Reach and Implementation of Government Schemes for Persons with Disabilities in Assam:

A Mixed Method Study
2021-2022

A Study conducted by
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Foreword

The right to social security is enshrined in legal instruments to protect and cover the basic needs of disadvantaged people in society, including people with disabilities, who are unable to meet their needs and earn meaningful livelihoods. Union Govt. of India and the state Govt. of Assam offer various social security and welfare schemes as well as poverty alleviation programmes that people with disabilities can access for their social amelioration.

The Social Welfare Department, Govt. of Assam, in fulfilment of its mandate under section 39 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act), had taken up a Programme for Awareness Generation on Disability to create widespread awareness on the said law among all stakeholders, across the state of Assam. This programme was implemented by Shishu Sarothi in 2019 – 2021. The awareness programs conducted across the districts as a part of the aforesaid initiative, brought to the fore some key issues emerging from overwhelming ground realities of the situation of people with disabilities in the state. Amongst these, the critical need of the hour seemed to be to create awareness about available schemes offered by different departments and the processes and systems to access these, through multiple platforms. It was felt that hundreds of people with disabilities were unable to access benefits under schemes, even though they may have applied multiple times for it.

It is in this background that the present research study was taken up to ascertain how far persons with disabilities have been able to benefit from schemes in the state of Assam and whether the implementation processes have been effective. The study was conducted in 2021 – 2022 by the Disability Law Unit – North East of Shishu Sarothi. Although this study report mentions other schemes, it primarily covers the scope, reach and implementation of three of the most common schemes - Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, Orunodoi scheme and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Rural, by people with disabilities.

It is our earnest hope that the study would help to create empirical evidence of ground realities and the impact and effectiveness of schemes for persons with disabilities, while creating sorely needed disaggregated data on disability.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AHP	:	Affordable Housing in Partnership
ASHA	:	Accredited Social Health Activist
AWW	:	Anganwadi Worker
BLC	:	Beneficiary Led Individual House Construction
CDPO	:	Child Development Project Officer
CwD	:	Children with Disability
DBT	:	Direct Benefit Transfer
Dept.	:	Department
DSWO	:	District Social Welfare Office / Officer
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
Fig.	:	Figure
Govt.	:	Government
IAY	:	Indira Awaas Yojana
INR	:	Indian Rupee
km.	:	Kilometre
MGNREG	:	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee
MLA	:	Member of the Legislative Assembly
MP	:	Member of Parliament
N.A.	:	Not Applicable
NFSS	:	National Food Security Scheme
NGO	:	Non - Governmental Organisation
OBC	:	Other Backward Caste
PMAY-G	:	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin or Rural
PMAY-U	:	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Urban
PRI	:	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PwDs	:	Persons with Disabilities
RPwD	:	Rights of Persons with Disabilities
SC	:	Scheduled Caste
SD	:	Standard Deviation
SECC	:	Socio Economic Caste Census
ST	:	Scheduled Tribe
SW	:	Social Welfare
TGL	:	Tea Garden Labour
UDID	:	Unique Disability Identity Card
WwDs	:	Women with Disabilities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction:

There are numerous schemes covering aspects of health, employment, education, welfare and social security for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). These include, amongst others, the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, Assam Orunodoi Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin, Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Urban, Assam Chief Minister Special Scholarship Scheme, and Escort Allowances or Travel Allowances scheme. To avail benefits under schemes, persons with disabilities are required to have Disability Certificates. UDID cards will also be required to track the physical and financial inclusion of beneficiaries at all levels of implementation.

The question the arises, however, is whether persons with disabilities are readily able to access these schemes, and if, these are adequately fulfilling their needs. To the best of our knowledge, no such data is available to help measure the reach and implementation of government schemes for persons with disabilities in Assam. The current study, ***"Reach and Implementation of Government Schemes for Persons with Disabilities in Assam: A Mixed Method Study"*** seeks to ascertain how far persons with disabilities have been able to benefit from schemes and whether the implementation process has been effective. The current study's mixed-method technique integrates many perspectives from people with disabilities, representatives of non-governmental organisations working in the disability sector, and government officials involved.

Methodology & Approach:

Data was collected from 26 districts of Assam with a total sample size of 1633. The study incorporated a mixed-method approach.

In the **quantitative part of the study,** a structured, close-ended questionnaire set was administered to 2 groups: Group A with 1207 PwDs above the age of 18 years and Group B with 380 Children with Disabilities (CwDs) below 18 years, whose parents/ guardians responded on their behalf.

The **qualitative part of the study** was conducted for 3 groups. 6 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 37 PwDs, and structured interviews were conducted for 2 Govt. officials and 7 NGO representatives involved in the scheme implementation process.

Of the total PwDs (including CwDs) 59.8% were males and 40.1% were females. The mean age of the participants was 30.23 years, with the highest participants falling in the range of 18 - 40 years (51 %).

The highest percentage of participants were in the general category (59.3%) followed by OBC (20. 8%), SC (8.6 %) and ST (6.4 %). **No formal education was reported by 40.9 % of the participants.** Approximately 54% were married and 44.5% were unmarried. The highest percentage of participants reported having locomotor disability (47.9 %). **Majority reported that they didn't use any assistive devices/aids and appliances/support services (99%).**

Since the population under study is specific, a purposive and snowballing sampling technique was used to contact the participants for data collation. The data gathered from quantitative study were analysed on a descriptive level using percentage estimates. The qualitative data, on the other hand, were analysed using thematic analysis. Finally, the mixed-method approach was used by comparing and integrating both the quantitative and qualitative results.

Main Findings:

Overview of the Quantitative Results:

Percentage of participants availing individual schemes is very low compared to overall percentage of participants availing schemes.



of the participants (872 PwDs / CwDs out of 1587) were **availing schemes**



were availing the **Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension**



were availing the **Orunodoi scheme**



were availing the **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme**



were availing **all other schemes**

32.7% of PwDs were not satisfied in availing the schemes.

Highest source of information about schemes were reported to be from NGOs, followed by grassroot workers like Anganwadi and ASHA workers and Panchayati Raj Institutions.

66.9 % paid fee to a 3rd party / agent for the scheme application process.

59% of PwDs reported that the scheme allowance gets delayed by years.

48.4% of PwDs reported that they waited more than a year to receive the allowance from the time of application.

74% of PwDs reported that the schemes did not meet their needs.

Awareness of rights and available schemes was low amongst PwDs, with only 9% of parents / guardians of CwDs being aware of scholarship schemes.

Status of Disability Certificate & UDID card:

82.5 % of the participants owned a Disability Certificate and 55.8 % owned UDID card.

Majority of PwDs agreed that the reason that they did not have a Disability Certificate / UDID card is because they did not know about it.

High cost of transportation and no clear guidelines on how to apply, were the primary difficulties faced byPwDs in availing Disability Certificate / UDID card.

No PwDs were availing / applying for Assam Chief Minister's Special Scholarship and Scholarships under Directorate of Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam and only 5 PwDs had availed the Deen Dayal Divyanjan Punor Xonsthapon Asoni.

Overview of the Qualitative Results:

PwDs and NGO representatives agreed that information about the application process for various schemes could be more easily available for PwDs and that there was irregularities and delays in the disbursal of schemes. They also agreed that there was a high degree of ignorance among PwDs about schemes.

It was generally opined that **though there are many schemes being implemented in different sectors in the state, what is the need of the hour is to streamline the existing schemes on a priority basis, so that people with disabilities can easily apply and access benefits.**

The Covid-19 pandemic severely affected the general well-being of PwDs. Financial crises faced was very high for both the age groups (89.7% and 74.7%) as they experienced loss of livelihood and insecurity in their current jobs. Delays in issuance of Disability Certificates, intermittent access to medical / rehabilitation support and services, and disability pension not being disbursed timely were other setbacks.

80 % of the participants availing Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme voiced for modification of this scheme and suggested that the pension amount should be increased, as INR 1000.00 per month is inadequate to meet their needs. Apart from this, they also suggested that the advertisements of schemes should be more widespread so that its information reaches maximum persons with disabilities.

> *"I applied for pension about 3 – 4 times now over the last few years. So many times, I gave it to Angadwadi Workers and also Panchayat and then in the Tengakhat Circle Office. It was really difficult to go repeatedly to follow up. Due to my leg, I cannot walk much and auto fare is also high for me."*

The participants also mooted **the need for proper implementation of the existing housing scheme, so that persons with disabilities could avail of the 5% reservation for poverty alleviation schemes they are entitled to under the RPwD Act, 2016.**

> *"I applied for housing some 4 - 5 years back, but till now my name is not on the list. When I ask the block office person, they tell me it will come in the next list."*

They also proposed that a helpline must be created so that persons with disabilities can get proper information about the schemes and the application procedures.

There was consensus among PwDs and NGO representatives on **suggestions for new schemes.** They proposed that new schemes specifically for **empowerment of women with disabilities** (WwDs) can be introduced by the Govt. Other proposals were for new schemes to avail **free medical surgeries, skill-development, and livelihood opportunities, entrepreneurial support, free transport, promoting participation of PwDs in sports, and a one-time matrimonial grant.**

Conclusion:

There are schemes in important sectors of health, education and social security, but there are gaps in awareness that has resulted in the exclusion of persons with disabilities from those schemes. The overall findings revealed that prioritizing the reach and accessibility of schemes for persons with disabilities is the most pressing need of the hour. The study has crucial implications in informing the authorities about the situation of persons with disabilities in Assam vis-à-vis their access to schemes, so that the same could be streamlined for effective implementation.

CHAPTER

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Assam is the largest state in North-Eastern India, in terms of population, with a land area of 78,438 sq. km. (30,285 sq miles). As per the last Census 2011, the total population of Assam was 31,169,272 including 480,065 persons with disabilities (PwDs), which is 1.54% of the total state population. Considering the population growth rate of India (1% annual change; World Bank open data, 2022), and also the fact that types of disabilities have now increased to 21 categories under the RPwD act, the current percentage of PwDs in Assam will be way higher.

The Government (Govt.) of Assam has formulated several schemes for PwDs aimed at benefiting them in terms of their welfare, health, employment, education. The question however arises whether PwDs are able to access these schemes and whether this are fulfilling the needs of PwDs adequately. To our current knowledge no such data is available to help gauge the reach and implementation of Govt. schemes for PwDs in Assam. This research, conducted in 2021-2022, aims to determine how far PwDs have been able to avail benefits under schemes and whether the implementation procedure has been effective in doing so. The current study's mixed method methodology incorporates numerous views from PwDs, representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working for PwDs, and government officials involved in the scheme implementation process, making the study highly valid and generalisable.

To avail benefits under schemes, PwDs should have Disability Certificate. Given below is a brief overview of Disability Certificate and UDID Card as well as some major schemes for PwDs in Assam.

1.1.1 Disability Certificate and UDID Card

Disability Certificate is a document that indicates a proof of a person's disability. A person with specified disability of not less than 40% is entitled to a disability certificate, which allows such an individual to avail entitlements and benefits under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD Act) and other laws and schemes. Disability Certificate may be permanent (if there is no chance of variation of degree of disability over time) or may have a period of validity (if there is chance of variation in degree of disability over time).

The Unique Disability Identity Card (UDID) is a single document of identification and verification of the person with disability for availing various benefits. This card will help in streamlining the tracking of the physical and financial progress of beneficiaries at all levels of implementation, from Village to Block to District to State and National level.

1.1.2 Background details of schemes

PwDs can avail benefits under disability specific schemes as well as mainstream poverty alleviation schemes, which should have 5% reservation for people with disabilities, as envisaged in the RPwD Act.

The below mentioned schemes are however, not an exhaustive list of schemes available in the state.

- **Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme:** It is a specific scheme launched by the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Assam for PwDs. The main objective of this scheme is to provide social security to persons with disabilities. The scheme provides a monthly amount of INR 1000.00 through direct bank transfer.

The eligibility criteria to apply for this scheme:

- The applicant must be a resident of Assam
- The applicant must have Disability Certificate (with minimum 40% disability)
- The applicant must have their own bank account in any nationalized bank
- There is no age limit or educational qualification

To apply under this scheme, the applicant has to submit the application in the prescribed form available in all the offices of District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs), Child Development Project Officers (CDPOs) or Anganwadi Worker (AWW) of their respective locality. The AWW will hand over the application to the CDPO, who will hand it over to the DSWO.

- **Assam Orunodoi Scheme:** Government of Assam launched the Assam Orunodoi Scheme on 2nd October 2020. The main objective of this scheme is to provide financial help to the poor people. Women being the primary caretakers of the family, are kept as beneficiaries of the scheme. Under this scheme, INR 830.00 per month (which has now increase to INR 1000.00) is given to the beneficiaries to buy fundamental items like medicines, pulses, sugar etc. The benefits under the scheme are directly transferred into the bank account of the beneficiaries through direct benefit transfer. The eligible and priority beneficiaries under this scheme are

- Families with widows
- Unmarried women
- Families with persons with disabilities
- Families with divorced / separated woman
- Poor families not having ration cards
- Poor families with National Food Security Scheme (NFSS) cards

- **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana:** It is a central government initiative aimed at providing affordable housing for all by the year 2022. It has two components - Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin or Rural (PMAY-G) and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U).

  Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin (PMAY-G): This scheme was earlier called Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY). The main aim of this flagship scheme is to provide financial assistance to below poverty line families who are either houseless or have inadequate housing facilities for constructing a safe and durable shelter. Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) data is used for the selection of beneficiaries under this scheme.

  Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U): It addresses urban housing shortage among urban poor, including slum dwellers, through 2 sub-schemes, Beneficiary Led Individual House Construction (BLC) and Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP). One-time assistance is given under this scheme through direct benefit transfer, in 3 instalments.

- **Assam Chief Minister Special Scholarship Scheme:** It was launched by the Directorate of Elementary Education, Government of Assam in 2012. Under this scholarship scheme, students belonging to the economically backward classes of the society, studying in classes 5th to 8th, can avail scholarship of INR 5000.00 for the pursuit of their primary education. This scholarship amount is directly transferred to the beneficiaries' bank accounts. For the selection of the eligible beneficiaries, concerned authorities conduct scholarship examination and, based on their merit performance, the scholarship is provided to the students.

- **Escort Allowances or Travel Allowances scheme:** To implement the Right to Education Act 2009, the Government of Assam as well as Sarba Shiksha Abhijan Mission, Assam has undertaken various strategy for providing quality education and other basic facility to children with disabilities (age group 6 -14 year) in general schools with an inclusive environment. The "Escort Allowances or Travel Allowances" is also part of it, under which, an amount of INR 6000.00 per annum is provided to children with benchmark disabilities (i.e. 40% or more of the specified disabilities) studying in pre-school to class XII under Samagra Shiksha Abhijan.

The most importantfactor determining the efficient use of any scheme meant for community welfare is awareness (Vijaykumar & Singh, 2004).Therefore, the level of awareness about the schemes is a key aspect that determines PwDs' access to them. In light of this, the current study also assessed the level of awareness amongst PwDs, as well as the perspectives of NGO representatives and govt. officials

regarding awareness and its role in scheme-access. It is a well-studied fact that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused a crisis in practically every aspect of people's lives (eg. Rakshit & Basistha, 2020; Jena, 2020; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021). The current study also attempted to analyse the living conditions of PwDs, as well as the scheme implementation scenario during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Scholarships under Directorate of Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam (SIRISH Scholarship): The objective of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to the students of tea and ex-tea garden tribes through direct benefit transfer (DBT) into the bank accounts of the applicants. These scholarships are available for both Pre-Matric and Post-Matric category. Applicants can apply online through the digital scholarship portal, i.e., SIRISH online application system portal. The eligibility criteria is that the candidate must be permanent resident of Assam and must belong to tea-tribe community, must possess a functional bank account, have a TGL / Ex-TGL caste certificate, with family income not more than INR 5.00 lakh per annum.

1.2 Objectives of the study

The overall objective of the study is to assess the ground realities on the reach and implementation of Government Schemes for Persons with Disabilities in Assam using a mixed method approach (quantitative and qualitative) from the perspective of persons with disability (PwDs 18 or above 18 years of age), children with disability (CwDs below 18 years of age), Government officials and NGOs.

