

Crompton

Crompton CSR Foundation

Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme

Impact Assessment Study

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Acknowledgement

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement	2
Table of Contents	4
List of Tables	5
List of Figures	5
Abbreviations	5
Executive Summary	7
Introduction	8
Background	8
Scholarship opportunities available for the students	9
Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Limited and their CSR Initiatives	10
The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme	11
Progress of the programme	11
Methodology	14
Research Objectives	14
Timeline	14
Research Approach	15
Research Sampling	15
Profile of the survey respondents	15
Research framework	16
Findings	18
Program Inputs	19
Program Output	24
Program Outcome	25
Program Impact	30
Analysis	32
Relevance	32
Effectiveness	33
	4
Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme Impact Assessment Study	

Efficiency	34
Coherence	36
Impact	37
Sustainability	38
Recommendations	39
Conclusion	40

List of Tables

Table 1: Details of KIIs and Online Survey

List of Figures

Figure 1: Profile of the scholarship recipients

Figure 2: Profile of the survey respondents

Figure 3: Awareness of the Scholarship Programme

Figure 4: Different ways scholarship helped the students

Figure 5: Personal and professional development of students

Figure 6: CSR Grant received and utilised in the Program

Abbreviations

AAI	Airports Authority of India
AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
AISHE	All-India Survey on Higher Education
AMP	Association of Muslim professionals
C4Y	Centre for Youth
CCF	Crompton CSR Foundation
CGF	Collective Good Foundation
COEP	College of Engineering Pune

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
E.W.S	Economically Weaker Section
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HODs	Head of Departments
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
I.T.Is	Industrial Training Institutes
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
KVPY	Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana
NSS	National Sample Survey
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
REECIS	Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact and Sustainability
SC	Scheduled Caste
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHDF Scholarships	Sikh Human Development Fund Scholarships
ST	Scheduled Tribes

Executive Summary

The Impact Assessment report evaluated the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program's impact on low-income students who received financial aid for higher education in 2021-2022. The programme, a partnership between Crompton CSR Foundation and Centre for Youth (C4Y), aimed to empower deserving students to pursue higher education. The evaluation examined the programme's outcomes and challenges and suggested recommendations for improvement.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the assessment followed a mixed methodology, combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods. An online survey was conducted with 96 scholarship recipients, and 37 key informant interviews were held with stakeholders such as the C4Y team, heads of educational institutions, parents, and students. The research covered recipients and stakeholders across Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, and Himachal Pradesh. The findings section of the report is structured around four key areas: Programme Inputs, Outputs, Outcome, and Impact, using the REECIS evaluation framework by OECD-DAC for analysis.

The assessment revealed that the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program had played a crucial role in addressing financial barriers and improving access to education for students in the Program locations. The scholarship amount, which was up to INR 1 Lac, covered various educational expenses, including tuition fees, development charges, hostel fees, mess charges, books, and related costs.

Furthermore, the program has contributed to the development of human capital and enhanced workforce readiness. By investing in the education of young individuals, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program has improved the employability prospects and expanded career opportunities for scholarship recipients.

The success of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program can be attributed to the collective efforts of the Crompton CSR Foundation, the dedicated implementation team, and educational institutions. The program demonstrated a strong commitment to empowering deserving students, breaking barriers, and creating a pathway to a brighter future.

Introduction

Background

India's youth population, which makes up 27.3%¹ of the total population, is key to the country's growth and potential. It is widely recognized that investing in the education, health, and training of young individuals unlocks the economic growth of a nation. To unlock this potential in India, it is crucial to ensure that young people have access to the necessary support, including good health, education, training, and opportunities to contribute to the economy.

The All-India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) revealed a significant disparity among young individuals in India in acquiring the education and skills needed for employment in the economy. According to the AISHE report of 2018-19 conducted by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), the Higher Education Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the 18-23 age group was just 26.3%. Highlighting that as many as 74 out of 100 students aged 18-23 were not enrolled in higher education. Although there was a slight improvement, with the ratio increasing to 27.3% in 20-21, the enrolments still fell too short of expectations.

The education and skills gap in India poses a significant challenge in utilizing the potential of the country's youth population as a demographic dividend. A demographic dividend refers to the economic benefits that arise when a country has a large working-age population capable of contributing productively to the workforce and overall economic growth. To effectively leverage this demographic dividend, bridging the gap between young individuals' education and skills and the job market's requirements is imperative.

AISHE data indicates a mismatch between the education and skills of many young individuals and the economy's demands. This mismatch implies that a significant portion of the youth population was ill-prepared to meet the economic demands, limiting their ability to contribute effectively to economic development. Consequently, young people faced challenges in finding suitable employment opportunities, resulting in unemployment, underemployment, or engagement in low-skilled and informal sectors, which hindered their full potential contribution to the economy.

To harness the demographic dividend effectively, addressing the gap in education and skills among the youth was crucial. This required investments in quality education, vocational training, and skill development programs aligned with the job market's needs. By equipping young individuals with relevant knowledge and skills, they could be better prepared to enter the

¹ Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (2022), The Social Statistics Division of National Statistical Office (NSO) (2022). Retrieved from: https://mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Youth_in_India_2022.pdf

workforce, enhance their employability, and make meaningful contributions to social and economic development, thus fully realizing the potential of the demographic dividend.

Recognizing students' financial challenges, the government introduced scholarships as a significant intervention to support enrolment and completion of studies. Alongside governmental efforts, the support of corporates and corporate foundations played a vital role in providing financial assistance to deserving students and addressing the low enrolment rates in colleges and universities.

This report assessed the impact and contributions of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program, a collaborative initiative between the government, corporates, and corporate foundations. The program aimed to empower students and bridge the education and skills gap among young individuals. By analysing the effectiveness of the scholarship program, we sought to provide evidence-based insights and recommendations to enhance its impact, foster greater enrolment, and enable more young individuals to access higher education.

