

## Chapter 5

### Awareness level of Aspirational District Programmes among the Entrepreneurs

#### 5.1: Introduction:

The state of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the Aspirational Districts of North East India has been discussed in the previous chapter. It was revealed in the previous chapter that amongst the MSMEs, micro-based enterprises have the highest percentage share compared with small- and medium-based enterprises. The present chapter is developed to ascertain the awareness level of Aspirational District Programmes (ADP) among the entrepreneurs of Aspirational Districts of North-East India. Understanding the level of awareness about the ADP among entrepreneurs can give an idea of its role in fostering entrepreneurship and economic growth in North-East India. The success of the government's entrepreneurial initiatives in aspirational districts depends significantly on awareness of various government schemes, including the ADP. Hence, conducting of awareness-based study is highly crucial at this juncture. Awareness studies have also emerged as crucial tools in understanding the impact of development initiatives on rural communities. In regions like North-East India, which is characterized by a lack of economic development and a positive entrepreneurial environment, awareness serves as a precursor to participation in development programs, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial growth like the Aspirational District Programme (ADP). As mentioned, the programme was initiated to uplift marginalized areas by enhancing education, healthcare, and economic development (NITI Aayog, 2018).

Several studies including Chatterjee & Das, (2019) reveal that enhanced awareness directly correlates with improved participation in entrepreneurial activities. Having awareness of government policy and programmes is one of the important factors for entrepreneurial success; an entrepreneur needs to have adequate knowledge of available resources, government support programs, and skill development initiatives to initiate and sustain entrepreneurial ventures. According to Devi & Singh, (2021), entrepreneurs who are aware of government initiatives such as credit-linked subsidy programs or skill development schemes report better business growth and sustainability.

The awareness level of entrepreneurs can be enhanced through various initiatives including education and training programmes. Effective dissemination through local institutions, NGOs, and digital platforms can also significantly improve the awareness levels of entrepreneurs (Pradhan *et al.*, 2020). Hence, there is a need for localized awareness campaigns (Gupta & Sharma, 2020) of government initiatives to promote entrepreneurship in rural and backward areas of the country.

Few studies are found in the existing literature that highlight the awareness level of entrepreneurs regarding ADP in North-East India. The summary of the studies related to the awareness of ADP among entrepreneurs of different states of North East India is presented below.

Sarmah *et al.* (2021) investigated the awareness level of entrepreneurs regarding ADP in North-East India. The study focused on Assam's three aspirational districts, including Baksa, Dhubri, and Darrang. The study considered structured surveys to assess awareness among rural entrepreneurs, revealing that only 40percent of respondents had prior knowledge of ADP initiatives. The study revealed that awareness campaigns through community networks and local institutions significantly improved participation in ADP-supported programs. A study which was conducted by Borah *et al.* (2022) on awareness among rural youth about ADP initiatives in Assam, focusing on three districts ( Barpeta, Goalpara, and Hailakandi) found that targeted awareness drives using local dialects improved youth engagement in ADP-supported vocational programs by 40percent. Das & Barman (2022) analysed the awareness of ADP in Meghalaya's rural districts, emphasizing the role of local governance institutions. The study found that entrepreneurs who attended Panchayat-led awareness sessions had significantly higher participation in government programs compared to those who relied on informal networks for information. Kashyap *et al.* (2022) examined awareness levels of ADP among women entrepreneurs in Mizoram's rural areas. The study highlighted that social networks like self-help groups (SHGs) played a critical role in disseminating information about ADP initiatives, ultimately increasing participation rates among female entrepreneurs by 30percent. Singh & Thapa (2023) also conducted a study in Nagaland's remote districts, focusing on the impact of social media campaigns in spreading awareness about ADP schemes. The study revealed that digital platforms improved awareness levels by 50percent, especially among tech-savvy youth

entrepreneurs. The findings of a study on ADP awareness among tribal entrepreneurs in Arunachal Pradesh which was conducted by Gogoi & Dutta (2023) revealed that lack of access to digital information platforms was a key barrier to awareness. The study recommended strengthening awareness campaigns through culturally adapted communication strategies and local language-based interventions.

From the above, it is revealed that the studies that are related to awareness of ADP among the entrepreneurs of North East India do not consider all the aspirational districts of North-East India. While some of the studies considered three districts of Assam, some of the studies considered one district of a state. An extensive study that considers all 14 aspirational districts, as well as the micro-entrepreneurs, is missing in the literature. The present study is an attempt to fill up the existing research gap.

