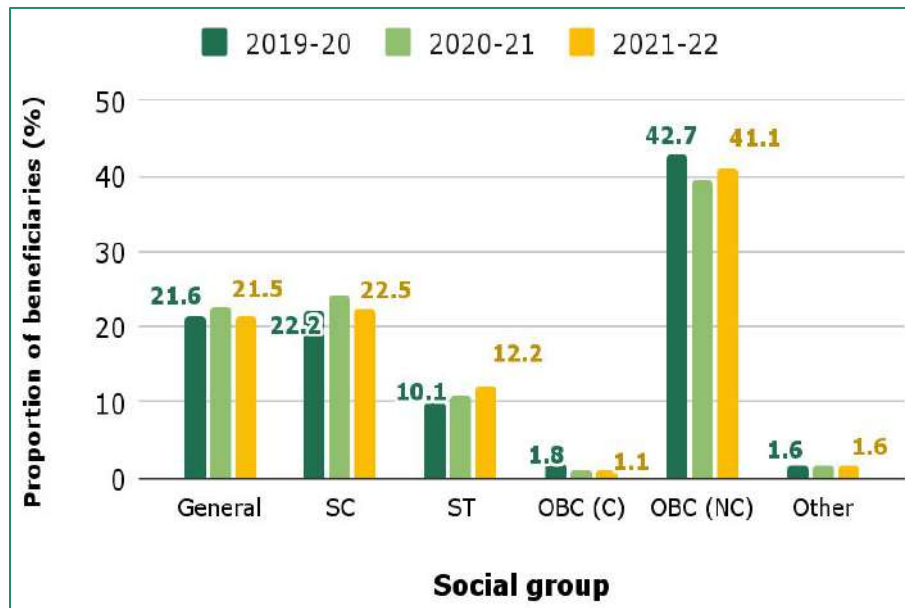However, pass rates are relatively **lower women who are divorced or widowed** (with a low of ~60% in 2020-21).

Thus, there is potential for **greater support to such beneficiaries** in effectively utilizing scheme benefits – perhaps through **tuition, support in attending classes**, etc.

Note: pass rates are highest in 2019-20 as the data for that year incorporates data on re-attempts. This is not the case for other years.

Scheme successful in meeting social representation targets

The proportion of beneficiaries from different social groups is **representative of their composition in the overall population and scheme guidelines**.
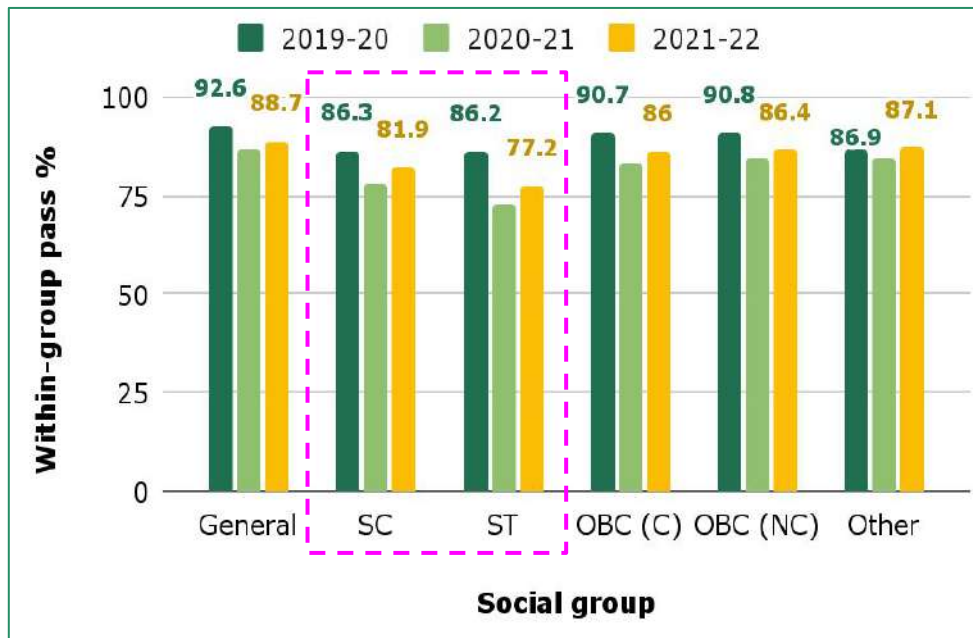
As per NFHS-5, there are 44.1% OBC households, while there are 19.3% SC, 3.8% ST, and 32.1% 'Other' households (including General, SBCs, etc.)