The **specific objectives of quantitative study** (sample: PwDs and CwDs) are as follows:

- To assess the awareness level of Disability Certificate and UDID card
- To assess the status of availing Disability Certificate and UDID card
- To explore the reasons for not owning a Disability Certificate and UDID card
- To explore the difficulties in owning the Disability Certificate and UDID card
- To assess the status of availing Government schemes
- To assess the awareness level of Government schemes
- To study the experience of PwDs in availing Govt. schemes
- To assess if finances, education and access to schemes were affected during the Covid-19 pandemic
- To study the awareness level of the rights of persons with disabilities
- To explore recommendations by PwDs with regard to scheme revisions

The **specific research questions of qualitative study** (sample: PwDs, Government officials and NGOs) are as follows:

- What is the awareness level of Government schemes?
- What are the positive and negative experiences of PwDs in availing Government schemes?
- What are the grievances / complaints regarding scheme implementation process?
- What kind of schemes are needed in future?
- What is the role of government and NGOs in the scheme implementation / facilitation process?
- What challenges do they face in implementing the schemes?
- How can these challenges be addressed?
- How has the covid-19 situation affected the scheme implementation process?
- How is awareness created about various Government schemes for PwDs?

1.3 Rationale of the study

This study will play a crucial role in finding and recording empirical evidence of ground realities and the impact and effectiveness of work being done on schemes for PwDs, while creating sorely needed disaggregated data on disability.

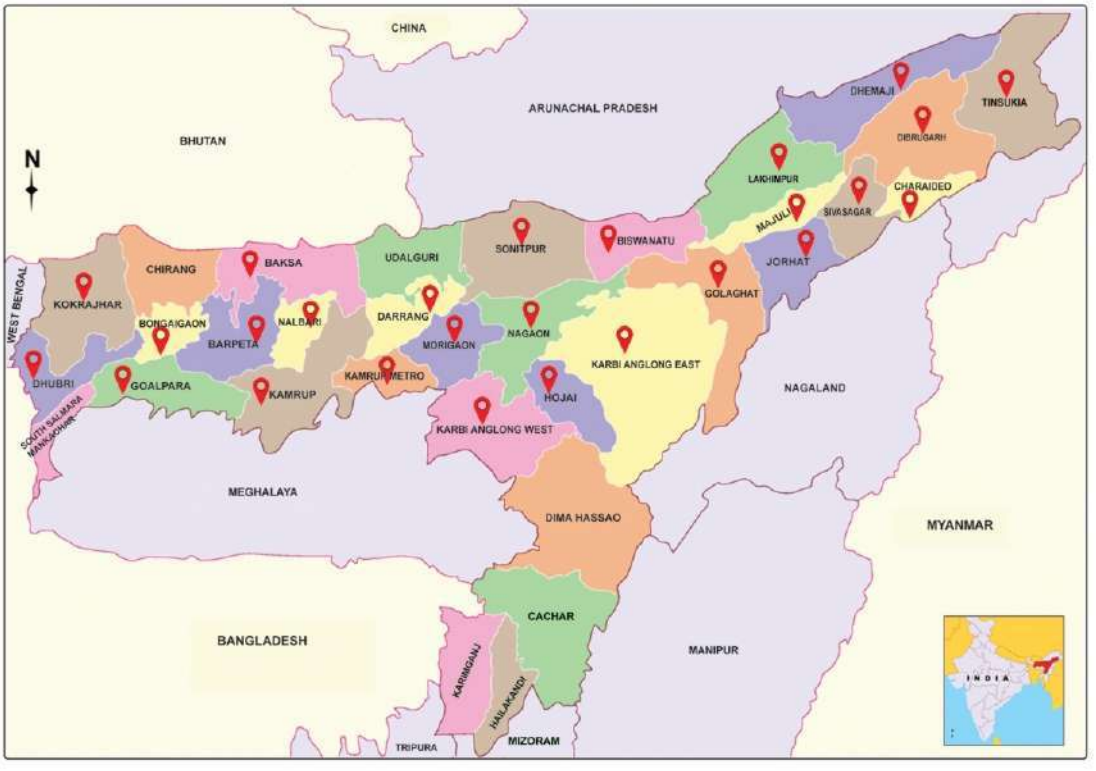
CHAPTER

2 METHOD

2.1 Study participants and sampling

The location of data collection spanned 26 districts of Assam (figs. 1 and 3). Data were collected from 4 groups of participants viz. PwDs, CwDs, government officials, and NGO representatives through convenient, snowballing sampling technique (fig. 2). These 4 participant groups play a role in availing government schemes for PwDs and / or implement them. Consent to participate in the study was obtained from all participants.

Fig. 1 Map of Assam in India showing the districts covered in the study



The nature of the person's disability was identified through self-report and verified through two sources: the participant's disability certificate issued by the Government of India (where available), and therapy / treatment record issued by medical / rehabilitation professionals.

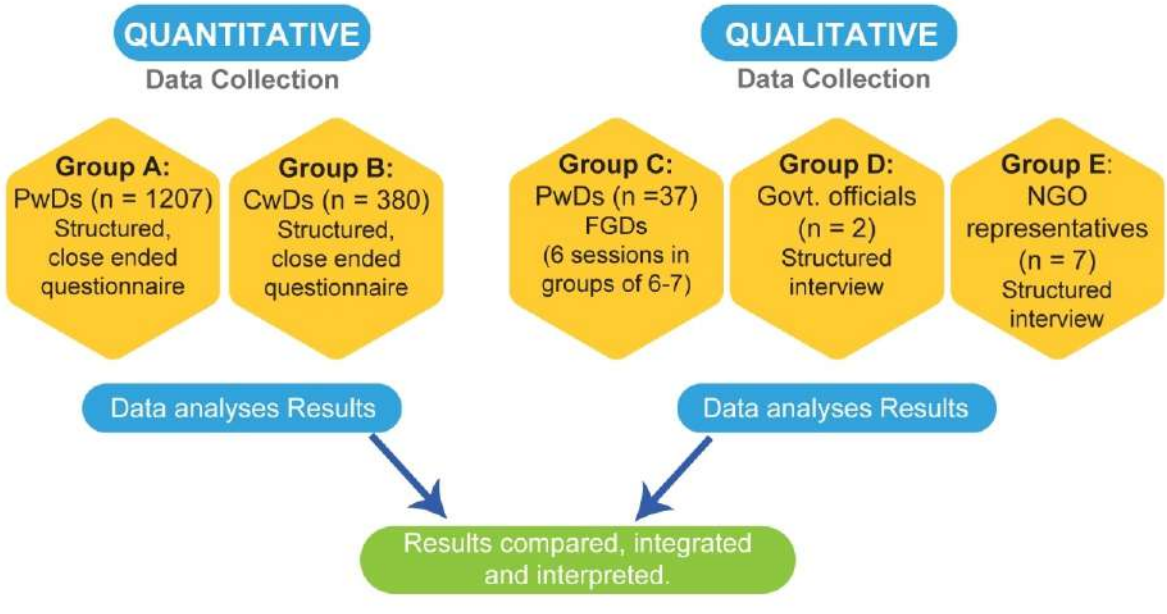
2.2 Research design

In order to meet the objectives of the current study, mixed-method research was designed, wherein both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained and analysed. Research that employs quantitative design, are positioned within the positivist worldview, their research

approach is deductive as they aim to test theory by examining relationships among variables, and the positionality of the researcher is independent of the respondents. The research strategy employed is either experimental or survey.

On the other hand, the qualitative researchers adopt a different approach of interpretivist research worldview, inductive approach which makes meanings from the data gathered, studies participants' meanings and relationships between them, plays a more active role in interacting with the participants, adopt key strategies such as case study, ethnography, action research, grounded theory and narrative inquiry. An examination of both the approaches led us to the adoption of both the quantitative and qualitative design in the current research; therefore, it is a mixed-method triangulation study (fig. 2). It enabled to cross-check data from multiple perspectives and thereby produce highly reliable and valid results (Youngs & Piggot-Irvine, 2012).

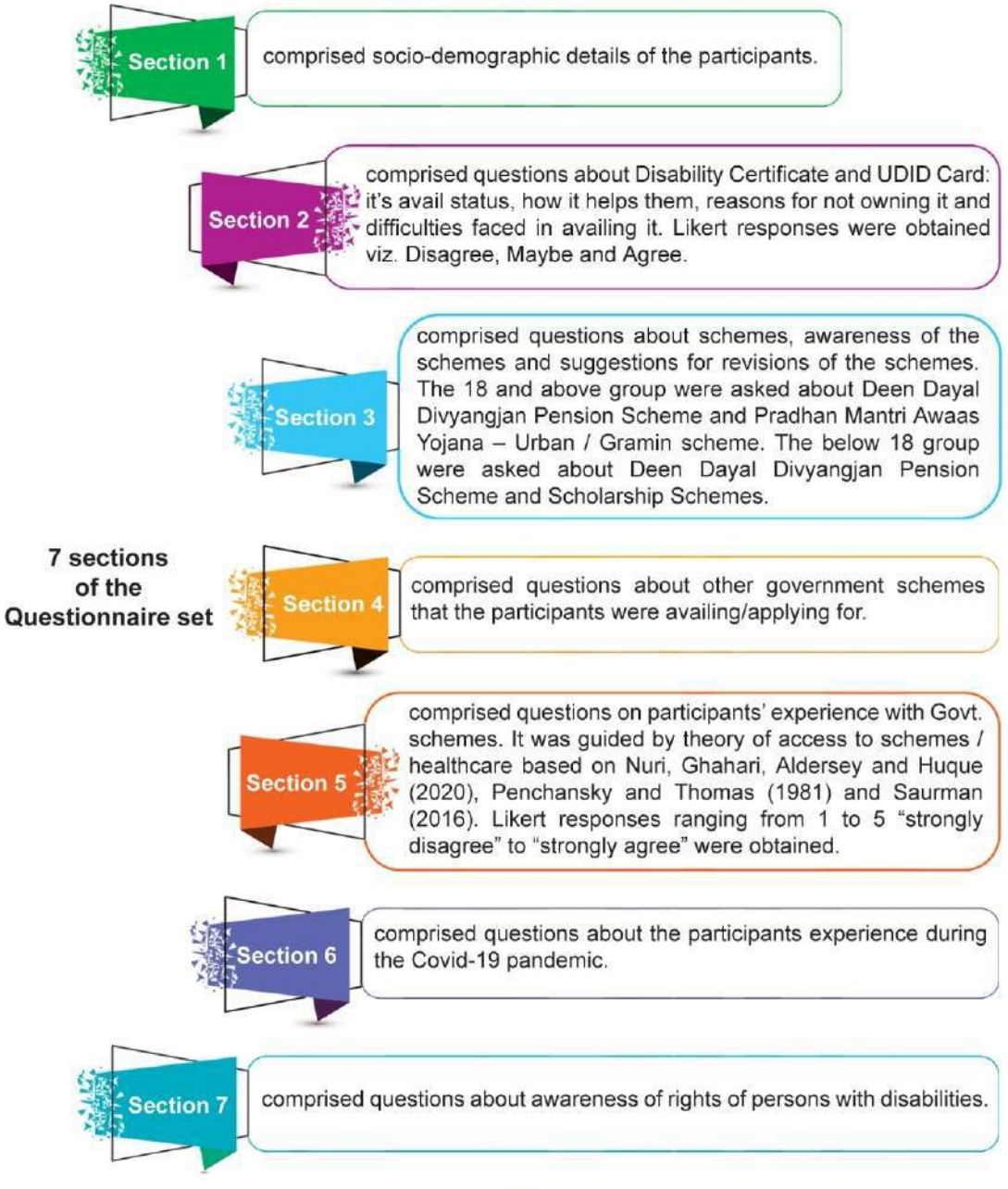
Fig. 2. Research design: mixed-method triangulation study



Sample size calculated through Krejcie and Morgan technique with 2.5% margin of error.

2.3 Measurement

For the quantitative part of the study structured questionnaires were administered to PwDs, and CwDs. For the CWD group, parents / legal guardians responded on their behalf. From our literature search, it was found that standardised questionnaires were not available to meet our research objectives. Therefore, a set of questionnaires were developed. The questionnaires were developed in English and then translated to Assamese through back translation method. The questionnaire set had 7 sections.



For the qualitative part of the study, structured interviews were conducted with PwDs, Government officials and NGOs (Fig. 2). Six FGDs were conducted for the PwDs, wherein, each group had 6-7 participants. Homogeneity was maintained for each of the group as far as possible. All the participants had locomotor disability. After the conduction of the 6th FGD, saturation of information was felt and hence further FGDs were not conducted.

2.4 Data analysis

For the quantitative study, percentages were used to describe and summarize the data set. For qualitative study, thematic analyses were conducted for the FGDs to analyse the interview transcripts.

CHAPTER

3 RESULTS OF THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY

This chapter reports the results of the quantitative analyses of the study. The sample consisted of 2 groups: (1) Group A consisting of 1207 PwDs above the age of 18 and, (2) Group B consisting of 380 CwDs below the age of 18. The overall aim of this part of the study was to generalise the responses of the participants, to the larger PwDs population of Assam.

3.1 Participants' demographic profile

A descriptive analyses of the participants' demographic profile was carried out (table 1, figs. 3 - 6). As seen in fig. 2, the quantitative part consisted of Group A and Group B. Group A comprised of PwDs who were 18 and above years of age (n = 1207), whereas Group B comprised of CwDs who were below 18 years of age. Preliminary data checks revealed no problem with missing data since missing data for each of the questions in the questionnaire set was less than 7%, which is acceptable (Dong & Peng, 2013). The descriptive analyses of the demographic data of participants were carried out by combining these 2 groups, thus leading to n = 1587.

Quantitative analysis of 1587 samples, including: 1207 PwDs above 18 years and 380 CwDs below 18 years

The overall sample had higher rural residents (87.5%) than urban (10%), the highest percentage of participants among the 26 districts of data collection were from Kamrup (19.8 %) and higher percentage were males (59.8%) than females (40.1%). The mean age of the participants was 30.23 years (SD = 15.8) with the highest age group falling in the range of 18 – 40 years (51 %). The highest percentage of participants were in the general category (59.3%) followed by OBC (20.8%), SC (8.6 %) and ST (6.4 %). The majority of participants reported to have had no formal education (40.9 %). The difference of percentage between married (53.5 %) and unmarried (44.5 %) participants was small.

Overall sample had

- highest data collection from Kamrup district (19.8%)
- more males (59.8%) than female (40.1%)
- higher rural residents (87.5%) than urban (10%),
- no formal education was reported by 40.9 %, and
- highest percentage of participants reported to have locomotor disability (47.9 %).

Participants were asked to report their type of disability as per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPwD Act), 2016. The highest percentage of participants reported to have locomotor disability (47.9 %) and least for thalassemia (.1 %), haemophilia (.3 %) and leprosy cured persons (.3 %). High percentage (90.9 %) reported that they didn't use any assistive devices/aids and appliances/support services. 82.5 % had a disability certificate and 55.8 % had a UDID card.