Apart from this, the present chapter is developed by keeping in mind that assessing the awareness of the ADP among entrepreneurs can find out several factors that can influence shaping a positive entrepreneurial environment in North-East India. It is also felt by the research that since the programme was initiated in 2018, a study related to awareness of ADP among the entrepreneurs of the aspirational districts will give a picture of the effectiveness of the implementation of the programme at the ground level.

Apart from this, some of the reasons for assessing the awareness of the ADP among entrepreneurs are mentioned below:

- (a) Checking the behavioral Change of entrepreneurs: Awareness is a critical step in encouraging positive behaviors of entrepreneurs such as environmental conservation, financial literacy, adoption of digital services, etc. (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983). Assessing the level of awareness can identify the level of behavioural change among entrepreneurs. According to Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), awareness significantly influences attitudes, intentions, and subsequent behavior change.
- (b) Assessing the knowledge level of entrepreneurs: Awareness study on ADP can help to evaluate how well entrepreneurs understand the government's flagship

programmes like ADP and such findings can be instrumental in improving the entrepreneurial environment in the economically least developed districts of North East India. Rosenstock's study (1974) proved that public health awareness has been instrumental in improving vaccination rates and controlling disease outbreaks.

- (c) **Entrepreneurial Engagement:** Increased awareness encourages entrepreneurs to leverage ADP's resources, such as financial incentives, training programs, and market linkages. In India's North Eastern Region, awareness about government support programs such as ADP has been linked to enhancing entrepreneurial activities (Gupta & Sharma, 2020).
- (d) **Bridging Information Gaps:** Identifying gaps is necessary to tailor interventions by policymakers and organizations such as organising specific targeted outreach campaigns, improving scheme penetration, etc. Limited awareness of the Aspirational District Programme (ADP) among rural entrepreneurs hindered the program's success, indicating the need for targeted communication strategies (Gupta and Sharma 2020). Hence, to take measures to improve awareness levels, identifying the gaps is highly essential.
- (e) **Economic Growth:** By ensuring entrepreneurs are aware of growth-oriented initiatives, ADP can contribute more effectively to job creation and income generation in backward districts.
- (f) **Policy Effectiveness:** Evaluating awareness helps policymakers understand how well ADP initiatives can reach target beneficiaries, ensuring effective resource allocation. It can help assess the success of campaigns, educational initiatives, and policy implementations.
- (g) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Awareness assessments can provide valuable data for evaluating ADP's impact on entrepreneurship development and informing future policy improvements.

To measure the level of awareness among the entrepreneurs, a structured questionnaire having 42 statements was circulated among the micro-entrepreneurs of the

study area. A four-point scale ( Not at all aware-1, Somewhat aware-2, Aware-3, and Highly Aware- 4) was considered to measure the level of awareness. Descriptive statistics like tabulations, simple percentages, medians, and standard deviations are used to analyse the collected data.

The chapter is presented in three parts. The first part gives an introductory background of the present chapter including a review of the literature, and research methodology applied in the chapter; the second part presents the findings of the field survey and the last part presents the conclusion.

## 5.2: Awareness of the Aspirational District Programme among the entrepreneurs

### 5.2.i. Descriptive statistics of awareness of ADP among the sample entrepreneurs

The descriptive statistics of awareness of ADP among the sample entrepreneurs are shown in Table 5.1. Here, the results of four attributes, AG1-objectives of ADP, AG2-Key Indicators of ADP, AG3-Role of state government in the implementation of ADP AG3-Role of district Administration in implementation of ADP are shown. The median value of all the attributes shows that the overall result according to the descriptive statistics is ‘somewhat aware of ADP’. The Std. Deviation results are found to be .720, .707, .710, and .689 implying that the data points are closely clustered around the median, indicating low variability. The Skewness value of all the attributes is less than 0.5 which indicates that all fall within the ‘approximate symmetry’.

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics of Awareness of ADP

		AG1	AG2	AG3	AG4
N	Valid	373	373	373	373
Median		<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>	<b>2.00</b>
Std. Deviation		.720	.706	.710	.689
Skewness		.195	.468	.344	.356

*Here, AG1-objectives of ADP, AG2-Key Indicators of ADP, AG3-Role of state government in implementation of ADP AG3-Role of district Administration in implementation of ADP*

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

5.2.ii. Awareness of ADP among the sample entrepreneurs

Table 5.2. Level of Awareness of ADP among the sample entrepreneurs

S. No	Q.No	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt
1	AG1	77	20.6	199	53.4	90	24.1	7	1.9	373	100.0
2	AG2	91	24.4	214	57.4	59	15.8	9	2.4	373	100.0
3	AG3	83	22.3	209	56.0	72	19.3	9	2.4	373	100.0
4	AG4	67	18.0	221	59.2	75	20.1	9	2.4	373	100.0