Scholarship opportunities available for the students²

Common types of scholarship opportunities available for students in India are classified as below:

Means-Based Scholarships- These support students from economically backward classes, usually categorized based on annual family income.	AMP Higher Education Scholarship Fund SHDF Scholarships Joining Hands Higher Education Scholarship program AICTE-Saksham Scholarship Scheme Sindhutai Sapakal Scheme for Educating Orphans and Children with Special Needs
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²

WeArePrecisely. 2020. "Top 25 Scholarships for College Students 2020: Indian Edition." Medium. <https://medium.com/@WeArePrecisely/top-25-scholarships-for-college-students-2020-indian-edition-10649f0f6734>

Merit-Based Scholarships Academic merit, as well as the financial need of the students, are considered under this scholarship	Siemens Scholarship program Kishore Vaigyanik Protsahan Yojana (KVPY) INSPIRE Scholarship Prime Minister's Scholarship Scheme for Central Armed Police Forces and Assam Rifles
Talent-Based Scholarships: This scholarship is provided to those who have talents has been recognized in the fields of music, art, and dance.	Comix Competition (International) Kalakriti Fellowship Madhobi Chatterji Memorial Fellowship Lalit Kala Akademi Scholarship
Sports-Based Scholarships: This scholarship is provided based on performance in a particular sport.	AAI Sports Scholarship Scheme in India University of Sussex Sports Scholarships Scheme (UK)

Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Limited and their CSR Initiatives

Crompton Greaves Consumer Electricals Limited, a renowned company in India with a rich brand legacy of over 90 years, has emerged as a trusted provider of a diverse range of electrical products and solutions. Firmly believing in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) principles, Crompton has integrated these principles into its business operations. Through its dedicated corporate social responsibility (CSR) arm, the Crompton CSR Foundation (CCF), the company has been actively involved in Water Conservation, Skill & Entrepreneurship Development, and community development initiatives. Crompton has successfully implemented various CSR Programs across different regions of the country.

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme

The Crompton CSR Foundation (CCF) and the Centre for Youth (C4Y) launched the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program in 2021 to support academically talented students from low-income backgrounds in pursuing higher education in Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), Vadodara (Gujarat), Baddi (Himachal Pradesh), and Goa locations.

C4Y reached out to students who faced financial challenges due to low family income, COVID-related disruptions, or other reasons and invited them to apply for the Merit-cum-Means 'C4Y Ujjwal Deep Scholarship' online through Google Forms. The program followed a 5 step process that included due diligence and verification of applicant documents, online interactions with the

students, shortlisting of the candidates, releasing the final list of selected students, and disbursement of the scholarship amounts to the institutions.

The scholarship was open to students who resided in Ahmednagar (Maharashtra), Baddi/Solan (Himachal Pradesh), Goa, or Vadodara (Gujarat), irrespective of their study location in India. The program supported undergraduate and postgraduate students in medical, engineering, and allied courses and students in Industrial Training Institutes (ITI), diploma courses, and competitive coaching.

Progress of the program

The scholarship program received 1,240 applications across its two phases. From these applications, 285 recipients were selected for the scholarship in Phase 1 and Phase 2. Among the selected recipients, 22% were females, while 78% were males. Below are the key details of the Scholarship Programme:

Details	(In numbers)
Scholarship disbursement Amount	INR 1 Crore
Maximum Scholarship amount per student	INR 1 lac
Applications	1240
Scholarship Recipients	285
Educational Institutions	40
College's Locations	Over 23 Cities
Students Residence	4 states (Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat & Himachal Pradesh)
Type of Courses	6