Table 1. **Demographic characteristics** of participants

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage of sample (Excluding missing data)
Rural / urban resident		
Rural	1389	87.5
Urban	159	10.0
Did not report	39	2.5
Gender		
Male	949	59.8
Female	636	40.1
Other	-	-
Did not report	2	.1
Age		
Below 18	376	23.8
18 – 40	798	51
41 – 60	346	22.1
61 – 80	42	2.7
81 - 90	1	0.1
90 or more	1	0.1
Did not report	23	1.4
Social Category		
General	941	59.3
OBC	330	20.8
SC	136	8.6
ST	101	6.4
Did not report	79	4.9
Occupation		
Farmers	143	
Head of household	226	
Begging	8	
Pension	2	
Marital status (above 18 years sample)	1200	
Married	642	53.5
Unmarried	537	44.5
Widow/widower	17	1.4
Divorced	5	0.4
Did not report	7	0.6
Have Disability Certificate	1310	82.5
Have UDID card	885	55.8
	Mean	**Standard deviation**
Disability percentage in Disability Certificate	61.74 %	19.13

Fig. 3 Percentage distribution of **participants' districts**

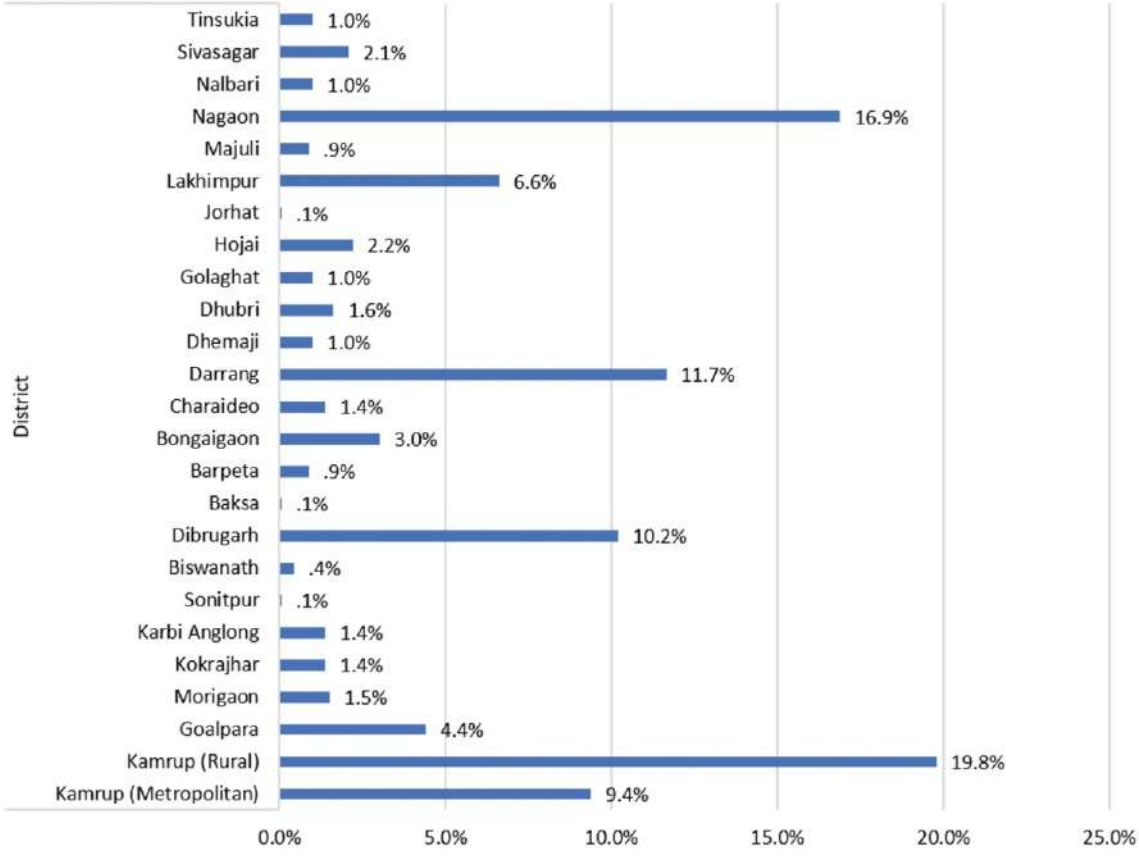


Fig. 4 Percentage distribution of participants' **educational qualification**

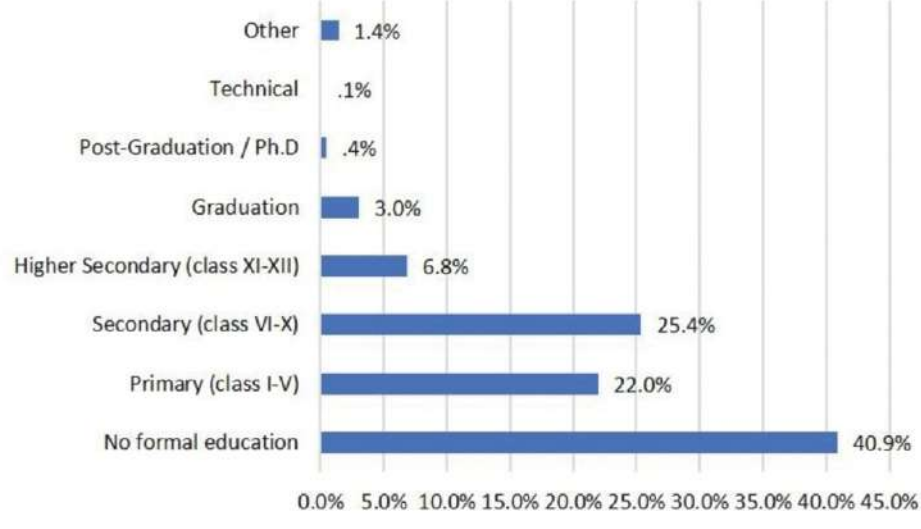


Fig. 5 Percentage distribution of participants' **type of disability**

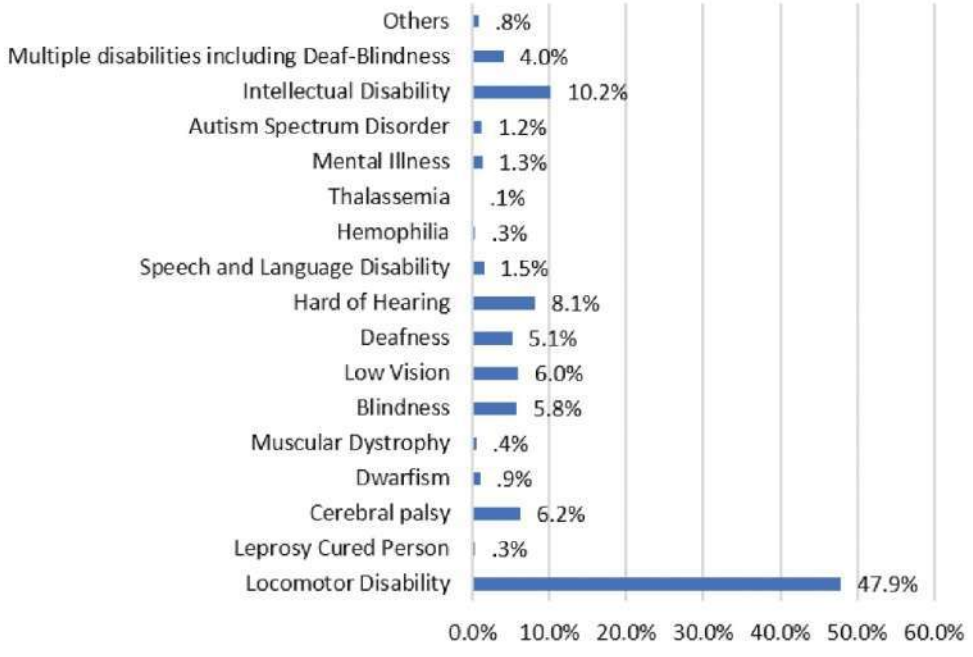
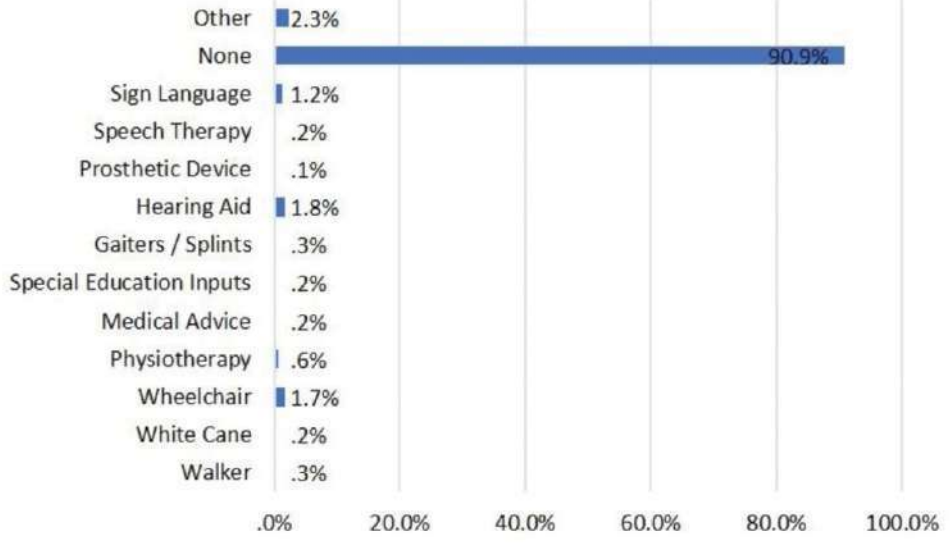


Fig. 6 Percentage distribution of participants' **use of assistive devices**



3.2 Use of Disability Certificate and UDID Card

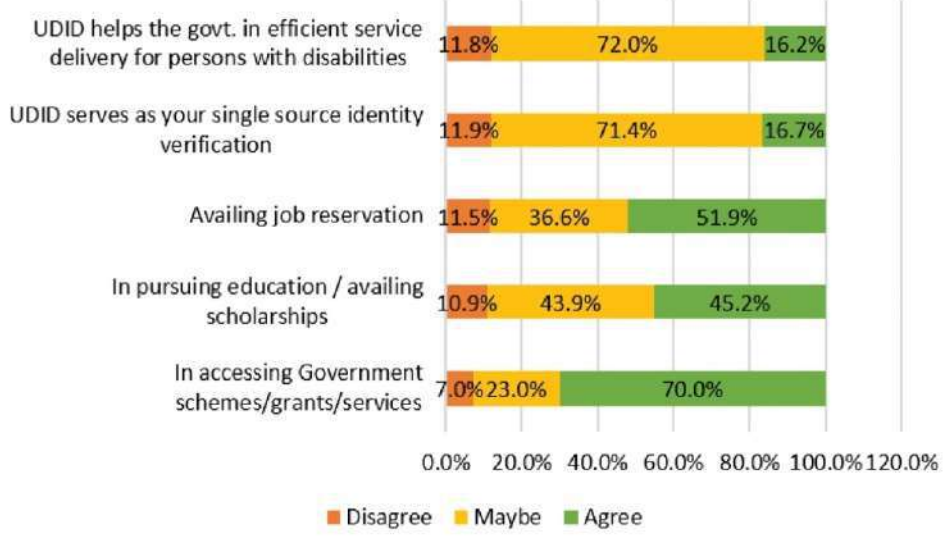
Responses of group A and B pertaining to Disability Certificate and UDID cardwere grouped together for analyses, as both the groups were asked the same questions.

Perception of help received by availing Disability Certificate / UDID card

Reliability analyses revealed Cronbach's alpha of .89 indicating high reliability of the scale for the current sample. Maximum percentage of participants responded that the Disability Certificate and / or UDID card helped them in accessing govt. schemes / grants / services (fig. 7; 70 %) followed by availing job reservation (51.9 %) and pursuing education / availing scholarships (45.2 %). Moreover, a high percentage responded that they were unsure whether the UDID serves as a single source identity verification (71.4 %) and helps the Govt. in efficient service delivery for PwDs (72 %).

Most PwDs responded that the Disability Certificate and / or UDID card helped them in accessing govt. schemes / grants / services, availing job reservation, and pursuing education / availing scholarships.

Fig. 7 Participants' perception of help received by availing Disability Certificate / UDID card

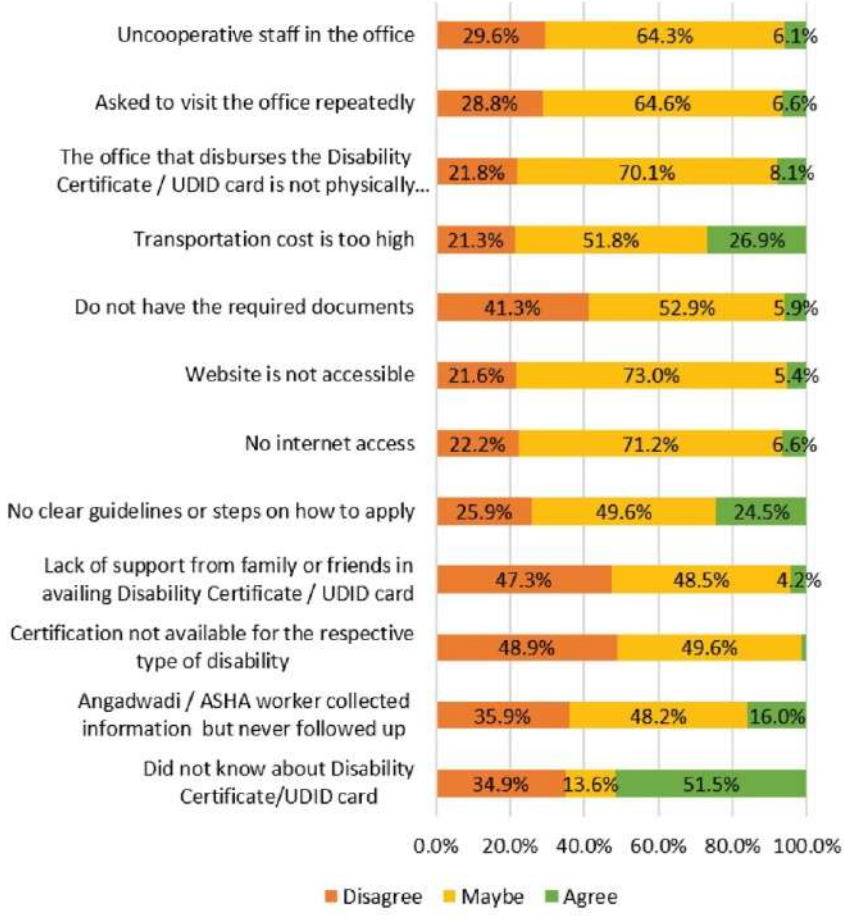


Perception of the reasons for not having Disability Certificate / UDID card

Majority of PwDs agreed that the reason that they did not have a Disability Certificate / UDID card is because they did not know about it

Reliability analyses revealed Cronbach's alpha of .87 indicating high reliability of the scale for our current sample. 17.5 % responded that they did not have a Disability Certificate and 44.2 % responded that they did not have a UDID card. Majority of the respondents agreed that the reason that they did not have a Disability Certificate / UDID card is that they did not know about it (51.5 %). Majority disagreed with the statements: "lack of support from family or friends in availing Disability Certificate / UDID card" (47.3 %) and "certification not available for their type of disability" (48.9 %). High percentage responded "maybe" to the statements: "the office that disburses the Disability Certificate / UDID card is not physically accessible" (70.1 %), "no internet access" (71.2 %), and "website is not accessible." (73 %).

Fig. 8 Participants' perception of the reasons for not owning Disability Certificate / UDID card

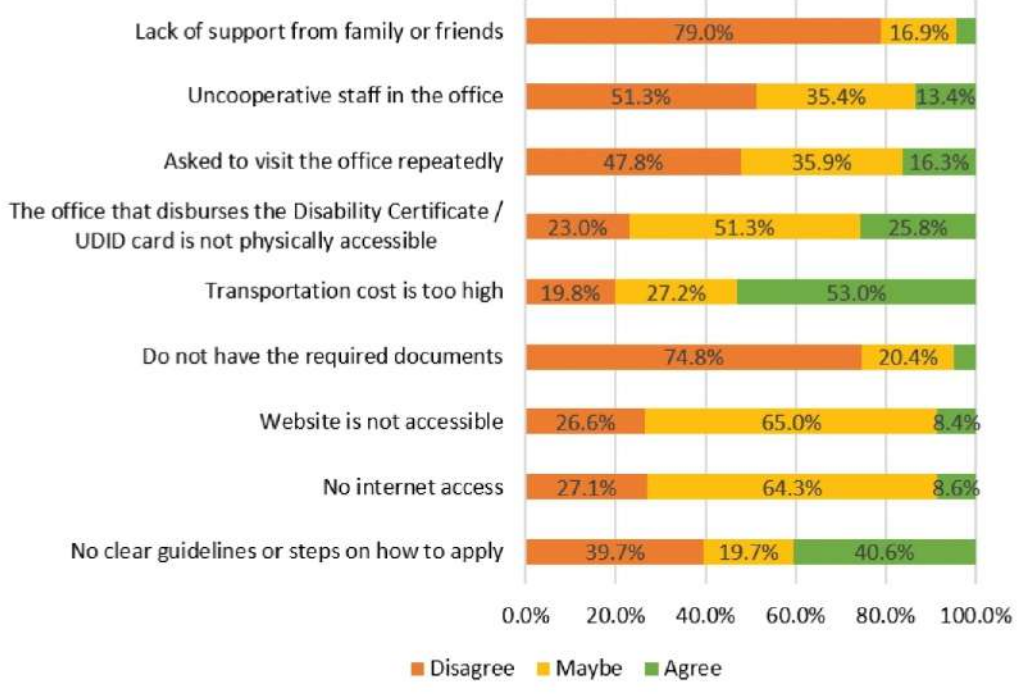


Perception of difficulties faced while availing Disability Certificate / UDID card

Reliability analyses revealed Cronbach's alpha of .82 indicating high reliability of the scale for our current sample. Maximum responded that the difficulty they faced in availing Disability Certificate / UDID card was high cost of transportation (53 %) and no clear guidelines or steps on how to apply for the same (40.6%). High percentage disagreed that the difficulty faced were: "lack of support from family or friends" (79 %), "do not have the required documents" (74.8 %), "uncooperative staff in the office" (51.3 %).