Source: field survey

From Table 5.2, it is revealed that the majority of the respondents (53.4 percent) are somewhat aware of '(AG1)-Objectives of ADP'. Only 1.9 percent of the total respondents are found to be highly aware of 'objectives of ADP', While 24.1 percent of the total respondents are aware of 'objectives of ADP', 20.6percent of the total respondents are found to be not at all aware of 'objectives of ADP'. *It indicates that about one-fifth of the total micro-entrepreneurs are not all aware of the 'objectives of ADP'.*

It is revealed that the majority of the respondents (57.4 percent) are somewhat aware of the **key** indicators of the Aspirational District Programme (AG2). Only 2.4 percent of the total respondents are found to be highly aware of these key indicators, while 15.8 percent of the total respondents are aware. However, 24.4 percent of the total respondents are not at all aware of the key indicators of the programme. *This suggests that nearly one-fourth of the micro-entrepreneurs lack awareness regarding the key indicators that drive the Aspirational District Programme.*

Similarly, awareness of the role of the State Government in implementing the Aspirational District Programme (AG3) shows that 56.0 percent of the respondents are somewhat aware. While 19.3 percent are aware, only 2.4 percent of the total respondents have a high level of awareness. On the other hand, 22.3 percent of the respondents are not at all aware of the State Government's role. *This indicates that more*

*than one-fifth of micro-entrepreneurs have no knowledge about the State Government’s involvement in the programme, which could affect their understanding of policy implementation at higher levels.*

Regarding ‘awareness of the role of the District Administration in implementing the Aspirational District Programme (AG4)’, the findings reveal that 59.2 percent of the respondents are somewhat aware. Another 20.1 percent of the total respondents are aware, while only 2.4 percent are highly aware. However, 18.0 percent of the respondents are not at all aware of the District Administration’s role. *This suggests that although the majority have some level of awareness, a significant portion of micro-entrepreneurs remain uninformed about the role played by local administration in executing the Aspirational District Programme.*

### **5.3. Awareness of Select Indicators of ADP**

Awareness of entrepreneurs on 5 indicators of ADP are presented separately in this section.

#### **5.3.a. Awareness on Financial Inclusion and Skill Development**

Table 5.3. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Awareness of provisions related to Financial Inclusion and Skill Development

		FISD 1	FISD 2	FISD 3	FISD 4	FISD 5	FISD 6	FISD 7	FISD 8	FISD 9	FISD 10
N	Valid	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.779	.748	.742	.766	.761	.935	.731	.683	.650	.676

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

Table 5.4. Level of Awareness of provisions related to Financial Inclusion and Skill Development among the sample entrepreneurs

S.No	Q.Code	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Count	percentage	Count	percentage	Count	percentage	Count	percentage	Count	percentage
1	FISD1	51	13.7	164	44.0	138	37.0	20	5.4	373	100.0
2	FISD2	53	14.2	161	43.2	148	39.7	11	2.9	373	100.0
3	FISD3	55	14.7	170	45.6	138	37.0	10	2.7	373	100.0
4	FISD4	57	15.3	171	45.8	130	34.9	15	4.0	373	100.0
5	FISD5	43	11.5	159	42.6	151	40.5	20	5.4	373	100.0
6	FISD6	34	9.1	110	29.5	132	35.4	97	26.0	373	100.0
7	FISD7	88	23.6	201	53.9	75	20.1	9	2.4	373	100.0
8	FISD8	89	23.9	211	56.6	69	18.5	4	1.1	373	100.0
9	FISD9	87	23.3	218	58.4	67	18.0	1	.3	373	100.0
10	FISD10	97	26.0	207	55.5	67	18.0	2	.5	373	100.0

Source: field Survey

From **Table 5.4**, it is revealed that the majority of respondents (44.0 percent) are somewhat aware of the **availability of financial assistance for entrepreneurs (FISD1)**. While 37.0 percent are aware, only 5.4 percent of the total respondents are highly aware of such financial provisions. On the other hand, 13.7 percent of the respondents are not at all aware of financial assistance opportunities. *This suggests that although a significant proportion of entrepreneurs have some level of awareness, a notable fraction remains uninformed, which may hinder their ability to access financial support.*

Regarding **government schemes for financial inclusion (FISD2)**, 43.2 percent of the respondents are somewhat aware, while 39.7 percent are aware. Only 2.9 percent of respondents have a high level of awareness, whereas 14.2 percent are completely unaware. *This indicates that while many micro-entrepreneurs have heard of financial*