Profile of the Scholarships recipients

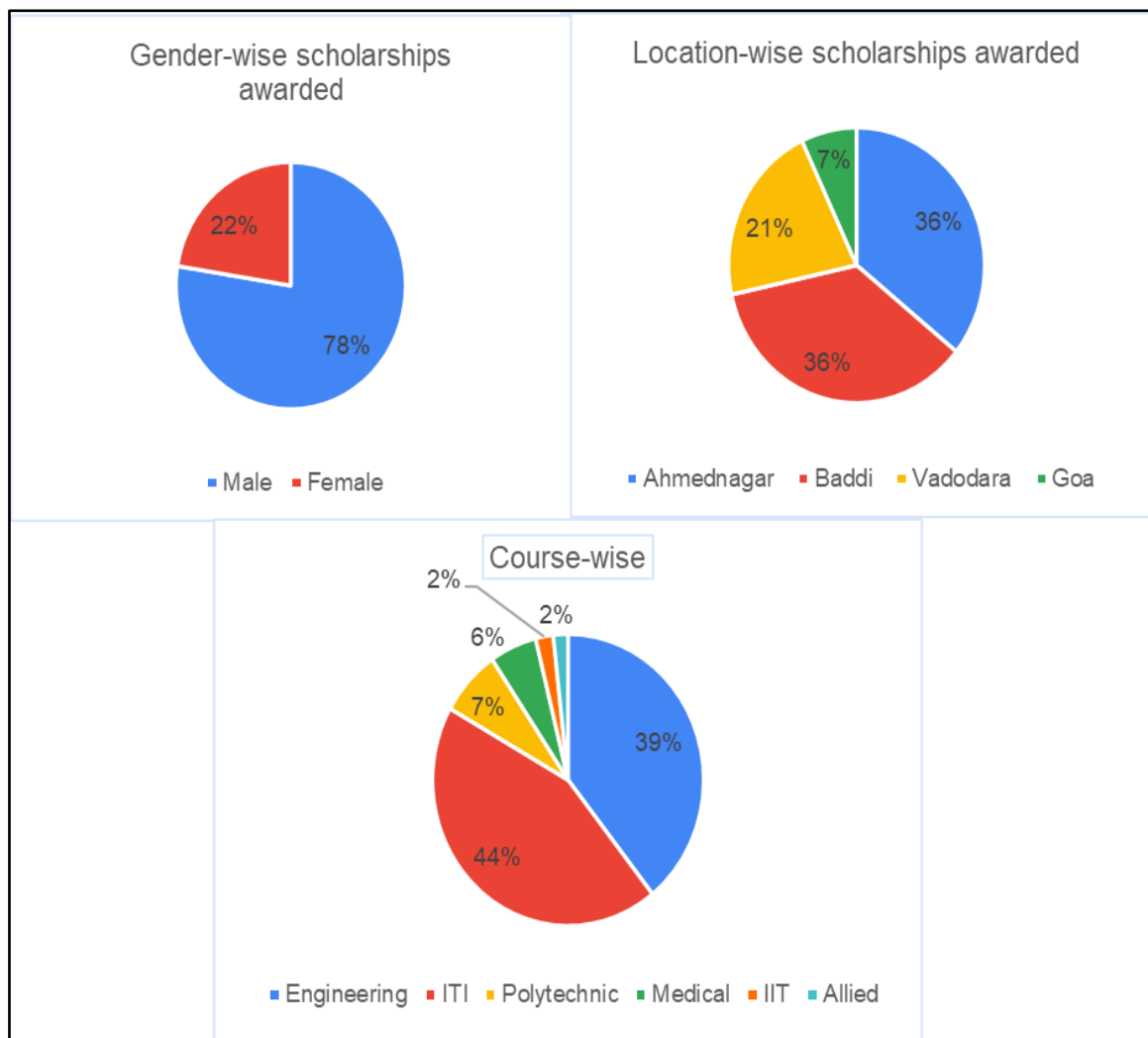


Figure 1: Profile of the scholarship recipients

The chart indicates that a larger proportion of scholarships were granted to male students. Furthermore, the distribution of scholarships is categorized by location and course. Among the specified locations, Ahmednagar (Maharashtra) and Baddi (Himachal Pradesh) stood out as the highest awarding regions, with approximately 100 scholarships awarded in each location. Vadodara closely followed with 61 scholarships, while 20 scholarships were given in Goa.

Methodology

This section outlines the methodology employed to evaluate the impacts of the Ujjwal Deep scholarship program. The assessment commenced with a context-setting meeting, during which NuSocia (the assessment team) collaborated with the CCF team to establish a shared understanding of the approach, timeline, and methodology. To gain insights into the program and its progress, a thorough analysis of secondary research was conducted, including a comprehensive review of Program documents and other relevant secondary sources of information.

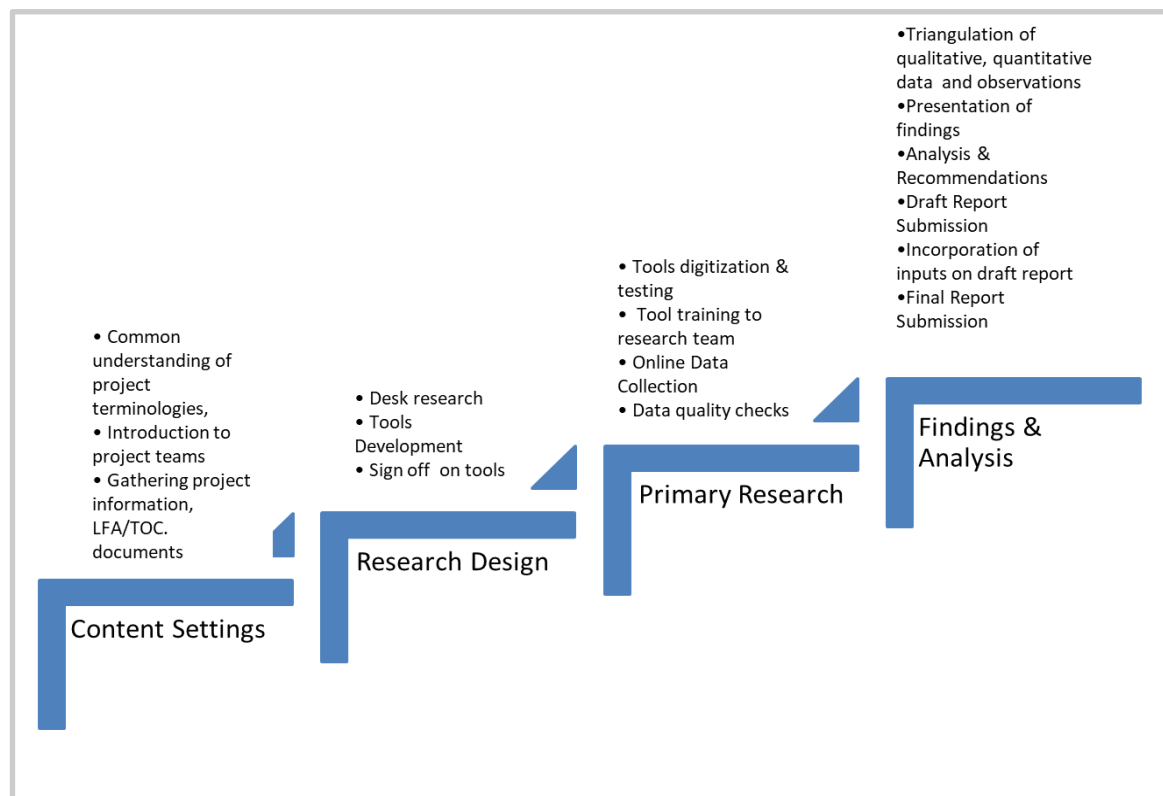
Research Objectives

This study aimed to examine the impact of the Crompton CSR Foundation's scholarship program specifically, analysing its effects on the educational journey, academic achievements, and overall advancement of the beneficiaries.

By comprehensively assessing the impact of this scholarship program, this research seeks to contribute to the understanding of its effectiveness in promoting and facilitating higher education opportunities for individuals supported by the Crompton CSR Foundation.

Timeline

The Program followed the following timeline:



Research Approach

The examination of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship programme has been carried out using the following approach:

- Research approach: The assessment study employed a mixed methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research methodologies.
- Research outreach and sampling: Convenience and purposive sampling techniques were utilized to reach and select participants for the study.
- Analysis Framework: The analysis of the data was conducted using the 'REECIS' framework developed by OECD-DAC.