The scheme guidelines provide 18% and 14% reservation for SCs and STs, respectively. Administrative data indicates that **the scheme has succeeded in meeting this target**.

Provide study support to beneficiaries from SC & ST groups

Pass rates among **general, OBC, and Other (SBC, Sahariya, etc.) category of beneficiaries are almost on par**.

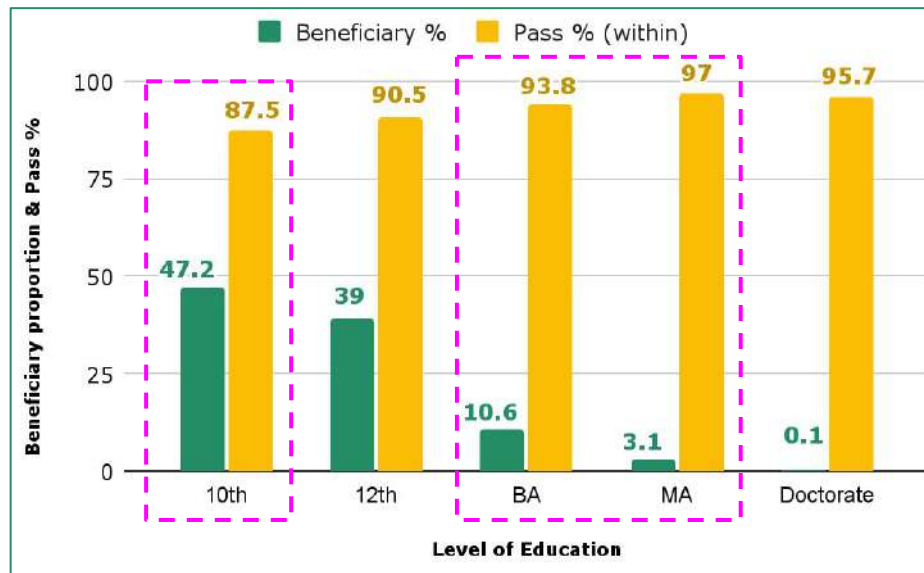However, **pass rates among SC and ST** category of beneficiaries indicate the **room for improvement**.

Thus, **additional study support (tuitions, support in attending classes, etc.) may be provided to such candidates** to enable them to effectively utilize scheme benefits.

Note: pass rates are highest in 2019-20 as the data for that year incorporates data on re-attempts. This is not the case for other years.

Higher education levels linked with higher pass rates

Legend: ■ Beneficiary % ■ Pass % (within)

Level of Education	Beneficiary %	Pass % (within)
10th	47.2	87.5
12th	39	90.5
BA	10.6	93.8
MA	3.1	97
Doctorate	0.1	95.7

Higher levels of education are linked with higher pass rates. This may be due to **greater familiarity with computer skills and knowledge** that is generally associated with higher levels of education.

Complete categorization of education level is available only for the first year of analysis (2019-20), hence the adjoining graph is for 2019-20 only.

In future batches, it will be **useful to continue collecting and recording data based on this complete categorization** as it helps in better monitoring and assessment.

Note: pass rates are highest in 2019-20 as the data for that year incorporates data on re-attempts. This is not the case for other years.