*inclusion schemes, very few possess an in-depth understanding, limiting their ability to benefit fully from these initiatives.*

The data also highlights that 45.6 percent of respondents are somewhat aware of **subsidies available for skill development programs (FISD3)**, and 37.0 percent are aware. However, only 2.7 percent of respondents are highly aware, while 14.7 percent are not at all aware. *This finding suggests that a lack of complete knowledge about skill development subsidies might prevent entrepreneurs from utilizing these benefits effectively.*

Similarly, awareness of **vocational training opportunities under government schemes (FISD4)** is relatively high, with 45.8 percent being somewhat aware and 34.9 percent aware. However, only 4.0 percent of respondents are highly aware, while 15.3 percent are not at all aware. *This suggests that although many entrepreneurs recognize the availability of vocational training, very few have detailed knowledge about how to access or leverage these opportunities.*

In contrast, the awareness of **self-employment loan schemes (FISD5)** shows a relatively better understanding, as 42.6 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, and 40.5 percent are aware. While 5.4 percent are highly aware, 11.5 percent of respondents are not at all aware. *This indicates that self-employment loans have relatively higher recognition compared to other financial provisions, possibly due to higher outreach efforts or local demand for such schemes.*

A significant finding emerges in the case of **special financial incentives for women entrepreneurs (FISD6)**, where 26.0 percent of respondents are highly aware—the highest percentage among all provisions analyzed. While 35.4 percent are aware, 29.5 percent are somewhat aware, and only 9.1 percent are not at all aware. *This suggests that awareness campaigns targeted at women entrepreneurs may have been more effective in disseminating information about financial incentives for them.*

However, in the case of **digital financial literacy programs (FISD7)**, 53.9 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 20.1 percent are aware. Only 2.4 percent have a high level of awareness, while 23.6 percent are completely unaware. *This suggests that although many entrepreneurs have some exposure to digital financial*

*literacy programs, a significant proportion still lacks basic awareness, which could be a barrier to financial inclusion.*

Similarly, awareness of **access to credit through digital platforms (FISD8)** shows that 56.6 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 18.5 percent are aware. However, only 1.1 percent are highly aware, and 23.9 percent are not at all aware. *This suggests that although digital lending platforms are gaining some recognition, there remains a substantial gap in entrepreneurs' deeper understanding of these options.*

The findings on **government-backed microfinance initiatives (FISD9)** indicate that 58.4 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 18.0 percent are aware. However, only 0.3 percent are highly aware, and 23.3 percent are not at all aware. *This suggests that microfinance schemes need more effective dissemination of information so that entrepreneurs can better utilize these financial instruments.*

Finally, **awareness of government-sponsored skill certification programs (FISD10)** reveals that 55.5 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 18.0 percent are aware. Only 0.5 percent have a high level of awareness, while 26.0 percent of respondents are not at all aware. *This highlights a major gap in knowledge regarding skill certification programs, which could impact entrepreneurs' ability to formally validate their skills for better opportunities.*

### **5.3. b. Awareness of Basic Infrastructure**

Table 5.5. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Awareness of provisions related to Basic Infrastructure

	AFI SD1	AFIS D2	AFIS D3	AFIS D4	AFIS D5	AFIS D6	AFIS D7	AFIS D8	AFIS D9	AFIS D10
N	Valid	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	.779	.748	.742	.766	.761	.935	.731	.683	.650	.676

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

Table 5.6. Level of Awareness of provisions related to Basic Infrastructure among the sample entrepreneurs

S.No	Q.Code	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt
1	BI1	44	11.8	146	39.1	134	35.9	49	13.1	373	100.0
2	BI2	58	15.5	164	44.0	125	33.5	26	7.0	373	100.0
3	BI3	38	10.2	199	53.4	116	31.1	20	5.4	373	100.0
4	BI4	29	7.8	191	51.2	119	31.9	34	9.1	373	100.0
5	BI5	34	9.1	170	45.6	124	33.2	45	12.1	373	100.0
6	BI6	37	9.9	179	48.0	128	34.3	29	7.8	373	100.0
7	BI7	35	9.4	218	58.4	87	23.3	32	8.6	373	100.0

Source: field Survey

The findings indicates that 39.1 percent of respondents are somewhat aware of **basic infrastructure provisions related to industrial zones (BI1)**, while 35.9 percent are aware. However, only 13.1 percent of respondents are highly aware, whereas 11.8 percent are not at all aware. This suggests that while a majority of entrepreneurs have a general understanding of industrial zone facilities, a lack of in-depth knowledge might limit their ability to fully benefit from these resources.