Research Sampling

To ensure a comprehensive representation of different states, courses, and academic terms, systematic sampling methods were employed. A survey tool based on Google Forms was distributed among the scholarship beneficiaries, facilitated by the Implementation Partner C4Y.

The sampling details of primary research are as follows:

Particulars	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Online Surveys
Students	17	96
Parents	10	
Government Institutions	7	
C4Y	2	
Monitoring agency	1	
Total	37	96

Table 1: Details of KIIs and Online Survey

The primary research includes virtual interactions covering the 37 KIIs and the 96 surveys across different locations.

Profile of the survey respondents

Out of a total of 96 survey responses, the highest number of participants, accounting for 65 individuals, came from Ahmednagar. In terms of gender representation, 73 male and 23 female scholarship recipients took part in the survey.

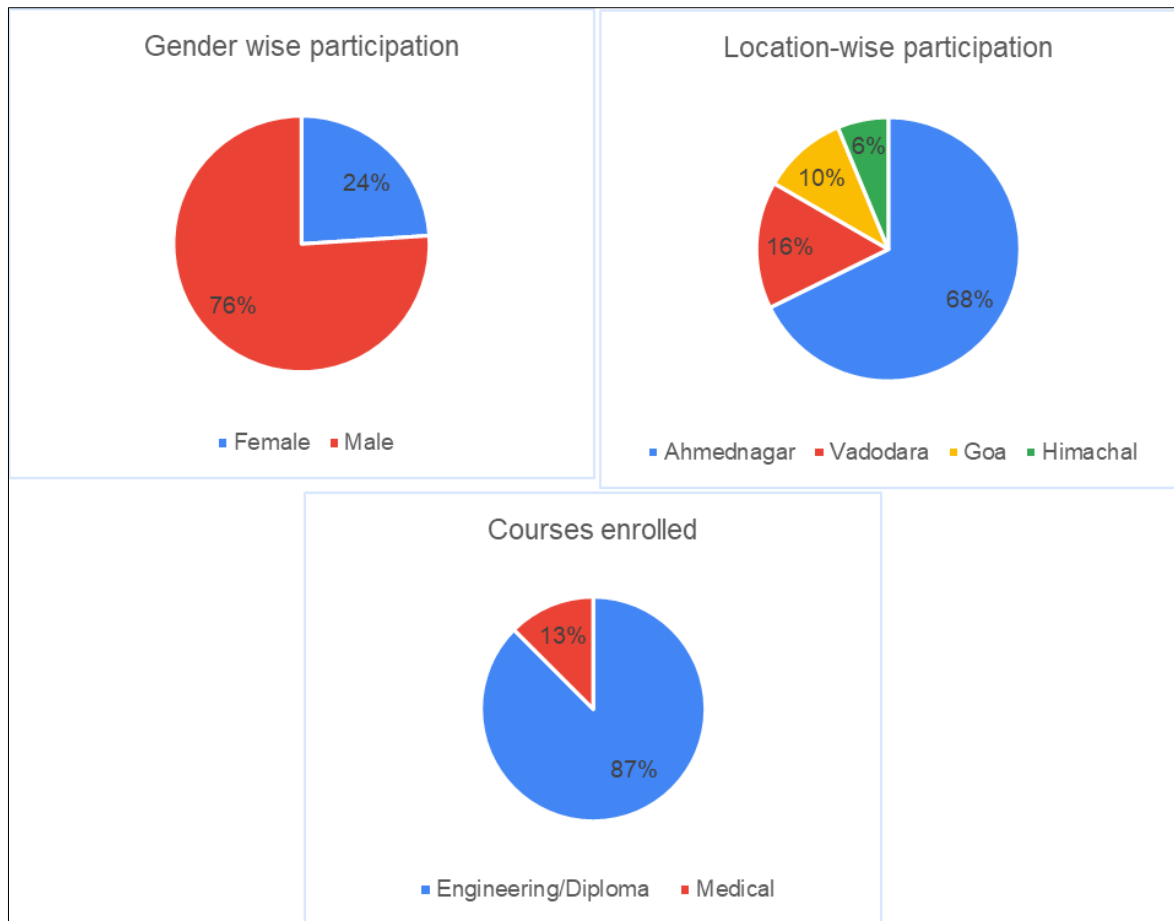
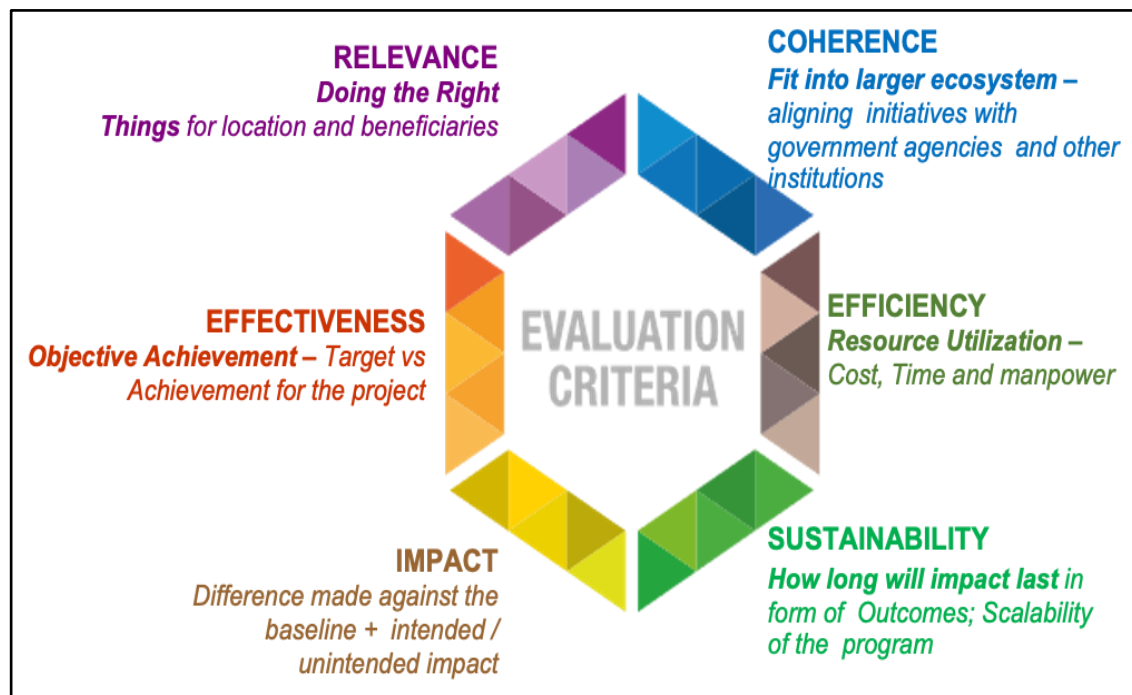