Most difficulty faced by PwDs in availing Disability Certificate / UDID card was high cost of transportation and no clear guidelines on how to apply

Fig. 9 Participants' perception of difficulties faced while availing Disability Certificate / UDID card



3.3 Schemes for Persons with Disabilities

54.94%
of the participants were **availing schemes.**

However, when the percentage of PwDs availing schemes is reflected separately for different schemes, it is rather low, with only

38% receiving **Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension,**

13% **Orunodoi scheme,**

2% **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme and**

less than 0.32% **other schemes**

Table 2 presents participants' experiences with regard to schemes availed, applied for, or planning to apply. It is observed that a total of 872 PwDs / CwDs (i.e. 54.94% of the current sample) were availing schemes. However, when we looked into individual schemes, the percentage of participants availing them were rather low - only 38% were availing the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, 13% were availing Orunodoi scheme, 2% were availing Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme and less than 0.32% were availing the other schemes. With regard to the question if participants had applied for a particular schemeand was waiting for its approval, 11% responded that they applied for the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme and were waiting for its approval and 2.3% are waiting for approval of the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme. 32.7% responded they were not satisfied in availing the schemes. None were found to be availing / applying for such schemes like the Assam Chief Minister Special Scholarship and Scholarships under Directorate of Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam.

In light of the above, **the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, Orunodoi scheme and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Rural are referred to as 'common schemes' and the remainder of the schemes as 'other schemes' in the current study.**

11% of PwDs applied for the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme and were waiting for its approval

Most participants availed / applied for schemes in the years 2010 – 2020 and a very high majority used the offline mode to apply for the schemes.

With regard to Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, Orunodoi scheme and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme, a higher number of participants reported that they received the assistance on time in comparison to not receiving it on time.

32.7% of PwDs were not satisfied in availing the schemes.

Highest source of information about schemes were reported to be from NGOs, grassroot workers like Anganwadi and ASHA workers, Panchayati Raj institutions and friends and family.

Table 2. Number of PwDs / CwDs with regard to their experiences in availing / applying for particular schemes

		Scheme for (PwDs/CwDs) all age groups	Schemes for PwDs 18 years and above									Schemes for CwDs below 18 years of age			
		i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii	ix	x	xi	xii	xiii	
Schemes		Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension	Orunodoi	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Rural	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Urban	Deen Dayal Divyanjan Punar Xongsthapan Asoni	Indira Gandhi pension	Old Age Pension	PM Kishan Yojana	PM Gramin Kaushalya Yojana	Widow Pension	Scholarships under Social Welfare Dept	Financial assistance under Sarba Siksha Abhiyan, Assam	Escort Allowance (Travel allowance)	Total
Scheme status	Availing	606	211	31	1	5	2	2	2	3	1		2	5	872
	Currently applying	28	1	8								1			38
	Applied and waiting for approval	176	0	37	2				1						216
	Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance	4	1	4											9
	Planning to apply	6		1								2			9
	None of the above														0

Schemes		i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii	ix	x	xi	xii	xiii	
Year since availed / applied	1985			1											1
	2000 - 2010	11	7	6											24
	2010 - 2020	736	146	35	3	1	2	1	3	1	1		1	5	935
	2020 - 2022	159	57	5		4		1				2	1		229
Mode of application used to apply	Fully online	4	0	1											5
	Partly online and partly offline	1	0	0											1
	Fully offline	810	213	68	3	5	2	2	3	3	1	1	2	5	1118
Frequency of assistance	None			8											8
	One instalment			1											1
	Two instalments			8											8
	Three instalments			17											17
	Four instalments			0											0
	One time assistance	3	0			5									8
	Yearly assistance	2	0									1	1	4	8
	Monthly assistance	588	203				2	2		2	1			1	799
	Quarterly assistance	18	0						1						19

	Schemes	i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii	ix	x	xi	xii	xiii	
	Half yearly assistance	1	0										1		2
	N.A.	212		51											263
Timely reception of assistance	Yes	440	169	20		2		1		3		1	1	4	641
	No	173	30	6		3	1	1	1		1		1	1	218
	N.A.			51											51
Source of information about scheme	Internet/ social media	1	0	1											2
	Newspaper/ TV/other media	25	10	2				1	2						40
	Friends/ family	76	17	2	2		1		1			1			100
	NGOs	278	44	9		4								4	339
	Awareness programmes	22	3	2											27
	Grassroot workers: AWW/ ASHA	234	63	5		1	1			1		2		1	308
	PRI	143	76	48	1			1		2	1	1			273
	None of the above	45	0	8									1		54
Satisfaction in availing scheme	Yes	118		11									1	2	132
	No	495		15	1							4	1	3	519
	Not Applicable	211		51											261

Note: Blank cells indicate a refusal to answer or not applicable.

Figs. 10 – 12 further depicts the experience of the participants in each of the common schemes in the form of sunburst charts. Perusal of the figures revealed that with regard to Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension scheme and Orunodoi scheme, majority of the participants were availing the scheme, (n = 606, 211 respectively), most availed / applied for the scheme in the years 2011 – 2020, application process was fully offline, received the assistance on monthly and timely basis, majority received information about the scheme from NGOs, grassroot workers like Anganwadi / ASHA workers and Panchayati Raj Institutions and, lastly, majority reported that they were not satisfied with the scheme.

With regard to Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Rural scheme, it was observed that very few participants were 'availing the scheme' (n = 31) and 'applied and waiting for approval of scheme' (n = 31; fig. 12, table 2). Most availed / applied for the scheme in the years 2011 – 2020, application process was fully offline, received 3 instalments, majority received information about the scheme from Panchayati Raj Institutions. Those availing the scheme reported that they received the assistance on time. There was not much difference between the number of participants who expressed satisfaction (n = 11) and dissatisfaction (n = 15) in availing the scheme.

Fig. 10 Experience of PwDs and CwDs in availing / applying for Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme

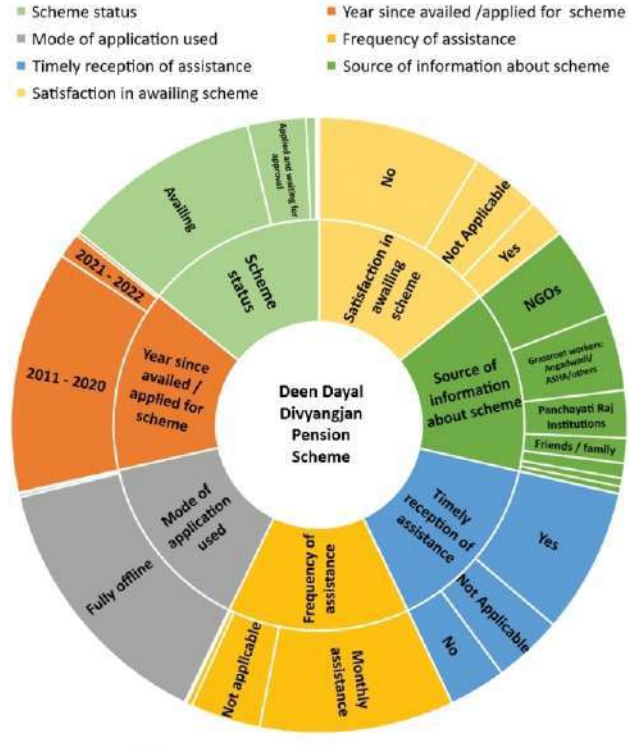


Fig. 11 Experience of PwDs in availing / applying for Orunodoi Scheme

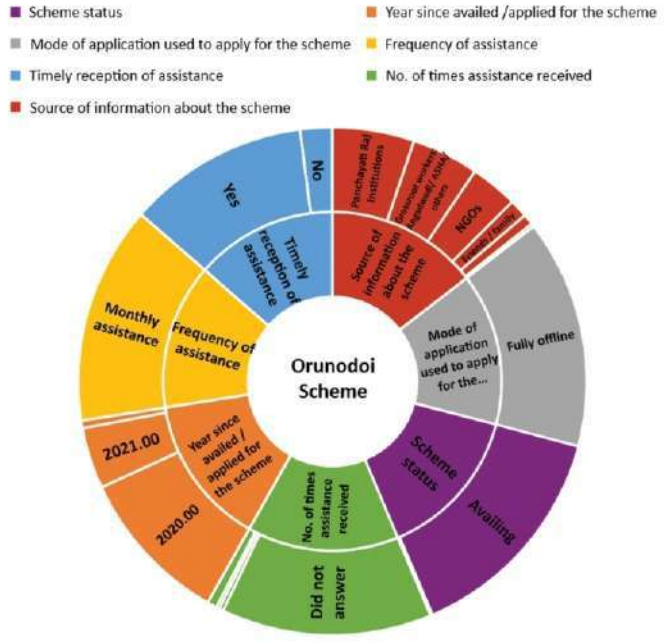
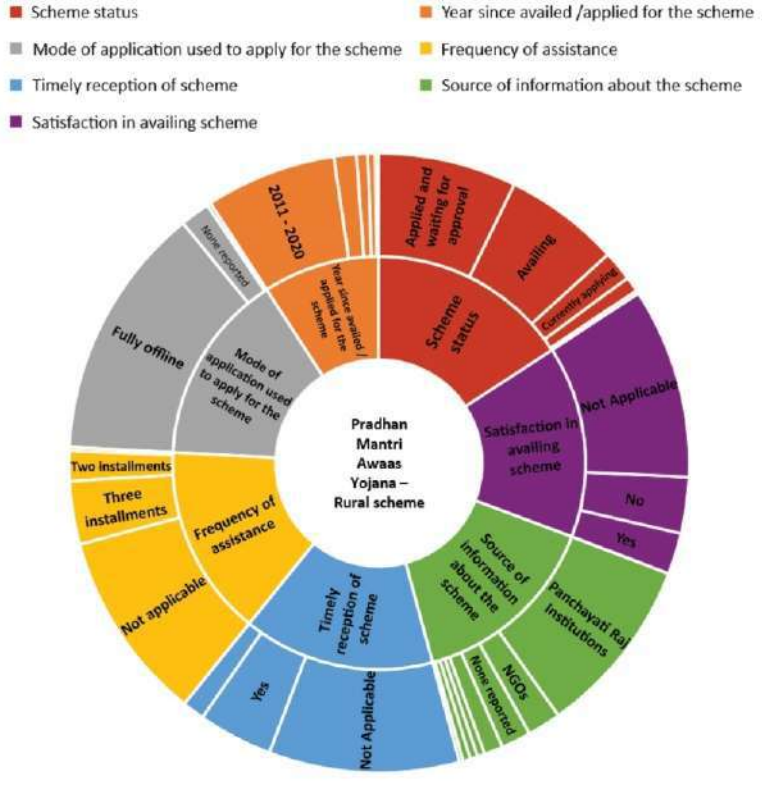


Fig. 12 Experience of PwDs in availing / applying for Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural Scheme



66.9 % paid fee to 3rd party / agent for the scheme application process.

Figure 13 shows an overview of the general perception of PwDs and CwDs in availing any scheme / schemes. Some remarkable results were observed. A high percentage of 66.9 % agreed that they paid fee to a third party / agent for the scheme application process. This is disconcerting, since the application process is free of cost.

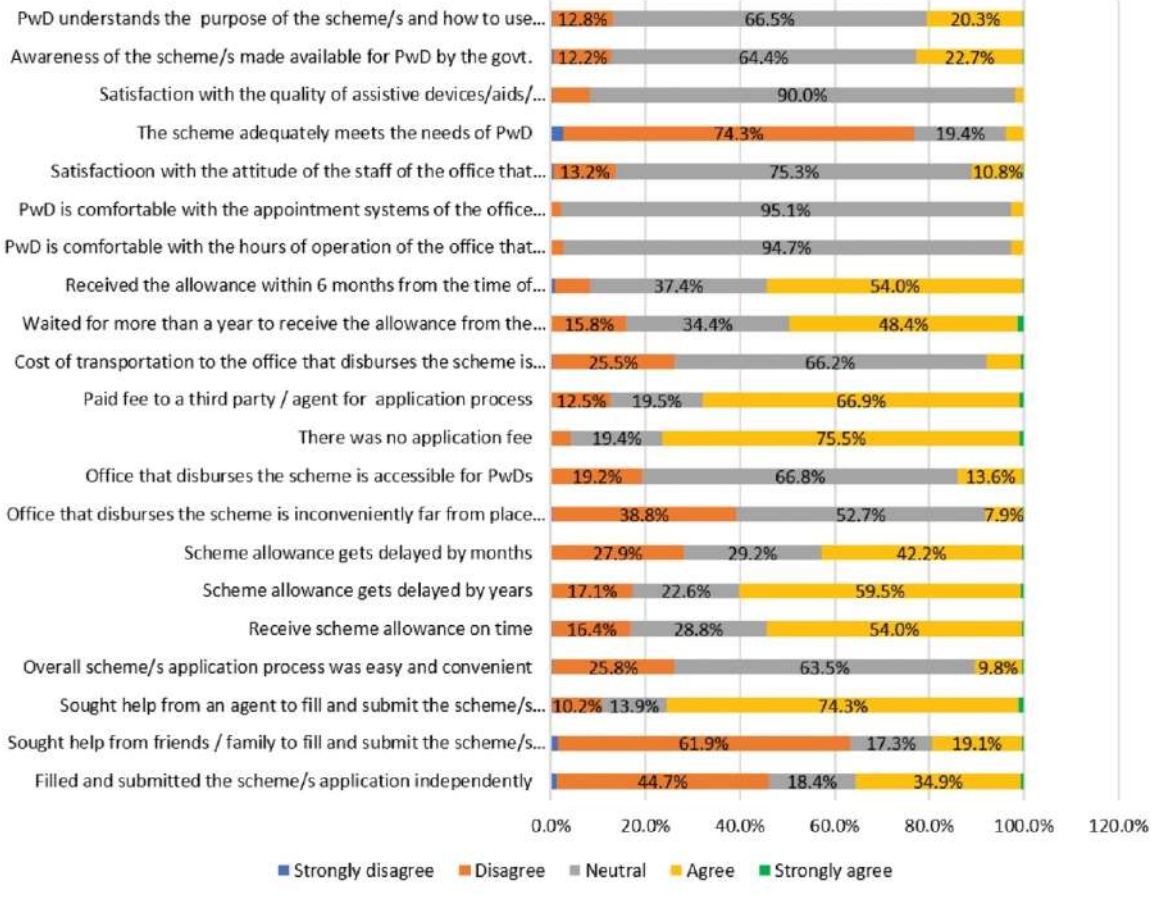
59% of PwDs reported that the scheme allowance gets delayed by years.

Further on, 59% of the participants reported that the scheme allowance gets delays by years and 48.4% reported that they waited more than a year to receive the allowance from the time of application. This indicates a rather slow scheme implementation process.

74% reported that the schemes did not meet their needs.

A high percentage of 74% reported that the scheme did not meet their needs and 64.4% responded neutrally when asked about whether they were aware of the schemes made available for PwDs by the Govt.

Fig. 13 General experience of PwDs and CwDs in availing any scheme(s)



3.4 Awareness of schemes

Awareness of schemes in the above-18 age group is presented in fig. 14. Overall, it was observed that the participants were most aware of the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension scheme (63.37 %) in comparison to the other schemes.

PwDs awareness of their rights and schemes was low, with only 9% of parents / guardians of CwDs being aware of scholarship schemes.

Regarding Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme and Urban scheme, an average percentage of mere 33.77 % and 38.23 % respectively responded that they were aware of the information about the said schemes.