Similarly, awareness of **government-supported infrastructure facilities (BI2)** is relatively high, with 44.0 percent of respondents being somewhat aware and 33.5 percent aware. However, only 7.0 percent of respondents are highly aware, while 15.5 percent are not at all aware. This indicates that while many entrepreneurs recognize the availability of infrastructure support, only a small fraction have the necessary details to navigate and utilize these facilities effectively.

For **common facility centers (BI3)**, 53.4 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, and 31.1 percent are aware. However, only 5.4 percent are highly aware, while 10.2 percent are not at all aware. The very low proportion of highly aware respondents suggests that these shared resources, which could help small businesses with cost-effective infrastructure, may not be fully utilized due to a lack of deep understanding.

In the case of **business parks and industrial clusters (BI4)**, 51.2 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 31.9 percent are aware. However, only 9.1 percent of respondents are highly aware, while 7.8 percent are not at all aware. This finding indicates that while entrepreneurs are relatively familiar with these spaces, they may not have complete information on how to access or make the best use of them.

Awareness of **utility services provided by the government (BI5)** is also significant, with 45.6 percent of respondents being somewhat aware and 33.2 percent aware. However, only 12.1 percent are highly aware, while 9.1 percent are not at all aware. This suggests that while many entrepreneurs know about these services, a considerable gap exists in understanding the specifics of how to access them.

Regarding **connectivity infrastructure (BI6)**, 48.0 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, and 34.3 percent are aware. However, only 7.8 percent are highly aware, while 9.9 percent are not at all aware. The relatively low percentage of highly aware respondents suggests that limited knowledge of available connectivity options may hinder entrepreneurs from optimizing their access to transport and digital infrastructure.

Finally, **awareness of industrial safety and environmental regulations (BI7)** is the most skewed, with 58.4 percent of respondents being somewhat aware and only 23.3 percent aware. Meanwhile, 8.6 percent of respondents are highly aware, and 9.4 percent are not at all aware. The high proportion of "somewhat aware" respondents suggests that while entrepreneurs recognize the importance of these regulations, they may lack the necessary detailed knowledge for full compliance and implementation.

### 5.3.c. Awareness of Agriculture and Water Resources

Table 5.7. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Awareness of provisions related to Agriculture and Water Resources

		AWR 1	AWR 2	AWR 3	AWR 4	AWR 5	AWR 6	AWR 7	AWR 8	AWR 9
N	Valid	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373	373
	Missin g	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.751	.758	.751	.773	.741	.764	.786	.776	.763

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

Table 5.8. Level of Awareness of provisions related to Agriculture and Water Resources among the sample entrepreneurs

S.No	Q.Cod e	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Co unt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt	Cou nt	perce nt
1	AWR1	97	26.0	193	51.7	73	19.6	10	2.7	373	100.0
2	AWR2	94	25.2	189	50.7	80	21.4	10	2.7	373	100.0
3	AWR3	98	26.3	190	50.9	76	20.4	9	2.4	373	100.0
4	AWR4	106	28.4	189	50.7	65	17.4	13	3.5	373	100.0
5	AWR5	109	29.2	212	56.8	36	9.7	16	4.3	373	100.0
6	AWR6	100	26.8	189	50.7	73	19.6	11	2.9	373	100.0
7	AWR7	83	22.3	174	46.6	104	27.9	12	3.2	373	100.0
8	AWR8	120	32.2	168	45.0	78	20.9	7	1.9	373	100.0
9	AWR9	113	30.3	176	47.2	176	47.2	7	1.9	373	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Awareness of **AWR1**- 'Micro-irrigation schemes of the Government' is moderate, with 51.7 percent of respondents somewhat aware and 19.6 percent aware. However, only 2.7 percent are highly aware, while 26.0 percent are not at all aware.

This suggests that while a majority have some level of awareness, there is a lack of deep understanding of the provision.

Similarly, **AWR2-** ‘Water bodies being rejuvenated under MGNREGA in the vicinity’ has a comparable awareness level, with 50.7 percent somewhat aware and 21.4 percent aware. Only 2.7 percent of respondents are highly aware, whereas 25.2 percent are not at all aware. This indicates that while general recognition exists, detailed knowledge remains limited.

In case of ‘Procedure to avail Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) coverage in Kharif season’**AWR3**, 50.9 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 20.4 percent are aware. Only 2.4 percent are highly aware, whereas 26.3 percent are not at all aware. This trend reinforces the observation that while surface-level knowledge is common, in-depth awareness is lacking.