Linkage between beneficiary and center penetration

District-wide beneficiaries as a proportion of total in 2021-22

Proportion of beneficiaries
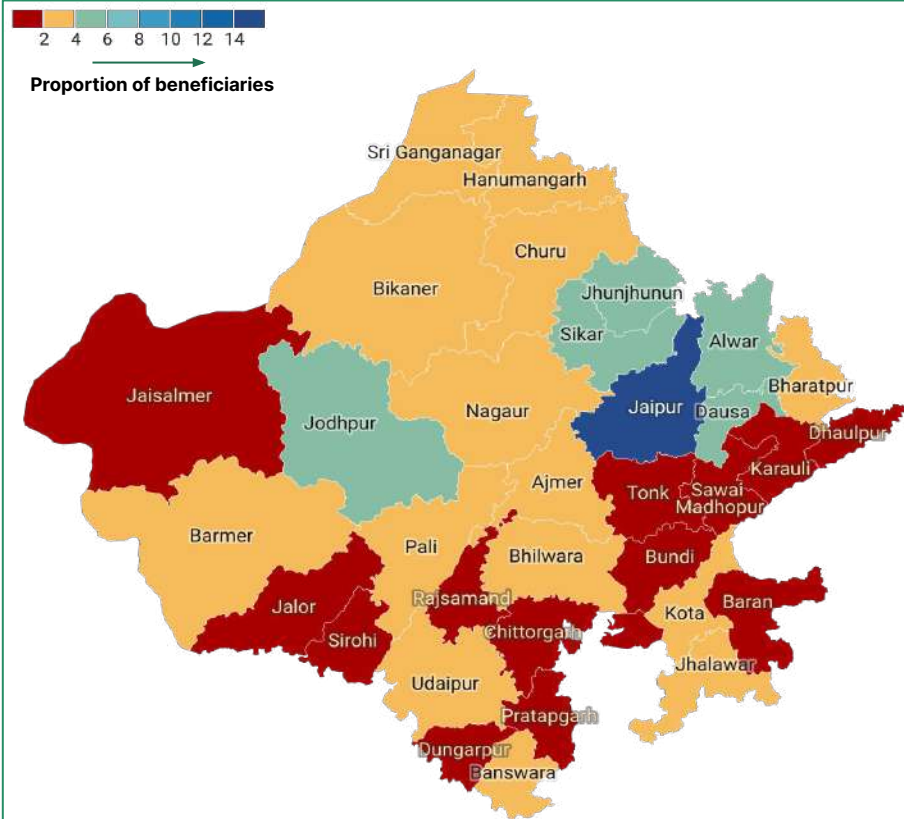
Top 5 Districts

District	Ben % (21-22)	Females % (2011)
Jaipur	15.1	9.8
Sikar	5.9	3.9
Jodhpur	4.8	5.2
Alwar	4.7	5.3
Jhunjhunu	4.2	3.2

Bottom 5 Districts

| District	Ben % (21-22)	Females % (2011)
Jaisalmer	0.5	1.0
Dhaulpur	1.05	1.8
Sirohi	1.1	1.5
Pratapgarh	1.1	1.3
Baran	1.2	1.8

Special focus may be given to the districts with low beneficiary penetration. This includes **Jaisalmer**, **Dhaulpur**, **Sirohi**, **Pratapgarh**, and **Baran**. In addition, **Jalore (1.29%), Rajsamand (1.36%), and Bundi (1.48%)** may also be considered.

Linkage between beneficiary and center penetration

District-wide centers as a proportion of total in 2021-22

Proportion of centers
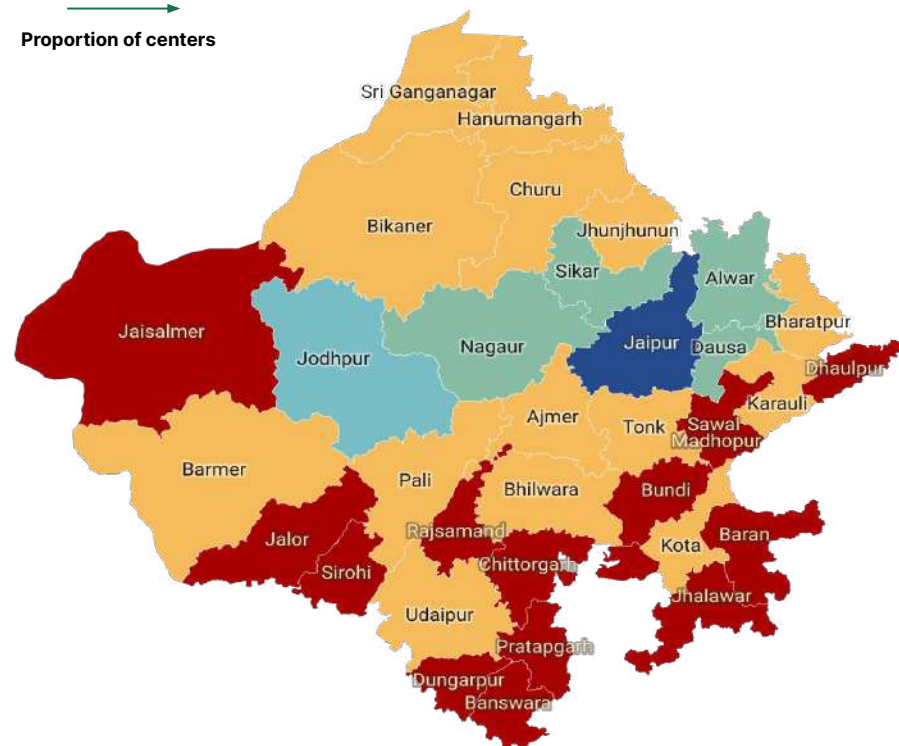
Top 5 Districts

District	ITGKs (21-22)	ITGK % (21-22)
Jaipur	796	15.4
Jodhpur	308	6
Sikar	293	5.7
Alwar	263	5.1
Dausa	215	4.2