Awareness of schemes in the below-18 age group is presented in fig. 15. Overall, it is observed that awareness of scheme in this age group was rather low. While a very low average percentage of 9 % responded that they were aware about the Scholarship schemes, a moderately higher average percentage of 32.85 % reported that they were aware of the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension scheme.

Awareness of rights of PwDs in both the age groups were found to be low with an average percentage of 21.6 % (fig. 16) being aware about various rights as envisaged in the RPwD Act.

Fig. 14. Awareness of schemes in above 18 age group

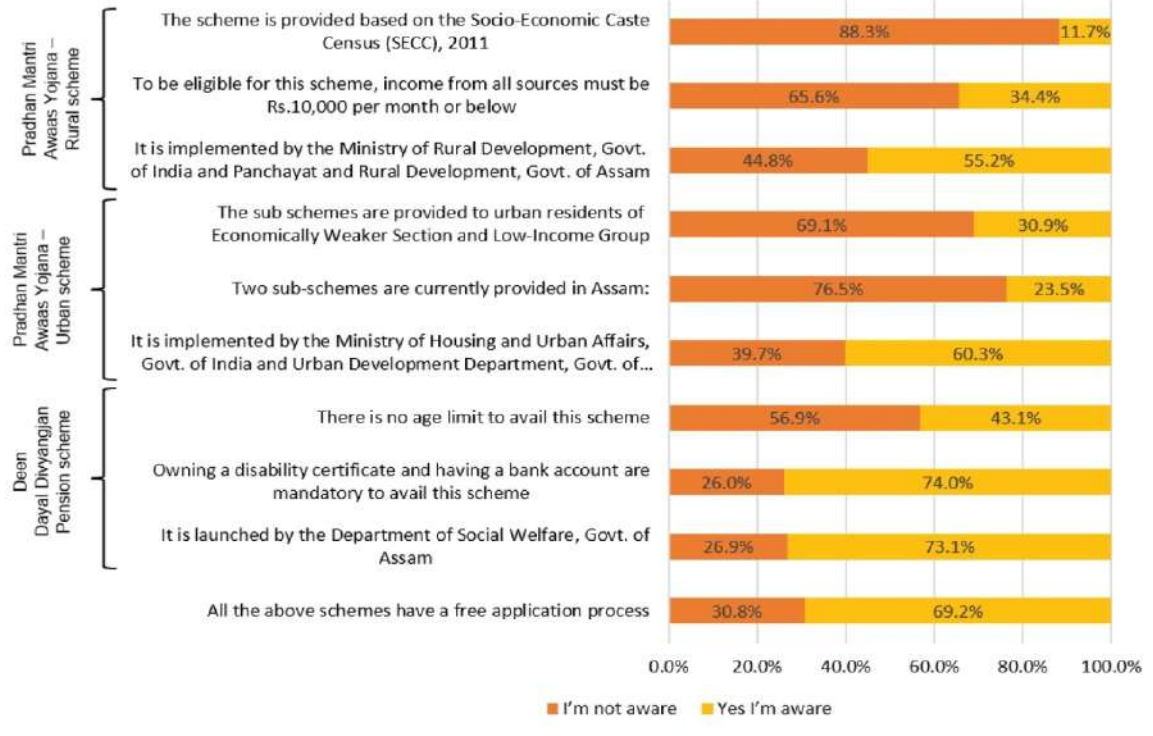
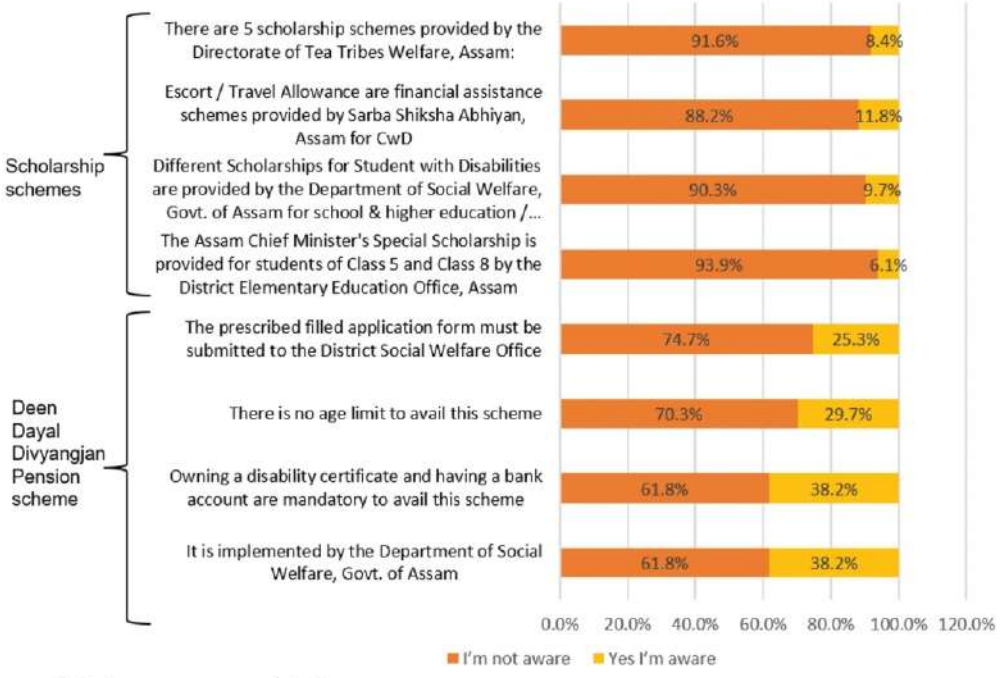
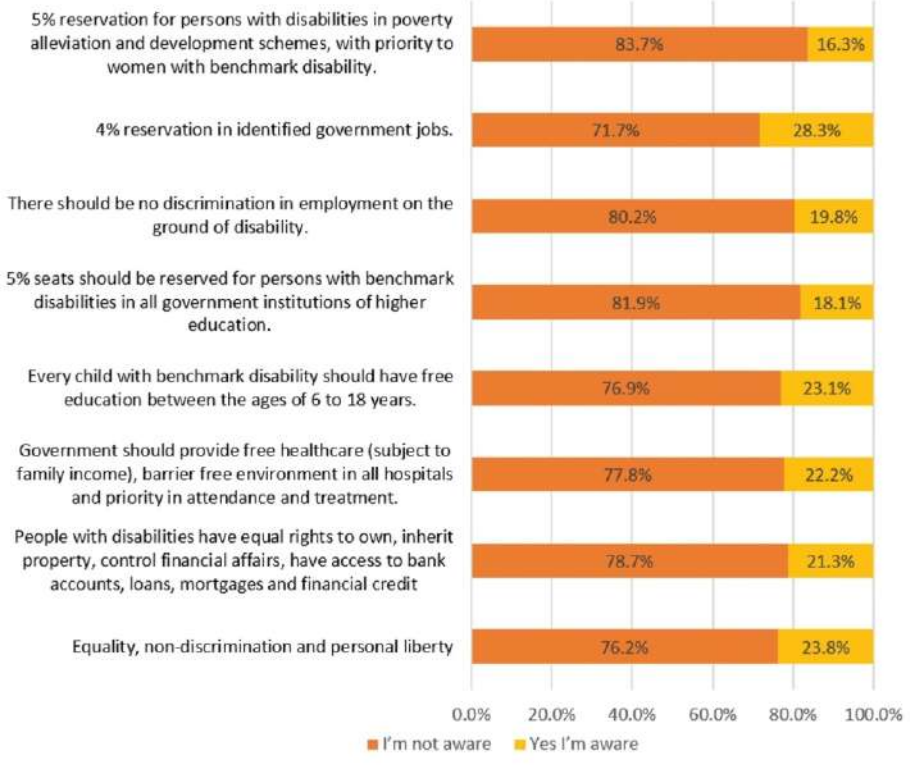


Fig. 15 Awareness of CwDs regarding Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension & Scholarship schemes



3.5 Awareness of rights

Fig. 16 Awareness of rights (all age groups)



3.6 Financial status, access to schemes and education during Covid-19 pandemic

63.4% PwDs (above 18 years) lost jobs / livelihood during the Covid-19 pandemic and financial crisis faced was very high for both the age groups (89.7 % and 74.7 % respectively).

Percentage analyses of the respondents' responses regarding their condition during Covid-19 pandemic (Figs. 16, 17) revealed high percentage of loss of jobs / livelihood among the above 18 age group (63.4 %).

Moreover, financial crisis, wherein earnings of family members / head of household was affected was revealed to be rather high for both the age groups (89.7 % and 74.7 % respectively).

Fig. 17 Financial conditions and access to schemes during Covid-19 pandemic of above 18 age group

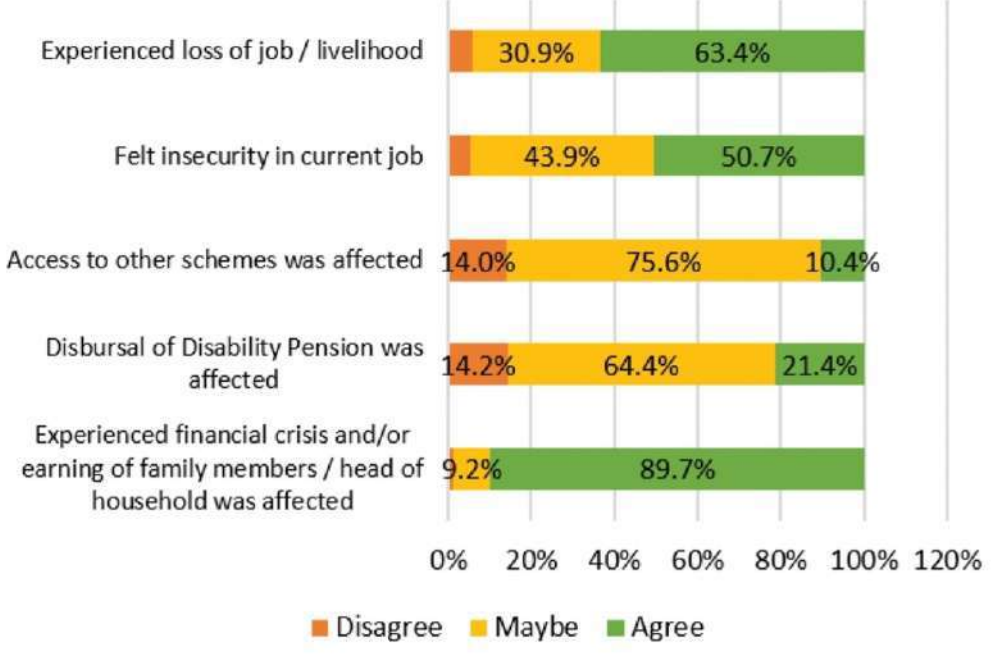
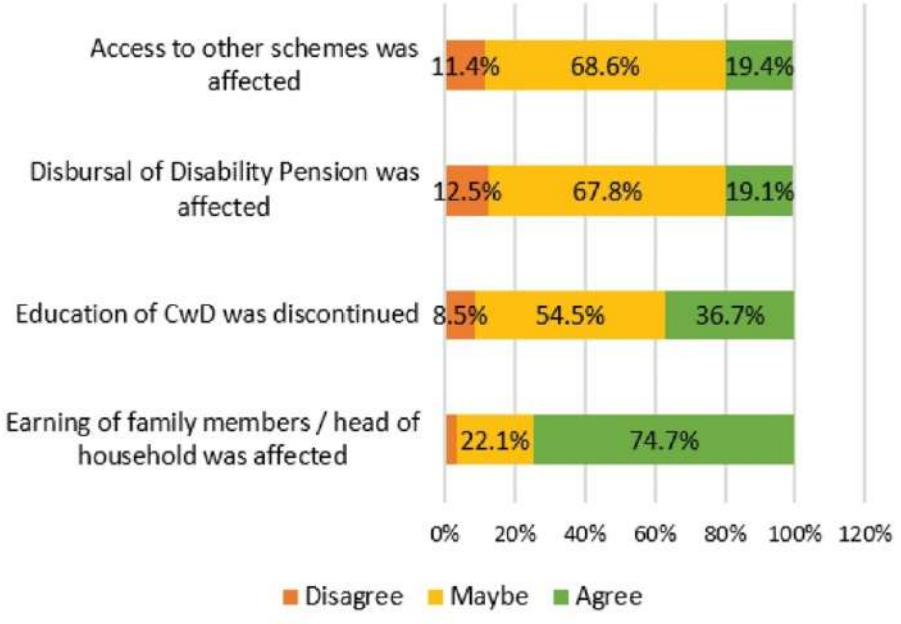


Fig. 18 Financial and educational conditions during Covid- 19 pandemic of below 18 age group



CHAPTER

4 RESULTS OF THE QUALITATIVE STUDY

This chapter reports the results of the qualitative analyses of the study. There were 3 samples in this part of the study: (1) Group C consisting of 37 PwDs spread over 6 FGDs, (2) Group D consisting of 2 govt. officials interviewed online, and (3) Group E consisting of 7 representatives of NGOs interviewed online and in-person (Fig. 2). The overall aim is to be able to understand their experiences and perceptions regarding reach and implementation of schemes for PwDs in the state.

4.1. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Six FGDs were conducted for group C (fig. 2) wherein, each group had 6 – 7 participants. The demographic details of the participants are provided in Appendix i. The FGDs were conducted in the regional language (Assamese). The interview transcripts thus obtained were translated from Assamese to English. Thematic analysis was conducted on the interview transcripts to reveal 4 core areas, viz., (1) grievances/complaints regarding the scheme implementation process, (2) experience of availing schemes, (3) person with disability puts strain on dynamics of family, and (4) suggestions.

Core areas of FGDs were

- **Grievances/complaints regarding the scheme implementation process**
- **Experience of availing schemes**
- **Dynamics of families with persons with disabilities, and**
- **Suggestions for existing/ new schemes**

It must be noted that some themes emerged to be more dominant due to them being mentioned or discussed more frequently during the FGDs. A word cloud featuring the dominant and less dominant themes are presented in fig. 19.

The demographic details of the participants in the FGDs is annexed as **Appendix: i.**

Fig. 19 Word cloud depicting the strength of themes in FGDs



Note: Larger the text, higher the frequency of it being mentioned or discussed in the interview.

Core areas of NGO interviews were

- Role of NGOs in scheme implementation / facilitation process
- Barriers to the effectiveness of schemes
- Impact of the pandemic on accessing schemes, and
- Suggestions for existing/ new schemes

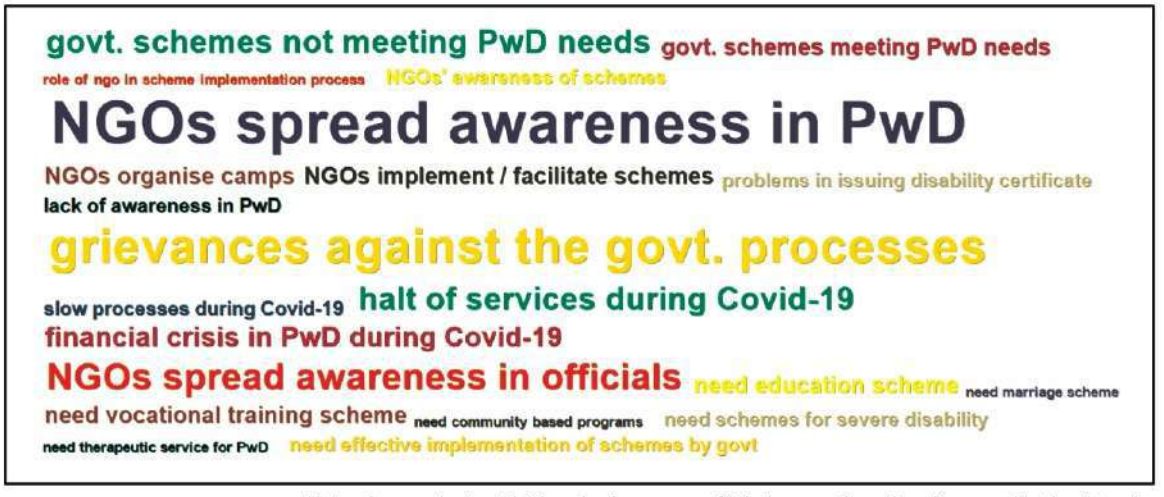
4.2 Interviews with NGO representatives

The interviews with representatives of 7 NGOs from 6 districts revealed 4 core areas via thematic analyses viz., (1) role of NGOs in the scheme implementation / facilitation process (2) barriers to the effectiveness of schemes for PwDs (3) impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on accessing schemes, and (4) suggestions for new schemes.