‘Procedure to avail Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) coverage in Rabi season’-**AWR4** shows slightly lower awareness levels, with 50.7 percent somewhat aware and only 17.4 percent aware. While 3.5 percent are highly aware, a notable 28.4 percent are not at all aware. This suggests that awareness efforts for this provision may need enhancement.

The awareness of Mandis in the District linked to Electronic Market -**AWR5** stands out, as 56.8 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, but only 9.7 percent are aware. While 4.3 percent are highly aware, 29.2 percent are not at all aware. This indicates that although many have heard of this provision, fewer have a strong understanding of its details.

For Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the agricultural produce -**AWR6**, 50.7 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, while 19.6 percent are aware. Only 2.9 percent are highly aware, whereas 26.8 percent are not at all aware. This follows a similar pattern to the previous provisions, highlighting the gap in deep knowledge.

The awareness of ‘Schemes to get animals vaccinated’**AWR7** is relatively higher, with 46.6 percent somewhat aware and 27.9 percent aware. However, only 3.2 percent are highly aware, while 22.3 percent are not at all aware. This suggests a better overall understanding of this provision compared to others.

In contrast, Procedure for Artificial insemination coverage-**AWR8** has the highest proportion of respondents who are not at all aware (32.2 percent), while 45.0 percent are somewhat aware and 20.9 percent are aware. Only 1.9 percent are highly aware, indicating that this provision has lower overall recognition and may require targeted awareness campaigns. Finally, the awareness of Soil Health Cards- **AWR9** follows a similar trend, with 47.2 percent somewhat aware and 20.9 percent aware. However, only 1.9 percent are highly aware, while 30.3 percent are not at all aware. This suggests that a significant proportion of respondents lack adequate knowledge about this provision.

### 5.3.d Awareness of Education

Table 5.9. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Awareness of provisions related to Education

		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6
N	Valid	373	373	373	373	373	373
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.796	.805	.730	.757	.768	.759

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

Table 5.10. Level of Awareness of provisions related to Education among the sample entrepreneurs

S.No	Q.Code	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent
1	E1	40	10.7	161	43.2	140	37.5	32	8.6	373	100.0
2	E2	68	18.2	178	47.7	106	28.4	21	5.6	373	100.0
3	E3	30	8.0	194	52.0	124	33.2	25	6.7	373	100.0
4	E4	36	9.7	190	50.9	120	32.2	27	7.2	373	100.0
5	E5	70	18.8	193	51.7	94	25.2	16	4.3	373	100.0
6	E6	32	8.6	186	49.9	125	33.5	30	8.0	373	100.0

Source: Field Survey

Awareness on Schools in the District with functional girls' toilets (E1) is relatively high, with 43.2 percent of total respondents somewhat aware and 37.5 percent aware of it. A smaller percentage (8.6 percent) is highly aware, while 10.7 percent are not at all aware. This indicates that a majority of respondents have at least a basic understanding, but deeper knowledge is limited.

Awareness levels for Female literacy rate (15+ age group) in the District (E2) are slightly lower compared to E1. While 47.7 percent are somewhat aware, only 28.4 percent are aware and 5.6 percent highly aware. Notably, 18.2 percent are not at all aware, suggesting a need for better dissemination of information about this provision.

The highest proportion of respondents (52.0 percent) are somewhat aware for Schools in the District with functional drinking water facility (E3), while 33.2 percent are aware and 6.7 percent highly aware. Only 8.0 percent are not at all aware, indicating a relatively good level of awareness compared to other provisions. Awareness for Schools in the District with functional electricity facility at secondary level (E4) is fairly balanced, with 50.9 percent somewhat aware and 32.2 percent aware. A slightly higher 7.2 percent are highly aware, while 9.7 percent are not at all aware. This suggests that general knowledge is present, but detailed understanding remains limited.

Awareness on Elementary schools in the District complying with RTE specified Pupil Teacher Ratio (E5) is lower for this provision, with 51.7 percent of total respondents somewhat aware but only 25.2 percent aware and a small 4.3 percent highly aware it. Notably, 18.8 percent are not at all aware, making this one of the least understood provisions in the dataset. Awareness on schools in the District providing textbooks to children within 1 month of start of academic session (E6) is 49.9 percent are somewhat aware, while 33.5 percent are aware and 8.0 percent highly aware. Only 8.6 percent of total respondents are not at all aware, making this one of the better-known provisions in terms of overall awareness.