Bottom 5 Districts

District	ITGKs (21-22)	ITGK % (21-22)
Jaisalmer	33	0.6
Pratapgarh	51	1.0
Sirohi	52	1.0
Dhaulpur	57	1.1
Rajsamand	60	1.2

- Districts with **greater center penetration also display greater beneficiary penetration**.

- Thus, districts like **Jaisalmer, Sirohi, Dhaulpur, and Pratapgarh (low beneficiary and center penetration)**, may benefit from a **targeted expansion of centers.**

4

District-wide Variation in Pass Rates

Pass rate
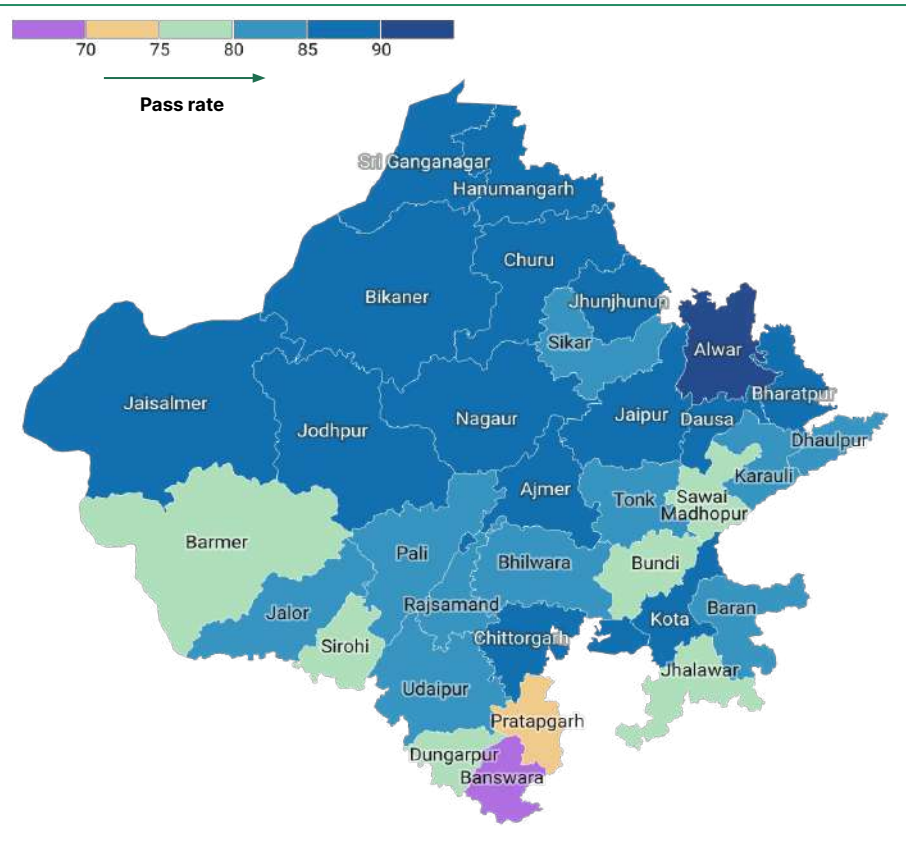
Top 5 Districts		
District	**Pass % (21-22)**	**% app. (21-22)[1]**
Alwar	91.2	89.1
Nagaur	89.2	88.3
Bharatpur	88.3	87.2
Ajmer	87.9	85.2
Jaisalmer	87.6	81.8

Bottom 5 Districts		
District	**Pass % (21-22)**	**% app. (21-22)**
Banswara	67.1	83.9
Pratapgarh	72.7	83.5
Jhalawar	75.2	87.9
Dungarpur	75.5	83.0
Barmer	77.1	81.0

- The districts listed above, including **Banswara, Jhalawar, and Barmer**, would benefit from **greater support to students** in order to uplift the pass %.