They are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

The details of the NGOs are annexed as **Appendix: ii.**

Fig. 20 Word cloud depicting the strength of themes in NGO interviews



Note: Larger the text, higher the frequency of it being mentioned or discussed in the interview.

4.3 Interviews with government officials

Interviews with the 2 Govt. officials revealed their experiences and role in the scheme implementation process. It is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER

5 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS OF QUANTITATIVE STUDY

5.1 Discussion of the results of the quantitative study

The overall aim of the current study was to shed light on the reach and implementation of Govt. schemes for PwDs in Assam using a mixed method study. The quantitative part of the study consisted of a total of 1587 participants (mean age = 30.23 years) wherein n = 1207 were PwDs above 18 years of age (Group A; fig. 2) and n = 380 were CwD below 18 years of age (Group B; fig. 2). The overall sample had higher rural residents (87.5%) than urban (10%), no formal education was reported by 40.9 %, and the highest percentage of participants reported to have locomotor disability (47.9 %).

The results of the quantitative part of the study (Group A and B; fig. 2) are discussed below as per the objectives formulated in section 1.2:

1. To assess the awareness level of Disability Certificate and UDID card:

More than 45% of participants responded that the Disability Certificate and / or UDID card helped them to access Govt. schemes / grants / services, availing job reservation and pursuing education / availing scholarships. But less than 17% were aware of the purpose of the UDID Card and its role as a single source identity verification. It can therefore be said that the awareness of Disability Certificate and UDID cards is moderate for PwDs and CwDs.

2. To assess the status of availing Disability Certificate and UDID card:

Access to Disability Certificate seems high, with 82.5% of the participants owning Disability Certificate. In comparison, 55.8% of the participants, which is about half of the sample, did not have a UDID card.

3. To explore the reasons for not owning a Disability Certificate and UDID card:

Perusal of the overall results of fig. 8 revealed that the strongest reason for not owning Disability Certificate and UDID card is lack of awareness as participants revealed that they did not know about it (51.5%).

4. To explore the difficulties in owning the Disability Certificate and UDID card:

Perusal of the overall results of fig. 9 revealed that the key difficulties reported in owning Disability Certificate and UDID card is high cost of transportation (53%) and no clear guidelines or steps on how to apply for them (40.6%). The Government may address both issues by keeping an eye on the expense of transportation for PwDs and by providing clear instructions on how to apply for schemes.

5. To assess the status of availing Government schemes

Our results revealed that only half of the participants were availing Govt. scheme(s), wherein 38% were availing the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, 13% were availing Orunodoi scheme, 2% were availing Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme and less than 0.32% were availing the other schemes. The govt. schemes are clearly not reaching PwDs in an effective manner. Of those who were availing the schemes (n = 872), 32.7% reported that they were not satisfied in availing the schemes. Moreover, none were found to be availing / applying for Assam Chief Minister Special Scholarship and Scholarships under Directorate of Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam. Therefore, **a considerable number of PwDs population were not beneficiaries of schemes, were not satisfied with the schemes, and even not aware of the schemes.**

Highest source of information about schemes were reported to be from NGOs, grassroot workers like Anganwadi and ASHA workers, Panchayati Raj institutions and friends and family. It can be said that, the ability of the schemes to reach PwDs can be attributed in large part to individuals who work at the social or grassroots level.

6. To assess the awareness level of Government schemes

In Group A, the participants had moderately high awareness of the Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme (average percentage = 63. 37%; fig. 14). Whereas in Group B, awareness percentage was low overall (fig. 15). An interesting observation was noted in fig. 14, wherein a high percentage of 69.2% revealed that they were aware that all the schemes have a free application process. But fig. 13 showed that an equally high percentage (66.9% of the participants) responded that they paid a fee to third party / agent for application process. This is an inclination towards financial exploitation of PwDs and steps must be taken to discourage it.

7. To study the experience of PwDs in availing Government schemes

The general experience of PwDs in availing Govt. schemes is presented in fig. 13. The stacked bar chart's overall appearance revealed that many of the participants marked their responses as "neutral." This denotes ambiguity or uncertainty in how schemes are generally accessed. Another insight is derived wherein high percentage agreed that there was no application fee but they admitted to have paid fees to a third party / agent for the application. Moreover, high percentage of 74.3% agreed that they sought help from agent to fill and submit the application form. At the same time, 61.9% highly disagreed to have sought help from friends / family to fill and submit the form. Therefore, it can be strongly inferred that PwDs are paying

a third party or agent despite being aware that applying for a scheme is a free process. The reason could be that the procedure of scheme application is not very clear and favourable for them. Revisions should be made to the overall application procedure for schemes, to make it clearer and to minimize the scope of third party intervention.

Another observation was the length of time it took to receive the monetary allowance. PwDs highly agreed that they had to wait months or even years after applying for the scheme before they finally received it. However, 54% agreed that they received the allowance on time once the installments began to come in.

8. To assess if finances, education and access to schemes were affected during the Covid-19 pandemic

Our results revealed that PwDs, CwDs and their overall household greatly experienced financial crisis in the form of loss of livelihood and insecurity in their current jobs. This shows the importance of effective and timely disbursement of scheme benefits, as financial crises can have severe effect on their general well-being.

9. To study the awareness level of the rights of persons with disabilities

Awareness of rights of PwDs in both the age groups were found to be low with an average percentage of 21.6 % knowing about some of the core rights of persons with disabilities. Usually, a person's awareness of their rights comes first in their broad understanding of the world; only later do they realise that there are schemes they may avail to their benefit (Guide, 2014). Therefore, further efforts to raise awareness of PwDs rights must be made.

10. To explore recommendations by PwDs with regard to scheme revisions

The participants were requested to share their suggestions on possible revisions that could be made to the schemes to make it more favourable for them.

Responses were for Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme, where 80% of the participants who are availing it, voiced that the monthly pension amount must be increased. The other suggestions for the said Pension Scheme were that

- all PwDs must receive this benefit;
- the application guidelines must be easily available;
- there should be option to submit and view the status of the application online;

- the allowance must be disbursed timely;
- the list of rejected and selected beneficiaries must be made public / online, clearly reflecting the reasons for non-selection; and
- clearer guidelines for the application process, especially, where to submit (unless the system is made online) should be made available, to minimize the scope of any intervention by third party / agent.

With regard to the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana - Rural scheme, it was shared that the amount of assistance must be increased, monetary assistance must be given in place of raw materials, toilet facility must be provided, scope for third party / agent / middlemen must be minimized as far as possible and the law must be duly followed and 5% reservation under poverty alleviation scheme as envisaged in the RPwD Act, 2016 must be implemented.

CHAPTER

6 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE STUDY

6.1 Discussion of the results of the FGDs

The themes and its respective sub-themes that emerged from the thematic analyses of the 6 FGDs are discussed in the following section:

Core theme 1: Grievances / complaints regarding the scheme implementation process.

Persons with disabilities had complaints and grievances regarding the process of scheme implementation which can be clubbed in 5 sub-themes, discussed below:

Information dissemination:

Persons with disabilities shared that the process of applying for the schemes and certificate was rather long-drawn where they had to visit offices multiple times. It was also reported that the processes were not quite clear. They did not know how to check their application status. *"Right now, the problem is some people give it to Angadwadi Workers and then Panchayat and sometimes, they also submit it themselves. So, there is duplication and confusion. . ."*

Another concern is that they do not receive information / news regarding new schemes on time from the offices.

> *"information about when schemes are available – does not come on time – by the time we get to know from others – forms are already over in the offices."*

Additionally, it was voiced that they receive unclear information and even wrong information.

> *"govt ads are given that persons with disabilities will get bank loans with subsidy – but when we go to banks, they say these are not available. Once I went to Khadi Board office at Rupnagar because it was informed by govt that they will give INR 1 lakh loan with 70% subsidy – but when I went, they said that this is not available."*

Grievance against officials:

Some PwDs shared that the officials were not aware of the rights and entitlements of persons with disabilities and that they do not inform and/or state clearly about forthcoming schemes and how to apply for it.

PwDs had been denied loans from banks without any clarification and they felt that PwDs were *"not respected"* and were *"harassed."* Some shared that few officials also played favouritism and did not sign papers easily.

> *". . when medical camps are set up for distributing Disability Certificates after conducting medical examinations, they make us wait for the whole day. The doctor should attend at 10 am but he comes at 1 pm. There is no facility of drinking water or sanitation for the whole day. . ."*

Delay in receiving scheme benefits:

Persons with disabilities also shared that they do not receive or experience delay in receiving monetary benefits after applying for schemes

"I applied for Orunodoi when it started ….. I have asked many times…but they tell me it is in process."

> *"I applied for housing some 4 - 5 years back, but till now my name is not on the list. When I ask the block office person, they tell me it will come in the next list."*

Travel:

Persons with disabilities claimed that because the concerned offices for scheme implementation were stationed in one or two main locations in the districts, they had to travel quite some distances to go to the offices, which became an expensive affair.

"main difficulty is we have to go to the offices many times. So much money is required and it is also very difficult due to my disability. We have to walk almost 1 km before we can access public transport like auto, battery rickshaw. I cannot walk such distances due to my bad knee and leg."

Core theme 2: Experience of availing schemes:

Persons with disabilities reported both positive and negative experiences of availing schemes. They are discussed below:

Positive experiences:

Many PwDs reported that they received adequate assistance from the Social Welfare Office and other govt. officials, as well as help from friends and family, in submitting their applications / availing schemes. Some also reported that they received the scheme benefits on time.

"I am getting the Disability Pension and Orunodoi scheme – both I got without much difficulty and on the first attempt."

". . .I went to DSWO and she showed the list of beneficiaries - but my name was not there and she told me that it will probably come in the next month's list. But I didn't get it and so I called her again and told her that my friends got it but I didn't – she asked me to go the Directorate of Social Welfare at Uzanbazar and to meet with some officials who looks after the disability section – I went there and gave my documents again. Thereafter, my application was pending for 3 months and then I got 3 month's pension together. And it is continuing now."

Negative experiences:

The negative experiences reported were typographical errors in their identity documents and the need to make several attempts to receive the benefit of schemes.

> *"I applied correctly for UDID, but the card came with my name wrongly given."*

> *"I applied for pension about 3 – 4 times now over the last few years. So many times, I gave it to Angadwadi Workers and also Panchayat and then in the Tengakhat Circle Office. It was really difficult to go repeatedly to follow up. Due to my leg, I cannot walk much and auto fare is also high for me."*

Core theme 3: PwDs puts strain on dynamics of family:

Most Persons with disabilities shared that having a PwD at home puts added strain on the household, where, very often, someone must be constantly present for their care-giving and financial expenses are also increased as well.

"when PwDs are there, it becomes a burden for the family – if educated, at least one person from the family should be given a govt. job. And, if no one is educated – at least some economic support by way of schemes should be provided".

Core theme 4: Suggestions.

Persons with disabilities gave several suggestions to modify existing schemes and also spoke of different aspects, where new schemes could be of great assistance.

Modification of existing schemes:

An overwhelming response from PwDs was that the disability pension amount should be increased, as INR 1000.00 per month is inadequate to meet their needs. Proactive measures must be taken by the Govt. so that the schemes reach all persons with disabilities. The application process could be made simpler. There should be clarity on where to submit the forms. Advertisements of schemes should be more widespread so that the news reaches maximum persons with disabilities. The need for proper implementation of the housing scheme was also mooted, so that PwDs could avail of the 5% reservation as envisaged under the law.

New Schemes:

Persons with disabilities proposed that new schemes, specifically for empowerment of women with disabilities (WwDs), can be introduced by the Govt. Other proposals were for new schemes to avail free medical surgeries, employment / livelihood opportunities, free transport, entrepreneurial support, promoting participation of PwDs in sports, and one-time matrimonial grant.

Many PwDs also suggested that a helpline must be created so that PwDs can reach out to a specific number to get proper information about the schemes and the application procedures across the districts.

Some people also believed that since there were already so many schemes in place, they did not need any more. They simply stressed upon the need to improve the implementation and disbursal of benefits under the currently available schemes as the main priority.

"PwDs should have a system where a card is there and they do not have to give fare in any public transport…. but most of the conveyance here are privately owned. Hardly any govt. transport."

> *"Some scheme for sports for persons with disabilities is very important. Here some youths with disabilities want to play… but there is no facility."*

"In Tripura people with disabilities get money when they get married – we can have something similar."

6.2 Discussion of interviews with NGO representatives

Interviews were conducted with representatives of 7 NGOs in order to learn about their perspectives on govt. schemes for PwDs. The NGOs have been working in the disability sector for more than 18 years and their demographic details are provided in the Appendix. Thematic analysis was carried out on the transcripts of the 7 interviews highlighting 4 core themes, which are discussed below:

Core theme 1: Role of NGOs in the scheme implementation / facilitation process.

The representatives reported that they create awareness amongst PwDs and parents / guardians by arranging awareness workshops, door-to-door information sharing, orientation programs, seminars, organising camps, and capacity building trainings. The programmes are held at the gram panchayat level, village and block level in different remote areas. They also spread awareness amongst govt. officials by holding discussions on scheme awareness, conducting interface meetings, submitting memorandums. They also link persons with disabilities with institutions and NGOs working on similar aspects.

A representative reported that they facilitate disability and sports scholarship; another reported that they facilitate pension schemes and a third reported that they implemented the Niramaya Health insurance scheme.

Core theme 2: Barriers to the effectiveness of schemes for PwDs

Delays in issuance of Disability Certificates and lack of awareness amongst PwDs were considered barriers to the effectiveness of schemes. Several concerns were raised about irregular schemes, poorly implemented assistance to school students, slow and cumbersome process in providing "IDs" (Disability Certificates or UDID cards) and aids / appliances to PwDs in rural areas. Non-cooperative and non-empathetic attitudes of some government stakeholders was also reported.

> *"Key challenges faced in facilitating the schemes are: long process & papers works involved in availing the schemes; transfer of government officials leads to pending / halting of works; lack of opportunity in budget planning based on their needs; delay in disbursement of funds for schemes; reallocation of funds such as MP and MLA funds for emergency relief (Covid); limited knowledge on the RPwD Act 2016 amongst PRI members and government officials at block & district level as well as persons with disabilities and families; slow process in timely accessing of schemes/entitlements; limited coverage on newly launched schemes, particularly in the rural areas and inability to access schemes due to limited time period for application for specific schemes."*

Core theme 3: Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on accessing schemes

The Covid-19 pandemic led to delays in issuing of certificates, closure of Govt. offices, intermittent access to medical / rehabilitation support and services, and stoppage of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantees (MGNREGs). It was also reported that PwDs faced financial crisis as they were not able to access scholarships / stipends and unemployment grants, and pension was not disbursed timely.

Core theme 4: Suggestions for new schemes

New schemes for persons with disabilities were suggested in the fields of education, one-time matrimonial grant, vocational training, therapeutic services, community-based programs and specific schemes for people with profound disabilities and high support needs.

Finally, perusal of the word cloud presented in fig. 20 revealed that the most discussed topics in the 7 interviews were: NGOs role in spreading awareness amongst PwDs and Govt. officials, and their grievances against the Govt. processes of scheme implementation.

6.3 Discussion of interviews with Govt. officials

Interviews were conducted with 2 Govt. officials of Assam who are associated in the scheme implementation processes. The purpose of the interview was to learn about their perspectives on PwDs' reach

and access to schemes. The highlight of the discussion with officials was that **there exists a lack of awareness amongst PwDs about schemes, and the role of Govt. in spreading awareness in PwDs.**

> *"Adequacy of the Govt. Schemes for PwDs cannot be validated with the number of beneficiaries who has applied for the Schemes as I believe there is a vast gap of awareness about the same schemes in the remote areas of the State. Once PwDs from around the State are aware of the benefits available for them, and they take the route to avail them in adequate manner, I think, we would see a great amount of development among the PwDs automatically."*

Other themes discussed were:

The role of Govt. in scheme implementation.