### 5.3.e. Awareness on Health and Nutrition

Table 5.11. Descriptive Statistics of Level of Awareness of provisions related to Health and Nutrition

		HN1	HN2	HN3	HN4	HN5	HN6
N	Valid	373	373	373	373	373	373
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Median		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		.824	.872	.777	.764	.807	.810

Source: computed based on Field Survey data

Table 5.12. Level of Awareness of provisions related to Health and Nutrition among the sample entrepreneurs

S.No	Q.Code	Not at all aware		Somewhat aware		Aware		Highly Aware		Total	
		Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent	Count	percent
1	HN1	49	13.1	151	40.5	141	37.8	32	8.6	373	100.0
2	HN2	60	16.1	134	35.9	143	38.3	36	9.7	373	100.0
3	HN3	55	14.7	169	45.3	131	35.1	18	4.8	373	100.0
4	HN4	55	14.7	163	43.7	141	37.8	14	3.8	373	100.0
5	HN5	65	17.4	160	42.9	129	34.6	19	5.1	373	100.0
6	HN6	82	22.0	152	40.8	127	34.0	12	3.2	373	100.0

Source : Field Survey

Regarding awareness on Pregnant women should receive 4 or more antenatal care check-ups (HN1), the findings reveal that 40.5 percent of the respondents are somewhat aware, while 37.8 percent are aware, and only 8.6 percent are highly aware. However, 13.1 percent of the respondents are not at all aware of these provisions. This suggests that while a majority of entrepreneurs have some level of awareness, a significant proportion lacks a deep understanding, which may hinder their ability to utilize these health and nutrition initiatives effectively.

Awareness on immunization of children (9-11) of BCG, DPT3 & OPV3 and Measles1 in the district indicates that 35.9 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, and 38.3 percent are aware, while only 9.7 percent are highly aware. On the other hand, 16.1 percent of respondents are not at all aware. This highlights that although a large

portion of the sample is familiar with these provisions, limited in-depth knowledge could restrict their ability to benefit fully from them.

In the case of HN3- Availability of specialist services available in district hospitals against IPHS norms, the data reveals that 45.3 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, whereas 35.1 percent are aware, and only 4.8 percent are highly aware. Meanwhile, 14.7 percent of respondents remain completely unaware. This finding suggests that while a significant proportion has heard about these provisions, very few have a comprehensive understanding, which may limit their ability to make informed health-related decisions.

Awareness of Conducting of Village/Urban Health Sanitation & Nutrition day- HN4 follows a similar pattern, with 43.7 percent of respondents being somewhat aware, 37.8 percent aware, and only 3.8 percent highly aware. However, 14.7 percent of respondents are not at all aware. This indicates that while a reasonable level of awareness exists, the low percentage of highly aware individuals points to a need for further sensitization efforts.

For HN5- Proportion of Anganwadis with own buildings, the findings show that 42.9 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, 34.6 percent are aware, and only 5.1 percent are highly aware. On the other hand, 17.4 percent of respondents are not at all aware. This suggests that while a majority have some level of awareness, a considerable portion remains uninformed, potentially affecting their ability to access health and nutrition-related benefits.

Finally, the lowest awareness levels are observed for HN6 i.e., percentage of First Referral Units (FRU) with labour rooms and obstetrics OT NQAS certified (meet LaQShya guidelines), where 40.8 percent of respondents are somewhat aware, 34.0 percent are aware, and only 3.2 percent are highly aware. Notably, 22.0 percent of respondents are not at all aware of these provisions. This indicates a significant gap in awareness, underscoring the need for targeted outreach and information dissemination efforts.

Table 5.13 Awareness Score sheet to define the Awareness level of ADP among the sample entrepreneurs

<b>Awareness Index Score (AIS)</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
≥ 70percent of the total score	<b>Highly Aware</b>	Strong Awareness of ADP
40percent – 69percent of the total score	<b>Moderately Aware</b>	Moderate Awareness of ADP
< 40percent of the total score	<b>Low Awareness</b>	Low and negligible Awareness of ADP

Source: developed by the scholar based on literature

(Weight=Total Score / Score of Indicator)

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Weight Calculation</b>	<b>Final Weight</b>	<b>Overall Weight Score</b>	<b>percent</b>
<b>Awareness of the basics of ADP</b>	3028	3028/34913	0.09	272.52	9
<b>Awareness of Financial Literacy and Skill Development Provision</b>	8299	8299/34913	0.24	1991.76	24
<b>Awareness of Basic Infrastructure provision</b>	6248	6248/34913	0.18	1124.64	18
<b>Awareness of Agriculture and Water Resource Provision</b>	6943	6943/34913	0.20	1388.6	20
<b>Awareness of Education provision</b>	5211	5211/34913	0.15	781.65	15
<b>Awareness of Health and Nutrition provision</b>	5084	5084 /34913	0.15	762.6	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>34913</b>		<b>1.00</b>	<b>6321.77</b>	<b>18.10</b>

