

Adhara Scheme: A Catalyst for Entrepreneurship among Persons with Disabilities in Dharwad District

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Abstract:

The present study on differently abled entrepreneurs analyses the Adhara Scheme for persons with disabilities facilitated by the Government of Karnataka through District Disabled Welfare offices for economically independence and assistance for entrepreneurship development among disabled persons in the state. The purpose of the study is to know the financial contribution by District Disabled Welfare office Dharwad, changes in income status of the entrepreneurs, to find out challenges faced by differently abled entrepreneurs and to analyze the satisfaction level of Differently Abled Entrepreneurs on Adhara Scheme. The Likert Scale is used for collection of data regarding the satisfaction of the respondents on Adhara Scheme and the same data is analyzed with the help of Mann-Whitney U Test. The study provides valuable insights into the impact of the Adhara Scheme on differently abled entrepreneurs, highlighting both its strengths and areas for improvement. Key findings indicate that while the scheme has successfully enhanced financial stability for many persons with disabilities, significant challenges persist. The majority of disabled entrepreneurs reported profitability and increased income levels, showcasing the scheme's ability to foster economic growth. Additionally, the reliance on institutional and government-backed financial sources, such as the District Disabled Welfare Office and commercial banks, underscores the scheme's success in reducing dependence on informal credit channels.

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is one of four tools that economists consider necessary for production: natural resources/land, labor and capital. The entrepreneur combines the first three of them to produce goods or provide services. They typically create a business plan, hire employees, obtain funding and financing, and manage and operate the business. In a capitalist system, the entrepreneur acts as a coordinating agent. As a result of the collaboration, resources are directed to new potential revenue prospects. An entrepreneur can create wealth by transferring different types of capital, both tangible and intangible. When an entrepreneur makes a decision or takes a risk, he has the power to help eliminate uncertainty in a market full of it. Entrepreneurs promote product innovation and share knowledge regularly to the extent that capitalism is a complex system of profit and loss. Established companies face increasing competition and creative demands that often force them to invest in research and development. From a scientific-economic point of view, the capitalist cuts off the path to a stable state balance.

Entrepreneurship and Persons with Disabilities:

According to Disability and Development Report 2018, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, Many people with disabilities, especially women and those with severe disabilities, face significant difficulties in participating fully in the labor market. Employment gaps persist for persons with disabilities in the mainstream labor market, and those who are employed are often in vulnerable, unstable jobs and tend to earn lower wages compared to individuals without disabilities. To address these ongoing challenges, many countries have implemented various initiatives, such as anti-discrimination legislation, quota systems, disability-inclusive employment policies, vocational and technical training programs, public employment services, entrepreneurship support programs, and social protection schemes that are compatible with work. These efforts aim to promote equal opportunities and improve the economic inclusion of persons with disabilities.

As per the 2011 census, Karnataka had 9,40,643 disabled population. In 2011 it is increased to 13,24,205. The following table comprises total population of persons with disabilities in Karnataka and Dharwad district in particular with all categories wise as per census of India 2011.

Table 1: Population of persons with disabilities

Type of disability	Dharwad District	Karnataka	Percentage*
In Seeing	6105	264170	2.31
In Hearing	8061	326432	2.47
In Movement	10020	271982	0.04
Mental Retardation	3074	93974	3.27
Mental Illness	777	20913	3.71
Any Other	5988	246721	2.43
Multiple Disability	3196	100013	3.19
Total	37221	1324205	2.81

(Source: Population Census Data, 2011)

*Percentage= Dharwad District to Karnataka

About The Adhara Scheme:

The Adhara loan scheme is being implemented by the Karnataka State Government under the Ministry of Women and Child Development and Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens through the Department of Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens to enable the disabled people to take up self employment and live a life. Under this scheme, 50% bank loan and 50% subsidy is provided.