"Applications are invited for the schemes from applicants and lists are forwarded to the Directorate for further process for disbursement of funds. My role is to facilitate the PwDs about the schemes and benefits available for them from the Govt. and give feedback to the official about the implementation of the same."

Challenges in implementing the schemes

One official reported that there were no challenges in implementing schemes while the other reported that challenges were with regard to the covid-19 situation, and society's reluctance of inclusion of disability.

Effect of Covid-19 pandemic on scheme implementation

One official reported that the pension scheme was disbursed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The other official reported that scheme implementation slowed down due to the pandemic.

Govt. budget for PwDs

An official reported that budget allocation for the scheme implementation is increasing in their deptt. / office.

"Allocation is increasing as the numbers of beneficiaries are increasing year after year. I am unaware of any information relating to budget allocation."

6.4 General discussion and conclusion

The present study is a novel attempt to understand the status of implementation of schemes for PwDs in Assam by providing strong quantitative and qualitative empirical data. The most discernible result of the study supported by all the groups was the lack of awareness about available schemes amongst PwDs. It was acknowledged by all groups that this lack of awareness has created barriers to the scheme implementation process. All groups also acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic situation severely affected the scheme disbursal process thereby leading to PwDs experiencing financial crisis.

The overall quantitative findings revealed that PwDs were not quite receiving the needed benefits for their social amelioration. Less than 14% of the sample was accessing schemes (excluding Deen Dayal Divyangjan Pension scheme, where 38% PwDs were availing the said scheme). Out of the 380 CwDs, only 7 were availing scholarship schemes. Traveling to offices for application and follow-up was rather strenuous for them. High percentage (74%) reported that the schemes did not meet their needs.

PwDs largely agreed that there are schemes for various aspects and that the crucial need of the hour is to prioritise the reach and access of existing schemes for people with disabilities. The interviews with NGO representatives, and the quantitative and qualitative findings from PwDs (and CwDs) revealed some congruent results. Both parties strongly felt that scheme implementation could be further streamlined, so that the application process is clear and easy-to-follow for PwDs, and irregularities and delays in scheme disbursal are minimized. Several people also strongly suggested that the entire application process should be online, making it easier for people to access information about the status of their application and so forth. There was an overwhelming request for increasing the quantum of disability pension. Finally, PwDs and NGO representatives also gave suggestions for new schemes that can be introduced in the different sectors of health, education, skill development / vocational training and sports.

It is also important to note here that the present study was unable to cover persons with high support needs, but it is safe to say that issues and challenges faced by persons with profound disabilities are manifold and concerted initiatives are required to address their acute and extraordinary needs.

The study has certain limitations: (1) being a novel study standardized scales were not available for the current research topic, therefore all the measurement scales were self-developed, (2) non-probability snowballing technique was used to collect the data

because the population under study is specific and difficult to find; there could therefore be a "sample or selection bias", (3) finally, the results are of a descriptive nature and inferential conclusions were not made from it due to the large volume of the data. It is certainly a direction towards future research.

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Appendix i

Demographic details of the FGD groups

Sl. No. of FGD	*District*	*Location of interview*	*No. of participants*	*Mean age (SD)*	*Gender*
1	Nagaon	Alitegani	6	30 (1.4)	Male
2	Kokrajhar	Hatimata, AIET office	6	30.2 (1.6)	Female
3	Kamrup (Metro)	Shishu Sarothi	6	30.7 (4)	Female
4	Kamrup (Metro)	Shishu Sarothi	7	40.1 (6.6)	Male
5	Kamrup (Metro)	Chandrapur	6	45.3 (10.8)	Female
6	Dibrugarh	MRC, Duliajan	6	30.2 (1.5)	2 females, 4 males

Appendix ii

Demographic characteristics of the NGOs and its representatives

	Organizations' registration	District of the organization	No. of years working for PwDs
NGO 1	RPwD Act 2016, National Trust Act,1999	Dibrugarh	23 years
NGO 2	Companies Act	Bongaigaon	18 years
NGO 3	Societies Registration Act	Kamrup (Metro)	25 years
NGO 4	Societies Registration Act	Kamrup (Metro)	25 years
NGO 5	Societies Registration Act	Jorhat	30
NGO 6	Societies Registration Act	Delhi	25 years
NGO 7	Indian Trust Act	Kokrajhar	7 years

Types of disability that the organizations are working with

Sl. No.	Locomotor Disability	Leprosy Cured Person	Cerebral palsy	Dwarfism	Muscular Dystrophy	Blindness	Low Vision	Deafness	Hard of hearing	Speech & Language Disability	Parkinson's Disease	Acid Attack Victim, Multiple sclerosis, Hemophilia, Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Disease	Mental Illness	Specific Learning Disability	Autism Spectrum Disorder	Intellectual Disability	Multiple disabilities including Deaf-Blindness
NGO 1	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
NGO 2	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NGO 3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NGO 4													✓		✓	✓	
NGO 5			✓					✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓
NGO 6	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NGO 7	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	

Ongoing services of the organizations for PwDs / CwDs

	Inclusive education	Vocational education	Day care centre	Scholarships	Medical treatment / therapy	Residential facilities	Any other (please specify)
NGO 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NGO 2	✓				✓	✓	
NGO 3	✓	✓			✓		
NGO 4	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
NGO 5	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Other *
NGO 6	✓	✓		✓	✓		Other**
NGO 7	✓	✓					

Other* community service, child care and protection, awareness.

Other** facilitating disability certificates, UDID cards, schemes and entitlements, assessment camps, assistive devices, promoting early identification and interventions, home based rehabilitation and education, promoting SHGS, gender inclusion, promotion of sexual & reproductive health, promotion of disability inclusive committees (community sharing), children support groups, mothers group, promoting community volunteers, networking & collaboration with Govt. departments and like-minded NGOs, capacity building of leaders of organization of PwDs.

Appendix iii

Questionnaire

(Persons with Disabilities above 18 years / Parents of PwDs on their behalf)

For office use only	
Serial Number:	Interviewer's Initial:
Participant ID:	Location of interview:

Section 1: Demographic details

Q1.	**Name:**		
Q2.	**Email:**		
Q3.	**Contact no.:**		
Q4.	**District:**		
Q5.	**Are you a rural or urban resident?**		
Q6.	**Gender:**	☐ Male ☐ Other	☐ Female
Q7.	**Age/ DOB:**	..... years old	
Q8.	**Social Category:**	☐ ST ☐ OBC	☐ SC ☐ General
Q9.	**Education:**	☐ No formal education ☐ Secondary (class VI-X) ☐ Graduation ☐ Diploma ☐ Professional course	☐ Primary (class I-V) ☐ Higher Secondary (class XI-XII) ☐ Post-Graduation / Ph.D. ☐ Technical ☐ Other
Q11.	**Did you ever discontinue education?**	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Q12.	**If yes, please state your reason for discontinuing:**		
Q13.	**Occupation:**	☐ Professional ☐ Daily Wage Labourer ☐ Retired ☐ Self-employed	☐ Salaried ☐ Skilled Worker ☐ Unemployed ☐ Other (please specify)
Q14.	**Occupation of head of household:**	☐ Professional ☐ Daily Wage Labourer ☐ Retired ☐ Self-employed	☐ Salaried ☐ Skilled Worker ☐ Unemployed ☐ Other (please specify)
Q15.	**Marital status:**	☐ Married ☐ Divorced	☐ Unmarried ☐ Widow/widower
Q16.	**Type of disability:**	☐ Loco motor Disability ☐ Leprosy Cured Person ☐ Cerebral palsy ☐ Dwarfism ☐ Muscular Dystrophy ☐ Acid Attack Victims ☐ Blindness ☐ Low Vision ☐ Deafness ☐ Hard of Hearing	☐ Speech and Language Disability ☐ Multiple Sclerosis ☐ Parkinson's Disease ☐ Hemophilia ☐ Thalassemia ☐ Sickle Cell Disease ☐ Mental Illness ☐ Specific Learning Disability ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorder ☐ Intellectual Disability

		☐ Multiple disabilities including Deaf-Blindness ☐ Others (please specify).....	
Q17.	**Do you use any assistive devices/aids and appliances/support services:**	☐ Walker ☐ Special Chair ☐ White Cane ☐ Wheelchair ☐ Physiotherapy ☐ Medical Advice ☐ Special Education Inputs ☐ Any other (please specify)	☐ Gaiters / Splints ☐ Hearing Aid ☐ Prosthetic Device ☐ Speech Therapy ☐ Sign Language ☐ Surgery ☐ Occupational therapy ☐ None

Section 2: Disability Certificate and UDIDcard

Q1.	Do you have a Disability Certificate?	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Q2.	Do you have a UDID card?	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Q3.	Disability percentage in Disability Certificate is			
Q4.	**How do you think the Disability Certificate and/or UDID card will help you?**			
a.	In accessing Government schemes/grants/services	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	In pursuing education / availing scholarships	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Availing job reservation	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	UDID serves as your single source identity verification	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	UDID helpsthe govt. in efficient service delivery for persons with disabilities	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
Q5.	**If you do not have a disability certificate/ UDID card, please share some reasons for the same byselecting the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement:**(Answer this question only if you DO NOT have a disability certificate/ UDID card)			
a.	Did not know about disability certificate/UDID card	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	Angadwadi / ASHA worker collected information from you but never followed up with you	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Certification not available for your type of disability	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	Lack of support from family or friends in availing disability certificate / UDID card	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	No clear guidelines or steps on how to apply	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
f.	No internet access	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
g.	Website is not accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
h.	You do not have the required documents	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
i.	Transportation cost is too high	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
j.	The office that disburses the disability certificate / UDID card is not physically accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
k.	You are asked to visit the office repeatedly	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
l.	Uncooperative staff in the office	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
Q6.	**If you have a disability certificate/ UDID card, did you facethe followingdifficulties in availing**			

	the same? (Answer this question only if you have a disability certificate/ UDID card)			
a.	No clear guidelines or steps on how to apply	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	No internet access	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Website is not accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	You do not have the required documents	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	Transportation cost is too high	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
f.	The office that disburses the disability certificate / UDID card is not physically accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
g.	You are asked to visit the office repeatedly	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
h.	Uncooperative staff in the office	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
i.	Lack of support from family or friends	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree

Section 3: DeenDayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Urban / Graminscheme.

		1. DeenDayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme	**2. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Urban / Gramin scheme**
Q1	**Scheme status:**	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above
Q2.	**Year since you availed /applied for the scheme:**		
Q3	**Mode of application used to apply for the scheme:**	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline ☐ None of the above	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline ☐ None of the above
Q4	**Frequency of assistance:**	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance ☐ Half yearly assistance ☐ Not applicable	☐ One time assistance ☐One installment ☐Two installments ☐Three installments ☐Four installments ☐ Not applicable
Q5	**Do you receive the assistance on time?**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
Q6	**From where do/did you get information about the scheme?**	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others

		☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions ☐ None of the above	☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions ☐ None of the above
Q7	**Are you satisfied in availing the scheme?**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
Q8.	**If you answered no to Q9, please share your reason**		

Q9. Are you aware of the following facts about the DeenDayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme?

a.	It is launched by the Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of Assam	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	Owning a disability certificate and having a bank account are mandatory to avail this scheme	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	There is no age limit to avail this scheme	☐ I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Q10. Are you aware of the following facts about the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Urban scheme?
(Answer this question only if you are an urban resident)

a.	It is implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Govt. of India and Urban Development Department, Govt. of Assam	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	Two sub-schemes are currently provided in Assam: (i) The Beneficiary-Led Individual House Construction (BLC) and (ii)Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP)	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	The sub schemes are provided to urban residents of Economically Weaker Section and Low-Income Group	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Q11. Are you aware of the following facts about the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin scheme? (Answer this question only if you are an rural resident)

a.	It is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India and Panchayat and Rural Development, Govt. of Assam	☐ I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	To be eligible for this scheme, income from all sources must be Rs.10,000 per month or below	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	The scheme is provided based on the Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC), 2011	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Q12.	Did you know that the above schemeshave a free application process?	☐ I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Please note: If you'd like to know more about the above schemes, you are welcome to request the researcher for a leaflet.

Q13. Please suggest some revisions to the schemes that could make them more favourable for you:
(Answer this question only if you are availing the schemes)

1. DeenDayal Divyangjan Pension Scheme	2. Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Urban / Graminscheme
1. 2. 3.	1. 2. 3.

Section 4: In the columns below please give details of any other government schemes you are availing / applying for.

Q1.	**Name of scheme:**	1.	2.	3. .....
Q2.	**Scheme status:**	□ Availing □ Currently applying □ Applied and waiting for approval □ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance □ Planning to apply □ None of the above→ Skip to Section 5	□ Availing □ Currently applying □ Applied and waiting for approval □ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance □ Planning to apply □ None of the above	□ Availing □ Currently applying □ Applied and waiting for approval □ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance □ Planning to apply □ None of the above
Q3.	**Year since you availed /applied for the scheme:**			
Q4.	**Mode of application used to apply for the scheme:**	□ Fully online □ Partly online and partly offline □ Fully offline	□ Fully online □ Partly online and partly offline □ Fully offline	□ Fully online □ Partly online and partly offline □ Fully offline
Q5.	**Frequency of assistance:**	□ One time assistance □ Yearly assistance □ Monthly assistance □ Quarterly assistance □ Half yearly assistance	□ One time assistance □ Yearly assistance □ Monthly assistance □ Quarterly assistance □ Half yearly assistance	□ One time assistance □ Yearly assistance □ Monthly assistance □ Quarterly assistance □ Half yearly assistance
Q6.	**Do you receive the assistance on time?**	□ Yes □ No	□ Yes □ No	□ Yes □ No
Q7.	**How many times did you receive the assistance till now?**			
Q8.	**From where do/did you get information about schemes?**	□ Internet/social media □ Newspaper/ TV/ other media □ Friends / family □ NGOs □ Awareness programmes □ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others □ Panchayati Raj Institutions	□ Internet/social media □ Newspaper/ TV/ other media □ Friends / family □ NGOs □ Awareness programmes □ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others □ Panchayati Raj Institutions	□ Internet/social media □ Newspaper/ TV/ other media □ Friends / family □ NGOs □ Awareness programmes □ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others □ Panchayati Raj Institutions

Section 5: The following questions are regarding your experience with Govt. schemes. Please select the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(Answer this section only if you are availing Govt. scheme/s)

1. I filled and submitted the scheme/s application independently	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
2. I sought help from friends / family to fill and submit the scheme/s application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
3. I sought help from an agent to fill and submit the scheme/s application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
4. The overall scheme/s application process was easy and convenient	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
5. I receive my scheme allowance on time	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
6. My scheme allowance gets delayed by years	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
7. My scheme allowance gets delayed by months	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
8. The office that disburses the scheme is inconveniently far from my place of residence	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
9. The office that disburses the scheme is accessible for persons with disability	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
10. There was no application fee	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
11. I paid a fee to a third party / agent for my application process	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
12. The cost of transportation to the office that disburses the scheme is expensive	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
13. I waited for more than a year to receive the allowance from the time I applied for it	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
14. I received the allowance within 6 months from the time I applied for it	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree

15. I am comfortable with the hours of operation of the office that disburses the scheme	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
16. I am comfortable with the appointment systems of the office that disburses the scheme	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
17. I am satisfied with the attitude of the staff of the office that disburses the scheme	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
18. The scheme adequately meets my needs	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
19. I am satisfied with the quality of assistive devices/aids/ appliances/support services provided to me through the scheme/s.	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
20. I am usually aware of the scheme/s made available for me by the govt.	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
21. I understand the purpose of the scheme/s and how to use it for my benefit	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree

Section 6: Did you experience the following during the Covid-19 pandemic?Please select the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement:

a.	Experienced financial crisis and/or earning of family members / head of household was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	Disbursal of Disability Pension was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Access to other schemes was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	Felt insecurity in current job	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	Experienced loss of job / livelihood	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree

Section 7: Are you aware of the following rights of a person with disability?

a.	Equality, non-discrimination and personal liberty	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	People with disabilities have equal rights to own, inherit property, control financial affairs, have access to bank accounts, loans, mortgages and financial credit	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	Government should provide free healthcare (subject to	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

	family income), barrier free environment in all hospitals and priority in attendance and treatment.		
d.	Every child with benchmark disability should have free education between the ages of 6 to 18 years.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
e.	5% seats should be reserved for persons with benchmark disabilities in all government institutions of higher education.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
f.	There should be no discrimination in employment on the ground of disability.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
g.	4% reservation in identified government jobs.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
h.	5% reservation for persons with disabilities in poverty alleviation and development schemes, with priority to women with benchmark disability.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

- End -

Thank you for your participation.