Source: Computed by the scholar

Here, the percentage Weight score =  $(6321.77 / 34913) \times 100 = 18.10$  percent

### **Overall Result: Low Awareness of ADP among the entrepreneurs**

The key findings of the above table can be interpreted as follows:

1. Overall Awareness Level: The total weight score is 18.10 percent, indicating a low awareness of ADP among entrepreneurs.
2. Category-wise Awareness:
  - a. Financial Literacy and Skill Development Provision has the highest awareness weight (24 percent), suggesting that outreach efforts in this area have been relatively effective.
  - b. Agriculture and Water Resource Provision (20 percent) and Basic Infrastructure Provision (18 percent) also have moderate awareness, though there is room for improvement.
  - c. Education Provision (15 percent) and Health and Nutrition Provision (15 percent) share similar levels of awareness, which are relatively low.
  - d. Awareness of the Basics of ADP (9 percent) has the lowest score, indicating that many entrepreneurs are unfamiliar with the foundational aspects of the programme.
3. Implications: The low awareness, especially in critical areas like the basics of ADP, education, and health, suggests that more targeted awareness campaigns and capacity-building initiatives are required to ensure entrepreneurs can fully benefit from the programme.

### **5.4 Conclusion**

The present chapter highlighted the awareness level of ADP among the entrepreneurs who are operating micro enterprises. The said Programme has been considered a significant intervention to transform India's most underdeveloped districts by focusing on key areas such as health, education, agriculture, financial inclusion, skill development and basic infrastructure. From the findings, it is observed that majority of the entrepreneurs are somewhat aware of the programme, however, there are huge

number of entrepreneurs who are not at all aware of the ADP. Among the five sectors identified, the highest awareness level is found in the provision of 'financial literacy and skill development'. The awareness levels of entrepreneurs regarding various provisions under the Aspirational District Programme (ADP) is also shown in the form of table to see the clarity of the level of awareness on different sectors. The overall awareness level of the programme among the entrepreneurs is found to be very low. The findings of the present chapter is also similar with some of the studies which have been mentioned in the first part of this chapter. The reason of low awareness could be because of different factors. However, one of the main factors would be the availability of information in different language which are not known to the entrepreneurs. A study conducted by Gogoi *et al.*, (2023) reveals that information on ADP initiatives is often available only in English or Hindi. It automatically limits accessibility for non-Hindi-speaking regions in Northeast India. Except Assamese and Bengali, the language which are widely spoken by the natives of North-Eastern Region belong to Tibeto-Burman language family. Above all, the entrepreneurs which have been considered for this study are those who own micro enterprises. Their operations are mainly concentrated on local areas. According to Singh & Yadav (2019), entrepreneurs who engage in community networks, business associations, or self-help groups often have better exposure to ADP interventions. Hence, there is need to organise awareness drives for participation, ensures access to incentives, and fosters engagement in skill development, financial support, and market linkage initiatives (Gupta & Sharma, 2020) among the entrepreneurs.

As mentioned in chapter 3, one of the standout aspects of the programme has been the focus on agriculture and water resources, with a notable increase in micro-irrigation coverage and animal vaccination rates. It can be mentioned that the distribution of Soil Health Cards, seeds are not only intervention in sustainable farming but also motivation for agro-based entrepreneurship development. The availability of financial and health services can also encourage local people to join entrepreneurial movement. Hence, in the next chapter, the benefits received by the entrepreneurs and the overall impact of ADP on them is explored.

## References

- Gogoi, P., Sharma, A., & Borah, K. (2023). Challenges in Implementing Government Schemes in Northeast India: A Case Study on ADP. *Journal of Rural Development*, 42(3), 215-230.
- Gupta, R., & Sharma, P. (2020). Entrepreneurship Development through Government Initiatives in India: A Study on ADP Awareness. *Indian Journal of Social Science Research*, 36(2), 145-160.
- Kumar, S., Patel, A., & Mishra, R. (2021). Assessing Awareness of Government Schemes among Entrepreneurs in Aspirational Districts. *Economic Development Quarterly*, 28(1), 87-101.
- Roy, D., & Das, A. (2023). Digital Literacy and ADP Awareness in Assam's Backward Districts. *Journal of Entrepreneurship Studies*, 45(4), 312-328.
- Singh, V., & Yadav, K. (2019). Role of Social Networks in Promoting Awareness of Government Programs: A Study on ADP in India. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 34(1), 67-82.