Objectives of the Study:

- To analyse the financial contribution of District Disabled Welfare Department through Adhara Scheme for Differently Abled Entrepreneurship in Dharwad District
- To know the challenges faced by Differently Abled Entrepreneurs in Dharwad District
- To identify the changes in financial status of Persons with disabilities after entering into the field of entrepreneurship in Dharwad District

- To know the financial sources of Differently Abled Entrepreneurs in Dharwad District
- To analyse the satisfaction of Differently Abled Entrepreneurs on Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District.

Hypothesis of the Study:

H0: There is no significant difference in the satisfaction level of males and females regarding the Adhara Scheme for Differently Abled Entrepreneurship in Dharwad District

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Rushi Pandya and Siddhartha Saxena (2006). Disabled entrepreneurs exhibit no unique characteristics from their non-disabled counterparts. They have an attitude of entry that is more tenacious and robust. Entrepreneurs who have limitations from birth have mastered the art of coping successfully from an early age. Entrepreneurs who have acquired unintentional disability are another group. At a later point in their lives, they encountered difficulties associated to disabilities, which had a varied impact on each of them. Education and family support were important factors in both categories. **E Saranya Devi and Saranya Elango (2020)**. Persons with disabilities are willing to take on challenges in the world of business; nevertheless, their main obstacles include lack of financial support, ignorance of EDP, **Saptarshi Dhar and Tahira Farzana (2017)**. Entrepreneurs with disabilities suffering from lack of family support, market competitiveness, and other issues, while they are battling, they are also working to support themselves. They eagerly accept risks and challenges. **Saptarshi Dhar and Tahira Farzana (2017)**. Founding and running a business was mostly motivated by a "desire to create an industrial identity" for people with disabilities. Entrepreneurs with disabilities often struggle to manage their working capital, lack business skills; have limited access to resources and training, and encounter operational and mobility challenges. **Dr. Shanimon S, and Shalini Lawrence Mary, (2020)**. A substantial portion of the population in India, typically the marginalized community of individuals with disabilities, falls behind in utilizing the developing field of entrepreneurship. Therefore, in order to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of economic development, skill development through entrepreneurship development programs is necessary. **Eugine Tafadzwa Maziriri et, al.,(2017)**. Most entrepreneurs with physical disabilities emphasize that the challenges they face make it difficult for their businesses to survive and grow. These challenges include a lack of equipment and machinery, discrimination, limited business networking opportunities, difficulty accessing start-up capital, lack of awareness about support centers, and insufficient education and training. **Ahmar Uddin Mohammed and Syed Ahsam Jamil (2015)**. The study describes that Disabled entrepreneurs are more likely to face barriers in access to finance, experience, self-beliefs and government support. **Norhasyikin Rozali et, at., (2018)**. This paper provides an overview of social entrepreneurship, focusing on entrepreneurs with disabilities. It explains the role of the government in raising awareness about social entrepreneurship among these entrepreneurs. **L. Tamilselvi (2014)**. According to the report, the majority of respondents are only familiar with commercial banks, ICICI Bank, MIC, and SMMEs. Nearly all respondents are aware of NBFCs, and manufacturing and sole proprietorship businesses in metropolitan areas experience the highest amount of difficulties when trying to access financial support provided by banks and financial institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The present descriptive study focuses on Adhara Scheme which is facilitated by District Disabled Wel

fare Department for Differently Abled Entrepreneurship in Dharwad District. The study is based on primary data which is collected through District Disabled Welfare Office Dharwad, Questionnaires, field survey and also on secondary data which is collected through DDWD Website, relevant articles, journals & other publications. Total 30 beneficiaries (20% of total population) are selected for the study from each category of the society in Dharwad district. The collected data is analyzed and interpreted with the help of Tables, Graphs and Charts. The Likert Scale is used for collection of data regarding the satisfaction of the respondents on Adhara Scheme and the same data is analyzed with the help of Mann-Whitney U Test.