Figure 2: Profile of the respondents

Research framework

This study utilized the REECIS framework to assess the Program's impact. The REECIS framework incorporates dimensions such as Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Coherence, Impact, and Sustainability, aligning with the standards and guidelines of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). By employing the globally recognized REECIS framework, this study guarantees a comprehensive and robust evaluation of the Program or program's impact.



REECIS Framework by OECD-DAC

The REECIS Analysis framework encompasses the following key aspects:

- **Relevance:** Assessing the significance of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship programme for the students it reached.
- **Effectiveness:** Evaluating the activities undertaken to accomplish the objectives of the Scholarship programme.
- **Efficiency:** Analysing the efficiency of the processes involved in the implementation of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship programme.
- **Coherence:** Examining the compatibility of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship programme with other similar interventions in the education sector in the country.
- **Impact:** Measuring the impact achieved by the programme on all intended and unintended beneficiaries.
- **Sustainability:** Assessing the long-term sustainability of the scholarship programme, considering its continued effectiveness and viability.

Findings

Academic Excellence In Higher Education

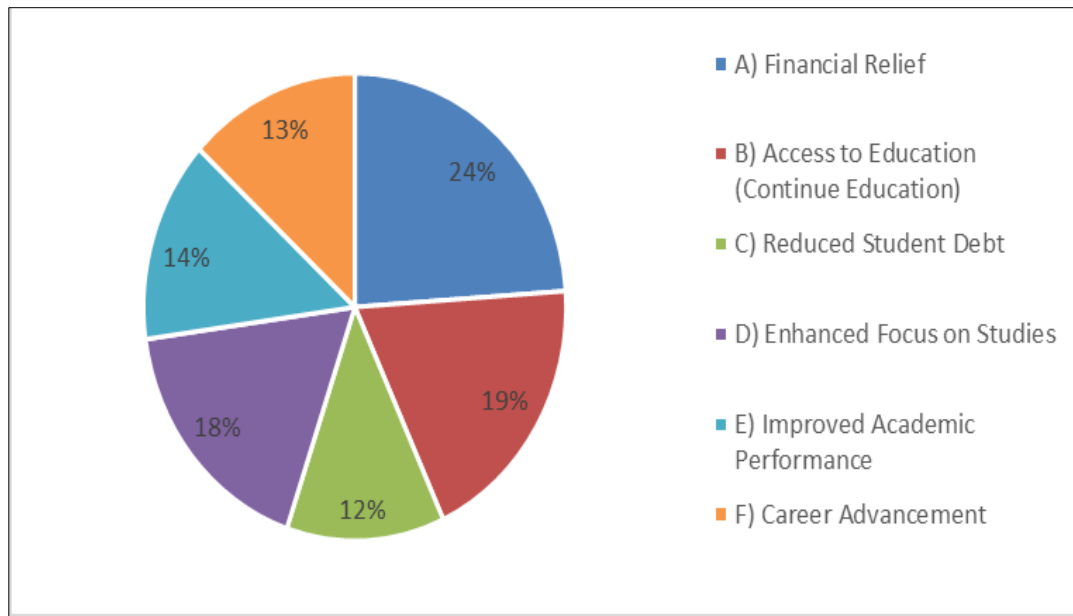


Figure 2: Different ways scholarship helped the students

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme had several positive outcomes, as shown by the testimonials of the recipients. The program provided crucial financial assistance to 24% of the students who faced financial difficulties, helping them afford higher education. It also enabled access to education for 19% of the students who faced entry barriers due to economic disadvantages.

The scholarship motivated 50% of the students to improve their academic performance and achievements. Additionally, 48% of the students reported that they could focus more on their studies because of the scholarship. The program's comprehensive impact was acknowledged by college principals, teachers, and instructors at the Industrial Training Institutes (I.T.I.s), who witnessed the student's progress and growth. The scholarship boosted the students' self-confidence and drive for academic excellence.

A student from Ahmednagar resonates with the sentiments above in the following words:

"The Program played a vital role in my higher education journey as it enabled me to enrol in a coaching center and appear for competitive exams."

Enhanced Access to Education

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme created access to higher education for students from low-income families in Ahmednagar, Goa, Vadodara, and Baddi. The main research findings show that 65% of the students heard about the scholarship program from important academic figures such as their HODs, teachers, or instructors, as shown in the graph below. This demonstrated the Program's positive impact in spreading information about educational opportunities and creating a more inclusive learning environment for those with financial constraints.