Consent Form

Research topic: Reach and Implementation of Government Schemes for Persons with Disabilities in Assam

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Disability Law Unit, Shishu Sarothi

Participation: My participation will consist of responding to a series of questionnaires related to the research topic mentioned above.

Risks: I understand that there is no risk involved in participating in this study, beyond those risks experienced in everyday life.

Benefits: My participation in this study will contribute to a better understanding of reach and implementation of government schemes for persons with disabilities in Assam

Confidentiality and Anonymity: I have received assurance from the interviewer that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. Anonymity will be protected by the removal of any identifying characteristics from the data during the analysis and reporting stages.

Conservation of Data: The data collected will be kept by the researchers of Disability Law Unit, Shishu Sarothi in a secure manner.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be deleted and/or destroyed.

By completing this survey, I am consenting to participate in this study.

Appendix iv

Questionnaire

[Parents of Children with Children with (below 18 years) on their behalf]

For office use only	
Serial Number:	Interviewer's Initial:
Participant ID:	Location of interview:

Section 1: Demographic details

Q1.	**Name of CwD:**	
Q2.	**Email**(Parent):	
Q3.	**Contact no.** (Parent):	
Q4.	**District:**	
Q5.	**Gender of CwD:**	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other
Q6.	**Age / DOB of CwD:**	..... years old
Q7.	**Social Category:**	☐ ST ☐ SC ☐ OBC ☐ General
Q8.	**Education of CwD:**	☐ No formal education ☐ Primary (class I-V) ☐ Secondary (class VI-X) ☐ Higher Secondary (class XI-XII)
Q9.	**Did the CwDever dis-continue education?**	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q10.	**If yes, please state the reason for discontinuing:**	
Q11.	**Occupation (if any)** (Parent):	☐ Professional ☐ Salaried ☐ Daily Wage Labourer ☐ Skilled Worker ☐ Retired ☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Other (please specify)
Q12.	**Occupation of head of household:**	☐ Professional ☐ Salaried ☐ Daily Wage Labourer ☐ Skilled Worker ☐ Retired ☐ Unemployed ☐ Self-employed ☐ Other (please specify)
Q13.	**Disability of CwD:**	☐ Loco motor Disability ☐ Speech and Language Disability ☐ Leprosy Cured Person ☐ Multiple Sclerosis ☐ Cerebral palsy ☐ Parkinson's Disease ☐ Dwarfism ☐ Hemophilia ☐ Muscular Dystrophy ☐ Thalassemia ☐ Acid Attack Victims ☐ Sickle Cell Disease ☐ Blindness ☐ Mental Illness ☐ Low Vision ☐ Specific Learning Disability ☐ Deafness ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorder ☐ Hard of Hearing ☐ Intellectual Disability ☐ Multiple disabilities including Deaf-Blindness ☐ Others (please specify).....
Q14.	**Do you use any assistive devices/aids and appliances/support services:**	☐ Walker ☐ Gaiters / Splints ☐ Special Chair ☐ Hearing Aid ☐ White Cane ☐ Prosthetic Device ☐ Wheelchair ☐ Speech Therapy ☐ Physiotherapy ☐ Sign Language

	☐ Medical Advice ☐ Special Education Inputs ☐ Any other (please specify)	☐ Surgery ☐ Occupational therapy ☐ None

Section 2: Disability Certificate and UDID card

Q1.	Does the CwDhave a Disability Certificate?	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Q2.	Does the CwDhave a UDID card?	☐ Yes	☐ No	
Q3.	Disability percentage in the Disability Certificate is			
Q4.	**How do you think the Disability Certificate and/or UDID card will help the CwD?**			
a.	In accessing Government schemes/grants/services	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	In pursuing education / availing scholarships	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Availing job reservation	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	UDID serves as a single source identity verification	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	UDID helps the govt. in efficient service delivery for persons with disabilities.	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
Q5.	**If the CwDdoes not have a disability certificate/ UDID card, please share some reasons for the same byselecting the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement:**			
a.	Did not know about disability certificate/ UDID card	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	Angadwadi / ASHA worker collected information from you but never followed up with you	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Certification not available for your type of disability	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	Lack of support from family or friends in availing disability certificate / UDID card	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	No clear guidelines or steps on how to apply	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
f.	No internet access	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
g.	Website is not accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
h.	You do not have the required documents	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
i.	Transportation cost too high	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
j.	The office that disburses the disability certificate / UDID card is not physically accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
k.	You are asked to visit the office repeatedly	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
l.	Uncooperative staff in the office	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
Q6.	**If the CwD has a disability certificate / UDID card, did you facethe following difficulties in availing the same?** (Answer this question only if you have a disability certificate / UDID card)			
a.	No clear guidelines or steps on how to apply	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	No internet access	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Website is not accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	You do not have the required documents	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
e.	Transportation cost too high	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
f.	The office that disburses the disability certificate / UDID card is not physically accessible	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree

g.	You are asked to visit the office repeatedly	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
h.	Uncooperative staff in the office	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
i.	Lack of support from family or friends	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree

Section 3: Pension and Scholarship Schemes

		1. DeenDayalDivyangjan Pension Scheme	2. Scholarship Schemes
			Please indicate if the CwD is availing, applying or planning to apply for any scholarship scheme: ☐Assam Chief Minister's Special Scholarship ☐Scholarships under Social Welfare Deptt. ☐Financial assistance under SarbaSikshaAbhiyan, Assam ☐ Scholarships under Directorate of Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam, please specify which one ..... ☐ Any other (please specify).....
Q1	**Scheme status:**	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above
Q2.	**Year since the CwDavailed /applied for the scheme:**		
Q3	**Mode of application used to apply for the scheme:**	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline ☐ None of the above	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline ☐ None of the above
Q4	**Duration of the scheme:**		
Q5	**Frequency of assistance:**	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance ☐ Half yearly assistance ☐ Not applicable	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance ☐ Half yearly assistance ☐ Not applicable
Q6	**Does the CwD receive the assistance on time?**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Q7	**How many times did the CwD receive the assistance till now?**		
Q8	**From where do/did you get information about the scheme?**	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others ☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions ☐ None of the above	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others ☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions ☐ None of the above
Q9	**Are you satisfied in availing the scheme?**	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable
Q10.	**If you answered no to Q9, please share your reason**		

Q11. Are you aware of the following facts about the DeenDayalDivyangjan Pension Scheme?

a.	It is implemented by the Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of Assam	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	Owning a disability certificate and having a bank account are mandatory to avail this scheme	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	There is no age limit to avail this scheme	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
d.	The prescribed filled application form must be submitted to the District Social Welfare Office (DSWO)	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Q12. Are you aware of the following facts about Scholarship Schemes?

a.	The Assam Chief Minister's Special Scholarship is providedfor students of Class 5 and Class 8 by the District Elementary Education Office, Assam	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	Different Scholarships for Student with Disabilitiesare provided by the Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of Assamfor school & higher education / technical education.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	Escort / Travel Allowance are financial assistance schemes provided by Sarba Shiksha Abhiyan, Assam for CwD	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
d.	Some scholarship schemes provided by Tea Tribes Welfare, Assam are: I. Pre-Matric II. Post-Matric III. Simon Sing Horo Special Post-Matric Scholarship IV. Financial assistance for advanced courses V. Financial assistance for higher studies	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

Please note: If you'd like to know more about the above schemes, you are welcome to request the researcher for a leaflet.

Q13. Please suggest some revisions to the schemes that could make them more favourable for the CwD:

DeenDayalDivyangjan Pension Scheme	Scholarship Schemes
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Section 4: In the columns below please give details of any other government schemes the CwD is availing / applying for.

Q1.	**Name of scheme:**	1.	2.	3. .....
Q2.	**Scheme status:**	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above	☐ Availing ☐ Currently applying ☐ Applied and waiting for approval ☐ Scheme approved and waiting to receive the assistance ☐ Planning to apply ☐ None of the above
Q3.	**Year since you availed /applied for the scheme:**			
Q4.	**Mode of application used to apply for the scheme:**	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline	☐ Fully online ☐ Partly online and partly offline ☐ Fully offline
Q5.	**Duration of the scheme:**			
Q6.	**Frequency of assistance:**	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance	☐ One time assistance ☐ Yearly assistance ☐ Monthly assistance ☐ Quarterly assistance
Q7.	**Do you receive the assistance on time?**	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Q8.	**How many times did you receive the assistance till now?**			
Q9.	**From where do/did you get information about schemes?**	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others ☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others ☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions	☐ Internet/social media ☐ Newspaper/ TV/ other media ☐ Friends / family ☐ NGOs ☐ Awareness programmes ☐ Grassroot workers: Angadwadi/ ASHA/others ☐ Panchayati Raj Institutions

Shishu Sarothi, Guwahati

Section 5: The following questions are regarding your experience with Govt. schemes. Please select the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement on the behalf of the CwD.

(Skip this section if the CwD is not availing any Govt. schemes)

1. I filled and submitted the scheme/s application independently	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
2. I sought help from friends / family to fill and submit the scheme/s application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
3. I sought help from an agent to fill and submit the scheme/s application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
4. The overall scheme/s application process was easy and convenient	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
5. The CwD receivesthe scheme allowance on time	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
6. The scheme allowance gets delayed by years	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
7. The scheme allowance gets delayed by months	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
8. The office that disburses the scheme is inconveniently far from my place of residence	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
9. The office that disburses the scheme is accessible for persons with disability	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
10. There was no application fee	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
11. I paid a fee to a third party / agent for the application process	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
12. The cost of transportation to the office that disburses the scheme is expensive	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
13. The CwD waited for more than a year to receive the allowance from the time of application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
14. The CwDreceived the allowance within 6 months from the time of application	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
15. I am comfortable with the hours of operation of the office that disburses the	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree

scheme					
16. I am comfortable with the appointment systems of the office that disburses the scheme	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
17. I am satisfied with the attitude of the staff of the office that disburses the scheme	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
18. The scheme adequately meets the CwD's needs	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
19. I am satisfied with the quality of assistive devices/ aids / appliances/ support services provided to me through the scheme/s.	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
20. I am usually aware of the scheme/s made available for CwD by the govt.	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree
21. I understand the purpose of the scheme/s and how to use it for the CwD's benefit	☐ Strongly disagree	☐ Disagree	☐ Neutral	☐ Agree	☐ Strongly agree

Section 6: Did you experience the following during the Covid-19 pandemic?Please select the option that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement:

a.	Earning of family members / head of household was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
b.	Education of CwD was discontinued	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
c.	Disbursal of Disability Pension was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree
d.	Access to other schemes was affected	☐ Disagree	☐ Maybe	☐ Agree

Section 7: Are you aware of the following rights of a person / child with disability?

a.	Equality, non-discrimination and personal liberty	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
b.	Persons with disabilities have equal rights to own, inherit property, control financial affairs, have access to bank accounts, loans, mortgages and financial credit	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
c.	Government should provide free healthcare (subject to family income), barrier free environment in all hospitals and priority in attendance and treatment.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
d.	Every child with benchmark disability should have free education between the ages of 6 to 18 years.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
e.	5% seats should be reserved for persons with benchmark disabilities in all government institutions of higher education.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

f.	There should be no discrimination in employment on the ground of disability.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
g.	4% reservation in identified government jobs.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware
h.	5% reservation for persons withbenchmark disabilities in poverty alleviation and development schemes, with priority to women with benchmark disability.	☐I'm not aware	☐Yes I'm aware

- End -

Thank you for your participation.

Consent Form

Research topic: Reach and Implementation of Government Schemes for Persons with Disabilities in Assam.\

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research study conducted by Disability Law Unit, Shishu Sarothi.

Participation: My participation will consist of responding to a series of questionnaires related to the research topic mentioned above.

Risks: I understand that there is no risk involved in participating in this study, beyond those risks experienced in everyday life.

Benefits: My participation in this study will contribute to a better understanding of reach and implementation of government schemes for persons with disabilities in Assam.

Confidentiality and Anonymity: I have received assurance from the interviewer that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. Anonymity will be protected by the removal of any identifying characteristics from the data during the analysis and reporting stages.

Conservation of Data: The data collected will be kept by the researchers of Disability Law Unit, Shishu Sarothi in a secure manner.

Voluntary Participation: I am under no obligation to participate and if I choose to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions, without suffering any negative consequences. If I choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be deleted and/or destroyed.

By completing this survey, I am consenting to participate in this study.

Appendix v

Questionnaire

(for NGO representative)

(telephonic or face-to- face interview)

For office use only	
Serial Number:	Interviewer's Initial:
Participant ID:	Location of interview:

Section 1: Demographic details

Q1.	**Nameof the organisation:**	
Q2.	**Your designation:**	
Q3.	**Your email:**	
Q4.	**Your contact no.:**	
Q5.	**Organisations' registration:**	☐Societies Registration Act ☐Trust Act ☐Companies Act ☐Special Licensing
Q6.	**Address:**	
Q7.	**District:**	
Q8.	**Year of establishment:**	
Q9.	**Number of years your organisation has been working for persons with disabilities:**	
Q10.	**Ongoing services for children/persons with disabilities:**	☐Inclusive education ☐Medical treatment/therapy ☐Vocational education ☐Livelihood ☐Day care centre ☐Residential facilities ☐Scholarships ☐ Any other (please specify)
Q11.	**Types of disability that your organisation is currently working with:**	☐ Locomotor Disability ☐ Speech &Language Disability ☐ Leprosy Cured Person ☐ Multiple Sclerosis ☐ Cerebral palsy ☐ Parkinson's Disease ☐ Dwarfism ☐ Hemophilia ☐ Muscular Dystrophy ☐ Thalassemia ☐ Acid Attack Victims ☐ Sickle Cell Disease ☐ Blindness ☐ Mental Illness ☐ Low Vision ☐ Specific Learning Disability ☐ Deafness ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorder ☐ Hard of Hearing ☐ Intellectual Disability ☐ Multiple disabilities including Deaf-Blindness ☐ Others (please specify)……..

Section 2: Questions on govt. schemes for PwDs.

1. What do you think is the situation of person with disabilities (PWDs) in Assam?
2. Are you aware of some Govt. schemes which PwDs can avail? What are they?
3. Are the govt. schemes for PwDs adequately meeting their needs? Please share some reasons in support of your answer.
4. Does your organization have any role in the scheme implementation / facilitation process? If yes, what is your / the role?
5. What challenges does your organization face in implementing / facilitating the schemes? *(ask this question if interviewee answers yes to Q3)*
6. How has the covid-19 situation affected the scheme implementation process? *(ask this question if interviewee doesn't mention covid or mentions it very passingly in Q4)*
7. How does your organization create awareness about various govt. schemes for PwDs?
8. What type of schemes would you suggest the govt. to launch in the future that would benefit the PwDs?

-End-

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix vi

Questionnaire

(for Govt. officials)

(telephonic or face-to-face interview)

For office use only	
Serial Number:	Interviewer's Initial:
Participant ID:	Location of interview:

Section 1: Demographic details

Q1. **Name:**	
Q2. **Email:**	
Q3. **Department:**	
Q4. **Post / Designation:**	
Q5. **District / State:**	

Section 2: Questions on govt. schemes for PwDs.

1. What do you think is the situation of person with disabilities (PWDs) in Assam?
2. Does the Govt. have enough data on PWDs?
3. There are some Govt. schemes aimed at benefitting the PwDs. Are they adequately meeting the needs of the PwDs? Please share some reasons in support of your answer.
4. What is your role in the scheme implementation process?
5. What challenges do you face and / or your office/deptt. faces in implementing the schemes?
6. How can these barriers (or challenges) be addressed and by whom?
7. How has the covid-19 situation affected the scheme implementation process? (ask this question if interviewee doesn't mention covid or mentions it very passingly in Q5)
8. How does your office/ deptt. create awareness about various govt. schemes for PwDs?
9. What is the budget allocation for the scheme implemented by your office/ deptt. which PwDs can avail? Has it increased or decreased over the years?

Thank you for your participation.

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