The present study “Adhara Scheme: A Catalyst for Entrepreneurship among Persons with Disabilities in Dharwad District” is carried out at the area of entrepreneurship. The study is only confined to Dharwad district where only micro differently abled entrepreneurs are considered. The analysis of data is based on financial contribution by DDWD Dharwad for Adhara Scheme and satisfaction of the beneficiaries on the same scheme. 30 beneficiaries are selected out of total 153 beneficiaries from the available data from the financial year 2016-17 to 2022-23 for the study. Tables and graphs are used for analyzing the data.

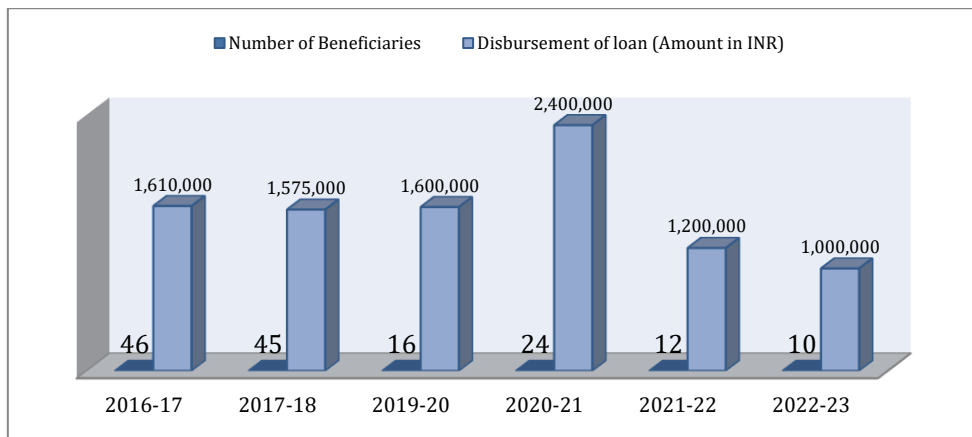


Figure 1: Number of Beneficiaries & disbursement of loan
(Source: District Disabled Welfare Office Dharwad)

RESULTS

Table 2: Year wise Number of beneficiaries and Disbursement of loan under Adhara Scheme through the District Disabled Welfare office in Dharwad District

Year	Number of Beneficiaries	Disbursement of loan (Amount in Rs.)
2016-17	46	16,10,000
2017-18	45	15,75,000
2019-20	16	16,00,000
2020-21	24	24,00,000
2021-22	12	12,00,000
2022-23	10	10,00,000
Total	153	93,85,000

The above table and bar chart presents the number of beneficiaries in six years of Adhara scheme in Dharwad district from the financial year 2016-17 to 2017-18 and 2019-20 to 2022-23. There is one year gap of the scheme i.e. FY 2018-19. In the FY 2016-17 and 2017-18 there are 46 & 45 beneficiaries assisted respectively under the same scheme. The maximum loan amount was Rs. 35,000 in these two financial years. And comparatively more number of PWDs are benefited in these couple of years. In following four financial years 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, and 2022-23 number of beneficiaries are 16, 24, 12 and 10 respectively. And it can be observed here that there is significant decrease in the number of beneficiaries from the FY 2019-20 to 2022-23. But maximum loan amount of the scheme increased to Rs. 1,00,000 with 50% subsidy

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	15	50.0
	Female	15	50.0
Age Group	20 to 30 years	13	43.3
	30 to 40 years	11	36.7
	40 to 50 years	3	10.0
	Above 50 years	3	10.0
Marital status	Married	25	83.3
	Unmarried	5	16.7
Educational Qualification	Up to SSLC	13	43.3
	PUC	10	33.3
	Undergraduate	6	20.0
	Uneducated	1	3.3
Type of Disability	Locomotive Disability	22	73.3
	Blindness	3	10.0
	Hearing Impairment	5	16.7
Family Type	Nuclear	14	46.7
	Joint	16	53.3
Location of the Business	Rural	16	53.3
	Semi Urban	3	10.0
	Urban	11	36.7

(Source: Field Survey)