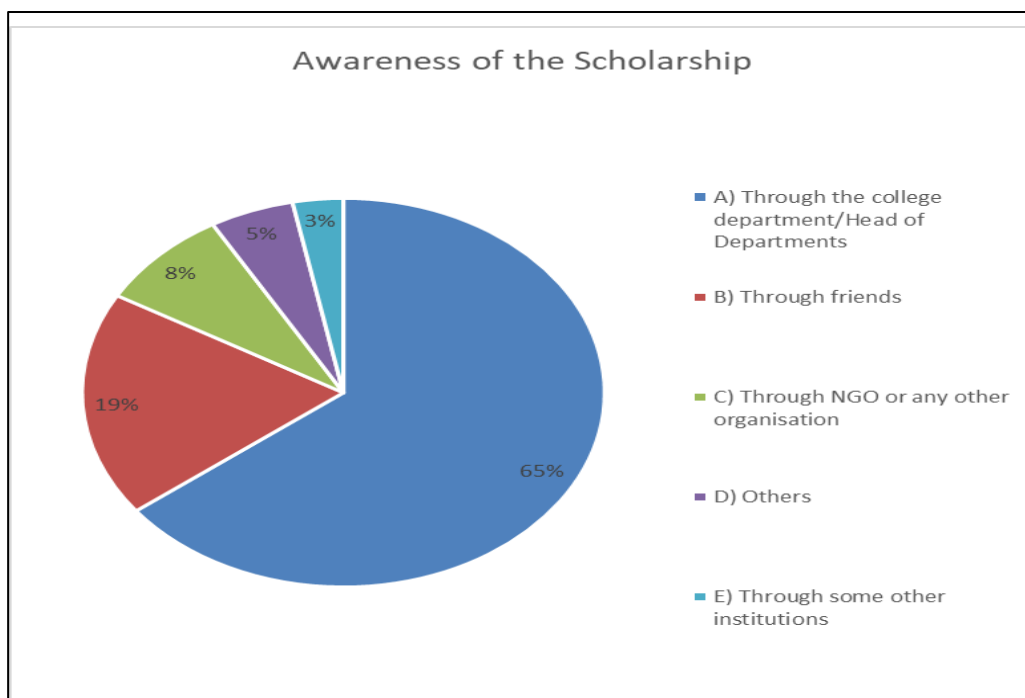


Figure 1: Awareness of the Scholarship Program

The graph illustrates the impact of educational institutions and key staff on promoting the program. The simplified application process and the ongoing assistance from the Centre for Youth (C4Y) contributed to a satisfactory outcome for scholarship recipients.

A B. Tech Civil Engineering student from Ahmednagar who received the scholarship expressed his satisfaction with the entire process as below:

"The whole process was easy and smooth, and I received support from the C4Y. The process was not lengthy; it was a required process for the scholarship program. C4Y was supportive in every step, somewhere the college has delayed the process in providing the provisional certificate to the students" - Scholarship Recipient (B.Tech. Civil Engineering Student) from Ahmednagar

C4Y received acknowledgment from the students for their support at every step. However, there were reported instances where the college's delay in issuing provisional certificates caused minor delays.

The scholarship program had a significant positive impact on the recipients' access to and quality of higher education. The survey revealed that 82% of students were highly satisfied with the program and its role in enhancing their opportunities and ambitions. The program reduced the financial barriers to education and created a more inclusive and equitable environment. It enabled students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue their educational dreams confidently.

Reduction in drop-out rates

The principal of the Shimla Industrial Training Institute (I.T.I.) in Himachal Pradesh stated that the scholarship program has led to lower student dropout rates. He emphasized that the scholarship has played a crucial role in enabling students to successfully complete their education by providing essential financial assistance.

The scholarship program has supported students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds by easing their financial stress. This has enabled them to continue their studies without giving up on their educational aspirations. As a result, the program has improved completion rates and helped students achieve their educational goals. It has lowered dropout rates and facilitated successful educational outcomes. The program has received positive feedback from both scholarship recipients and educational institutions.

Financial Relief for Students

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program aimed to address the financial barriers that prevented many students from enrolling in higher education. The program provided financial assistance to selected students from low-income backgrounds across various regions, such as Ahmednagar, Goa, Vadodara, and Baddi. This enabled them to access courses nationwide and expand their educational opportunities. The program covered college fees for the students, allowing them to focus on their academic goals without worrying about financial constraints. The program distributed INR 1 Crore in scholarship funds to 285 students in the first and second phases. The scholarship amounts varied from INR 750 to INR 1 Lac, depending on the students' needs and

expenses and the course fee. The students reported that the program reduced their financial stress and helped them acquire new skills and prepare for government examinations.

A medical student pursuing an M. Pharm degree in Vadodara expressed their financial burden associated with private college fees.

“The fees of the Master’s course in private college are not affordable. The fees of any educational courses are very high nowadays; it was difficult for me to pay my college fees as my father is not employed”. -Medical Student (M.Pharm) from Vadodara.

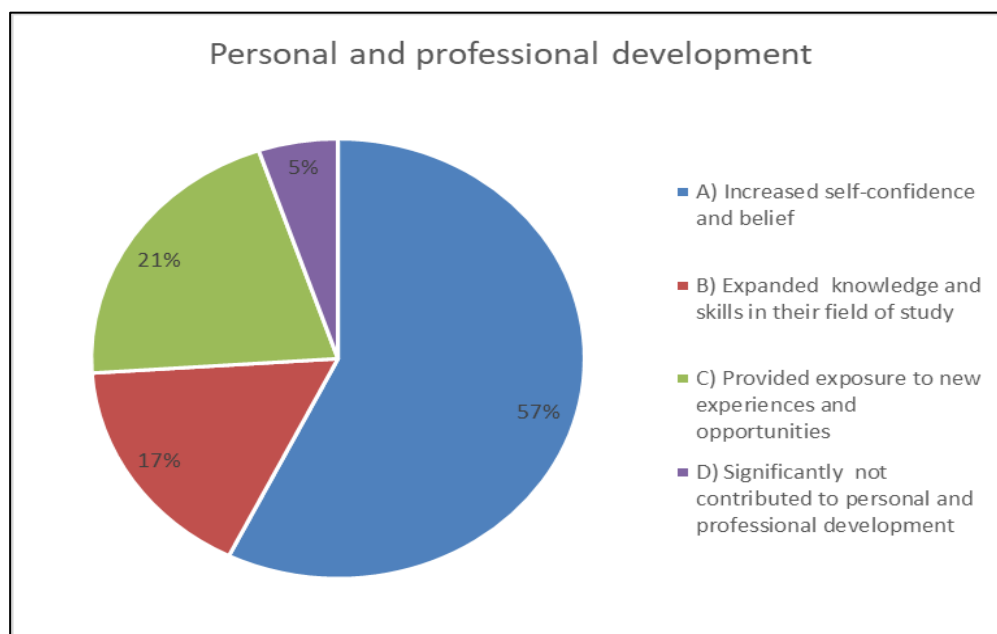


Figure 3: Personal and professional development of students.