- This may be done through the **support of CSOs** and **reviewing best practices** from **districts like Alwar and Nagaur**.

1: The column "% app. (21-22)" indicates the number of those who appeared in the final exam as a proportion of those who enrolled for the course.

Scheme's Pathway to Impact

Inputs	Activities	Outcomes	Impact
Stakeholders raise awareness among eligible women	ITGKs receive the necessary materials and orientation	Beneficiaries are equipped with computer knowledge	Increased digital literacy and use among women
Stakeholders facilitate interested women to apply	ITGKs provide books and materials to beneficiaries	Beneficiaries gain familiarity in working with a computer	Increase in women's empowerment and self-esteem
Beneficiaries shortlisted and informed of next steps	Classes administered as per the guidelines (132 hours)	Beneficiaries receive course certificate (if passed)	Increase in women's labour force and entrepreneurial participation
Beneficiaries report for the biometric registration	Beneficiaries attend the classes	Increase in employability of beneficiaries	
	Internal assessments and remedial classes take place		
	Final exam takes place and beneficiaries are informed		

16

Findings from Scoping Interviews

Insights on Scheme Inputs

What is the status and what could be better?

Inputs

Stakeholders raise awareness among eligible women

Stakeholders facilitate interested women to apply

Beneficiaries shortlisted and informed of next steps

Beneficiaries report for the biometric registration

Scheme awareness is generally good. In addition to the benefit of a certificate, IEC material should also focus on the **skill building benefits**, **potential jobs**, etc.

The RSCIT course is compulsory for government jobs. In addition, an effort can be made to **provide beneficiaries with information on other jobs that are possible** with the skills gained through this course.

- **The financial subsidy provided through the scheme is helping women access the scheme**. 5 (of 19) beneficiaries interviewed indicated that they would not be able to do this course without it.

- There is scope to **expand the pool of women who can avail the course for free given the high demand for it**.

Insights on Scheme Activities

Activities

ITGKs receive the necessary materials and orientation

↓

ITGKs provide books and materials to beneficiaries

↓

Classes administered as per the guidelines (132 hours)

↓

Beneficiaries attend the classes

↓

Internal assessments and remedial classes take place

↓

Final exam takes place and beneficiaries are informed

What is the status and what could be better?

Most beneficiaries interviewed (17/19) **received the books timely and free**. For grievances during registration, the **department has set up a helpline number**. The **same may also be used post-registration for other complaints**.

Scope to simplify the material's language and structure. Some beneficiaries (3/19) reported trouble in understanding it.

In terms of centre-based resources, all interviewed beneficiaries (19 of 19) said **there were enough computers and teachers**. To ensure that beneficiaries are well-informed, **share exam-related information (timetable, center, etc.) via SMS**.

However, **training of teachers around pedagogy and teaching skills** may help to enhance learning.

19

Insights on Scheme Outcomes

What is the status and what could be better?

Outcomes

Beneficiaries are equipped with computer knowledge

Beneficiaries gain familiarity in working with a computer

Beneficiaries receive course certificate (if passed)

Increase in employability of beneficiaries

There is potential to **explore how learning may be enhanced and sustained**. Some beneficiaries (11/19) reported that they **may still require support to apply learnings** from the course (although this may be **partly driven by COVID-induced disruptions** to classes, etc.

While the scheme may increase employability (by providing a certificate), orientation sessions may be organised **to inform and counsel beneficiaries regarding jobs**, **applications, etc.**

In this regard, the department can **identify opportunities to connect beneficiaries with employers**, **create awareness around platforms (like the work-from-home portal)** where they may seek jobs, or **link them to job-based government programs**.

Insights on Scheme Impact

Impact

- Increased digital literacy and use among women

- Increase in women's empowerment and self-esteem

- Increase in women's labour force and entrepreneurial participation

While the scheme increases digital literacy and use during the course, **opportunities to sustain this must be explored**. The government's **program to provide smartphones free-of-cost to women is a step in the right direction**.

As highlighted earlier, **enabling beneficiaries to gain employment must be a key focus area**. None of the beneficiaries interviewed (0 of 19) were able to get a job after completing the course.

For evaluating impact in the future, the department and RKCL can **institute regular feedback mechanisms** wherein **short, phone-based surveys** may be shared with beneficiaries at the **conclusion, 6 months, and 1 year following the course** to **collect feedback, whether they were able to find jobs,** etc.