The above table presents a balanced gender distribution (50% each) and a predominantly young to middle-aged population, with 80% falling between 20-40 years. Most respondents are married (83.3%), and educational attainment varies, with the majority having up to SSLC (43.3%) or PUC (33.3%), while a small fraction (3.3%) is uneducated. Locomotive disabilities are the most common (73.3%), and most respondents live in joint families (53.3%). Business locations are primarily rural (53.3%), with fewer in urban (36.7%) or semi-urban areas (10%). This analysis highlights a diverse group, with significant rep-

resentation from rural and disadvantaged backgrounds, offering insights into socio-economic and demographic factors.

Table 4: Status of Business of the Respondents

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Income status of the business	Profitable	20	66.7
	Non Profitable	6	20.0
	No Profit No Loss	4	13.3
Changes in Income	Increased	20	66.7
	Decreased	4	13.3
	No Change	6	20.0
Financial Sources of the respondents	Own Capital	24	27.9
	Commercial Banks	27	31.4
	District Disabled Welfare office	28	32.6
	Money Lenders	2	2.3
	Others	5	5.8
Challenges faced by the respondents	Financial Issue	21	25.6
	Marketing	16	19.5
	Travelling	24	29.3
	Competition	14	17.1
	Production	4	4.9
	Other Issues	3	3.7

(Source: Field Survey)

The dataset provides insights into the financial status, sources of funding, and challenges faced by entrepreneurs. A majority (66.7%) of businesses are profitable, with 13.3% reporting no profit or loss and 20% operating at a loss. Income levels have increased for 66.7% of respondents, while 20% saw no change, and 13.3% experienced a decline. Regarding financial sources, most rely on support from the District Disabled Welfare Office (32.6%), commercial banks (31.4%), or personal capital (27.9%), while reliance on moneylenders (2.3%) or other sources (5.8%) is minimal. Key challenges include traveling issues (29.3%), financial constraints (25.6%), and marketing difficulties (19.5%), with competition (17.1%) and production (4.9%) posing lesser problems. This analysis highlights that while many entrepreneurs are financially stable, they face significant operational and logistical challenges.

Table 5: Satisfaction level of the respondents on Adhara Scheme

Variables	Points of likert scale	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Satisfaction on Maximum amount of loan of Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District	Strongly Disagree	11	36.7
	Disagree	6	20.0
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6.7
	Agree	6	20.0

Satisfaction on Maximum amount of subsidy on loan of Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District	Strongly Agree	5	16.7
	Strongly Disagree	3	10.0
	Disagree	3	10.0
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	10.0
	Agree	7	23.3
Satisfaction on Formalities on process of loan of Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District	Strongly Agree	14	46.7
	Strongly Disagree	12	40.0
	Disagree	14	46.7
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	10.0
Satisfaction on Duration of loan sanctioned under Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District	Agree	1	3.3
	Strongly Disagree	11	36.7
	Disagree	12	40.0
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	16.7
Satisfaction on Repayment Period of Adhara Scheme in Dharwad District	Agree	2	6.7
	Disagree	2	6.7
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.3
	Strongly Agree	9	30.0
	Strongly Agree	18	60.0

(Source: Field Survey)

The dataset evaluates respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of the Adhara Scheme based on a Likert scale. Regarding the maximum loan amount, 36.7% strongly disagree, while 20% disagree, indicating dissatisfaction from over half of the respondents. However, 20% agree, and 16.7% strongly agree, showing some positive feedback. For the subsidy on loans, 46.7% strongly agree, and 23.3% agree, reflecting broad satisfaction, though 30% are neutral or dissatisfied. The formalities in the loan process draw criticism, with 40% strongly disagreeing and 46.7% disagreeing, suggesting significant challenges in procedural efficiency. Similarly, dissatisfaction is prominent regarding the duration of loan sanctioning, with 36.7% strongly disagreeing and 40% disagreeing, while only 6.7% express satisfaction. However, in additional data on satisfaction with the duration of loan sanctioning, 60% strongly agree and 30% agree, indicating notable satisfaction among some respondents and suggesting variability in experiences or recent improvements in this area.