The graph shows that the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program positively affected the students' self-confidence and belief in their abilities, with 57% reporting a significant improvement. The program also helped 21% of the students explore new experiences and opportunities that enriched their personal growth beyond academics. One of the beneficiary's parents shared that his son could enrol in other classes, like language-speaking classes, thanks to the money saved from the scholarship. These examples show that the scholarship program not only supported the students academically and enhanced their overall development and self-assurance.

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program also improved the students' career prospects by enabling them to pursue specific courses and prestigious colleges. Many students wanted to join well-known institutions that offered excellent placement opportunities, knowing that quality education was essential for their career success. Some students from Baddi were especially

remarkable, as they worked hard to pay their tuition fees, showing their deep appreciation of the importance of getting high-quality courses and placements for their future careers.

The scholarships provided by the program offered crucial financial support to deserving students, enabling them to afford essential education expenses, including tuition fees, books, and materials. Furthermore, the scholarships significantly reduced the likelihood of students dropping out of their studies due to financial difficulties. As a result, the program's efforts to reduce dropout rates positively impacted student retention within educational institutions, creating a more supportive environment for students to persist and complete their education.

Increased Motivation towards higher education

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program catalysed students' academic aspirations, empowering them to dream bigger and pursue higher educational opportunities, ultimately paving the way for brighter futures and expanded career prospects. A beneficiary confessed that the scholarship opportunity had motivated him to pursue other free soft-skill courses on online platforms like Udemy and Unacademy. It has also encouraged some beneficiaries to participate in academic exhibitions, showcasing their final-year Programs.

An Engineering student from Ahmednagar expressed the sentiment described above in the following words:

“Yes, the scholarship had a significant impact on my academic performance and achievements. It allowed me to concentrate on the subjects and areas that sparked my interest. With the financial burden lifted, I could dedicate more time to learning additional skills, particularly coding, which has been a passion of mine. The scholarship supported my education and allowed me to explore and pursue my other interests, leading to personal and academic growth.”

Holistic Development and Self-Assurance

The implementation partners of this Program assert that the scholarship program was a comprehensive investment in students' overall well-being. Before introducing this initiative, students experienced mental stress due to their inability to pay fees and other institution-related expenses. However, implementing the Program alleviated this stress, enabling students to concentrate on acquiring new skills.

The primary research findings demonstrate that the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program surpassed its role as a mere financial aid program and profoundly impacted the students' lives. The program facilitated holistic development, fostering confidence and motivation while preparing the students for future success. By investing in their education, the program contributed to human capital development and bolstered the students' readiness for the workforce. Through its comprehensive support, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program empowered students to excel academically and equipped them with the necessary skills and opportunities to thrive in their future careers.

Preparing Students for the Job Market

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program was a beneficial initiative that enabled students to pursue higher education with financial assistance. The program aimed to equip students with the knowledge and skills required for the future job market and their personal growth. The program also enhanced students' education quality and prepared them for their professional goals. The program increased the opportunities for students to find good jobs and have more career choices.

A Civil Engineering student from Ahmednagar expressed how this program helped him to qualify for government jobs:

“The scholarship helped me in my journey to apply for government jobs. With the timely support I received, I got selected as the Sub-divisional Officer in the Water Conservation Department of our district.”

Partnerships for Mutual Growth

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program helped foster mutual growth among various stakeholders by collaborating closely with schools, teachers, and students to support their learning and development. The implementing agency's first step was to establish a robust network of partnerships with colleges, counsellors, youth groups, and other essential actors already engaged in this domain. This strategic approach allowed them to create a collaborative environment that nurtures cooperation and support.

Through C4Y's close association with colleges, they harnessed the existing educational structures and resources, significantly amplifying the program's impact. Working hand in hand with experienced counsellors and youth groups, the Program gained valuable insights and expertise that guided in designing more effective interventions and targeted programs for the youth

beneficiaries. As parents and students became involved in the Program at a later stage, they found themselves immersed in an already thriving network of support and opportunities.

By fostering a collaborative ecosystem among all stakeholders, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program facilitated mutual growth and collective progress, creating a harmonious environment where everyone plays a crucial role in shaping the brighter future of the youth.

Transformative Impact on Families

Furthermore, while parents may not have possessed detailed knowledge about the program, they expressed deep gratitude for the assistance provided to their children's education. The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program not only relieved the financial burden on families but also instilled a sense of hope and optimism for the future. Parents recognized the transformative impact of the program on their children's lives and the opportunities it created for their educational and career advancement.

"The scholarship program has been instrumental in supporting students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly those whose parents were engaged in farming. It provided crucial assistance, enabling students to enrol in courses and cover their tuition fees, thereby alleviating financial burdens for their families." - Teacher, Baddi, Himachal Pradesh

Findings Summary

Most respondents (81.25%) rated the impact of the scholarship program as "Extremely positive," indicating that the program has had a highly beneficial effect on their educational journey. The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship was crucial in providing essential financial support for higher education and equipping students with valuable knowledge, skills, and a strong sense of responsibility. The program forged partnerships with educational institutions, teachers, and students, fostering a collaborative environment that nurtured growth and development, leading to positive change.

The program allocated INR 1 Crore in scholarship funds, directly benefiting students and allowing them to thrive academically, unlocking their full potential. Throughout the application process, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program consistently demonstrated its unwavering dedication to guiding and supporting students, ensuring a seamless and inclusive experience. The Collective Good Foundation (CGF) diligently monitored the utilization of scholarship funds, emphasizing the program's commitment to transparency, accountability, and achieving maximum impact.

Importantly, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Program perfectly aligned with Crompton's broader Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) objectives, encompassing community care and social welfare. By breaking down financial barriers, the program granted students enhanced access to higher education, opening doors to opportunities for academic excellence. The program's far-reaching impact extended beyond individual students, positively influencing the communities and regions they served as students brought their knowledge, skills, and newfound confidence to uplift those around them.