Overall, the Adhara Scheme garners mixed feedback, with respondents appreciating subsidies but expressing dissatisfaction with loan amounts, complex formalities, and delays in sanctioning. The positive feedback on recent loan sanctioning durations highlights progress, yet there is room for further improvements to ensure consistency in satisfaction.

Hypothesis Test Summary

Sl. No.	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.a,b	Decision
1	The distribution of Maximum amount of loan is the same among male and female categories of the Respondents.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.539c	Retain the null hypothesis.
2	The distribution of Maximum amount of subsidy on loan is the same among male and female categories of the Respondents.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.870c	Retain the null hypothesis.
3	The distribution of Formalities on process of loan is the same among male and female categories of the Respondents.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.775c	Retain the null hypothesis.
4	The distribution of Duration of loan sanctioned is the same among male and female categories of the Respondents.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.367c	Retain the null hypothesis.
5	The distribution of Collateral Security on loan is the same among male and female categories of the Respondents.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.074c	Retain the null hypothesis.

(Source: Authors Calculations)

- a. The significance level is .050.
- b. Asymptotic significance is displayed.
- c. Exact significance is displayed for this test.

DISCUSSION

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the demographic, financial, and operational aspects of the Adhara Scheme, focusing on respondent satisfaction, income changes, financial sources, and challenges faced by entrepreneurs. The findings highlight critical strengths and areas for improvement, offering valuable insights into the scheme's effectiveness and impact.

Key findings: The demographic data show a balanced gender distribution, with 80% of respondents in the 20-40 age group. A significant majority (83.3%) are married, and 76.6% have at least a secondary education, indicating a relatively educated population. Most respondents are from rural areas (53.3%), which aligns with the scheme's goals.

Regarding financial outcomes, 66.7% of businesses reported profitability, with equal proportions experi

encing income increases. However, 20% reported losses, and 13.3% saw no change in income, suggesting mixed success. Financial sources show reliance on institutional support, with 32.6% receiving funds from the District Disabled Welfare Office, and 31.4% from commercial banks. However, 2.3% used moneylenders, indicating limited dependence on informal credit. Operational challenges such as traveling (29.3%), financial constraints (25.6%), and marketing difficulties (19.5%) hinder entrepreneurial growth, while competition and production issues were less prominent. Regarding satisfaction, 70% were pleased with subsidies, but 56.7% found the loan amount inadequate. Procedural formalities were criticized, with 86.7% dissatisfied, and 76.7% criticized loan sanctioning timelines, though 90% reported satisfaction with recent improvements.

Limitations: The study's sample size may not fully represent all beneficiaries, and the self-reported data introduces potential biases. Regional and demographic variability suggests the need for further detailed analysis.

Implications and Future Directions: Policymakers should consider increasing loan amounts and simplifying procedures for better accessibility. Improvements in loan timelines and addressing operational challenges can enhance entrepreneurial success. Future research should examine regional variations, the long-term impact on livelihoods, and integrate capacity-building with financial assistance for sustainable growth among persons with disabilities.

CONCLUSION

The study provides valuable insights into the impact of the Adhara Scheme on differently abled entrepreneurs, highlighting both its strengths and areas for improvement. Key findings indicate that while the scheme has successfully enhanced financial stability for many persons with disabilities, significant challenges persist. The majority of disabled entrepreneurs reported profitability and increased income levels, showcasing the scheme's ability to foster economic growth. Additionally, the reliance on institutional and government-backed financial sources, such as the District Disabled Welfare Office and commercial banks, underscores the scheme's success in reducing dependence on informal credit channels.

In conclusion, while the Adhara Scheme demonstrates considerable potential in fostering entrepreneurship and improving livelihoods of persons with disabilities, a more holistic approach addressing financial, procedural, and operational challenges is essential to maximize its impact and reach.

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