The program's steadfast commitment to education, empowerment, and opportunity contributed to shaping a brighter future where knowledge and success were accessible to all. This endeavor left an indelible mark on the lives of countless students and the communities they served, ultimately fostering a more prosperous and empowered society.

Analysis

In the following section, the observations and findings of the primary research have been analysed using the OECD-DAC global framework REECIS as below:

Relevance

Relevance, the first criterion in the REECIS framework, refers to how well the goals and structure of intervention align with the needs, policies, and priorities of the beneficiaries, global community, country, and partner institutions. It also considers whether the intervention can adapt to changing circumstances and continue to meet those needs.

In India, the Gross Enrolment Ratio³ in higher education has been steadily increasing, but it is still relatively low compared to developed countries; in 2021, the GER in higher education in India was around 27.1%. Only 27.1% of eligible individuals aged 18-23 were enrolled in higher education institutions.

Some of the challenges faced by economically disadvantaged students in India in accessing higher education are as follows:

³ The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in higher education is a measure of the percentage of eligible population enrolled in higher education institutions.

- 1. Affordability:** Higher education can be expensive, and the cost of tuition, books, accommodation, and other expenses can be a significant burden for economically disadvantaged students. Scholarships provide financial assistance and help bridge the affordability gap, making higher education accessible to economically disadvantaged students.
- 2. Access and Equity:** Economically disadvantaged students often face barriers to higher education due to financial constraints. Scholarships help level the playing field by providing opportunities for meritorious students from economically weaker backgrounds to pursue higher education.
- 3. Reducing Dropout Rates:** Financial constraints often lead to higher dropout rates among economically disadvantaged students. Scholarships help reduce the financial burden and enable students to complete their education, reducing dropout rates.
- 4. Merit-Based Opportunities:** Scholarships based on merit provide recognition and incentives for academically talented students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These scholarships encourage and support students to pursue higher education and achieve their full potential.
- 5. Skill Development and Employability:** Scholarships focused on specific disciplines or professional courses help economically disadvantaged students acquire the necessary skills and qualifications for better employment opportunities. By investing in their education, scholarships contribute to the economic empowerment of these students and improve their chances of securing good jobs.
- 6. Breaking the Cycle of Poverty:** Education is a powerful tool for social mobility and breaking the cycle of poverty. Scholarships for economically disadvantaged students allow them to access higher education, gain knowledge and skills, and improve their socio-economic conditions.

Overall, scholarships for economically disadvantaged students play a vital role in increasing access to higher education, promoting equity, and empowering individuals from marginalized backgrounds. These scholarships help address the financial barriers that hinder their educational aspirations, enabling them to realize their potential and contribute to the development of society.

Considering the growing economic costs of acquiring higher education, with a university program costing about 7,77,654 rupees in India,⁴ It becomes increasingly difficult for families from non-affluent families to fund a college degree. To address this gap, there are several emerging scholarship opportunities that in India in place to help underprivileged students access higher education, such as the Shubh Aarambh Scholarship offered by Mondelez International and the Magic Bus India Foundation, National Means Cum Merit Scholarship offered by the Government of India to students from families with an annual income below Rs. 6 lakhs, etc.

Against this backdrop, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program was relevant for providing crucial financial assistance to academically gifted but underprivileged students pursuing higher education. The program supported students affected by Covid-19 and students belonging to economically weaker sections. With a strategic focus on technical colleges and specific courses aligned with the aspirations of the targeted beneficiaries, covering undergraduate and postgraduate medical, engineering, and allied courses.

Effectiveness

The second criterion in the REECIS framework is Effectiveness, which measures the extent to which the program achieved or is expected to achieve its objectives and its results, including any differential results across locations.

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program's analysis showed its success in enabling the selected students' admissions to technical, medical, and allied courses. The program benefited from collaborating with the Centre for Youth (C4Y), which brought domain expertise and helped network with educational institutions, teachers, students, and youth groups, increasing the program's impact. The program followed a well-structured collective process for eligibility determination, course selection, document verification, and scholarship disbursement, ensuring transparency and fairness in the selection process.

The program disbursed funds quickly, helping to ease the financial burdens and enabling them to concentrate on their studies without delay. This reduced mental stress helped the students to focus on skilling and participating in extracurriculars.

⁴HSBC Report, "The Value of Education, the Price of Success." Retrieved from https://www.us.hsbc.com/content/dam/hsbc/us/en_us/value-of-education/HSBC_VOES_USA_FactSheet_508r2.pdf

The program had some areas for improvement. Increasing outreach and awareness, efforts would allow more deserving students to benefit from the scholarship. Collaborating with educational institutions, conducting awareness campaigns, and using digital platforms could widen the program's reach and ensure eligible students were aware of its benefits, especially to bring in more application diversity.

Efficiency

The Efficiency criterion evaluates the program's ability to deliver results economically and on time.

One of the admirable aspects of the scholarship program was its proactive outreach and collaboration with technical institutions, colleges, and universities. The C4Y team personally visited the institutions' heads and distributed flyers and brochures to inform them about the scholarship opportunity. They also used multiple channels, such as college WhatsApp groups, to spread awareness and increase the program's reach and impact.

Another positive feature was the constant support the C4Y team offered throughout the program. Students and colleges appreciated the team's availability and help during the application process and with the required documents. The team's high dedication and responsiveness made the implementation process smoother and more efficient, ensuring timely assistance and information for students and colleges.

The program spent a sum of 1,08,51,147 against the sanctioned grant of 1,08,50,000 rupees, out of which 1,00,00,000 rupees (92%) was a direct expense towards the scholarships, while a sum of 8,51,147 (8%) was used towards the admin and overheads. The scholarships ranged between 750 rupees per student (for the I.T.I courses) to 1,00,000 rupees (for students enrolled in Engineering courses and MBBS) while the other courses ranged in between, with an effective per-beneficiary cost of 38,074 rupees at the overall program level.

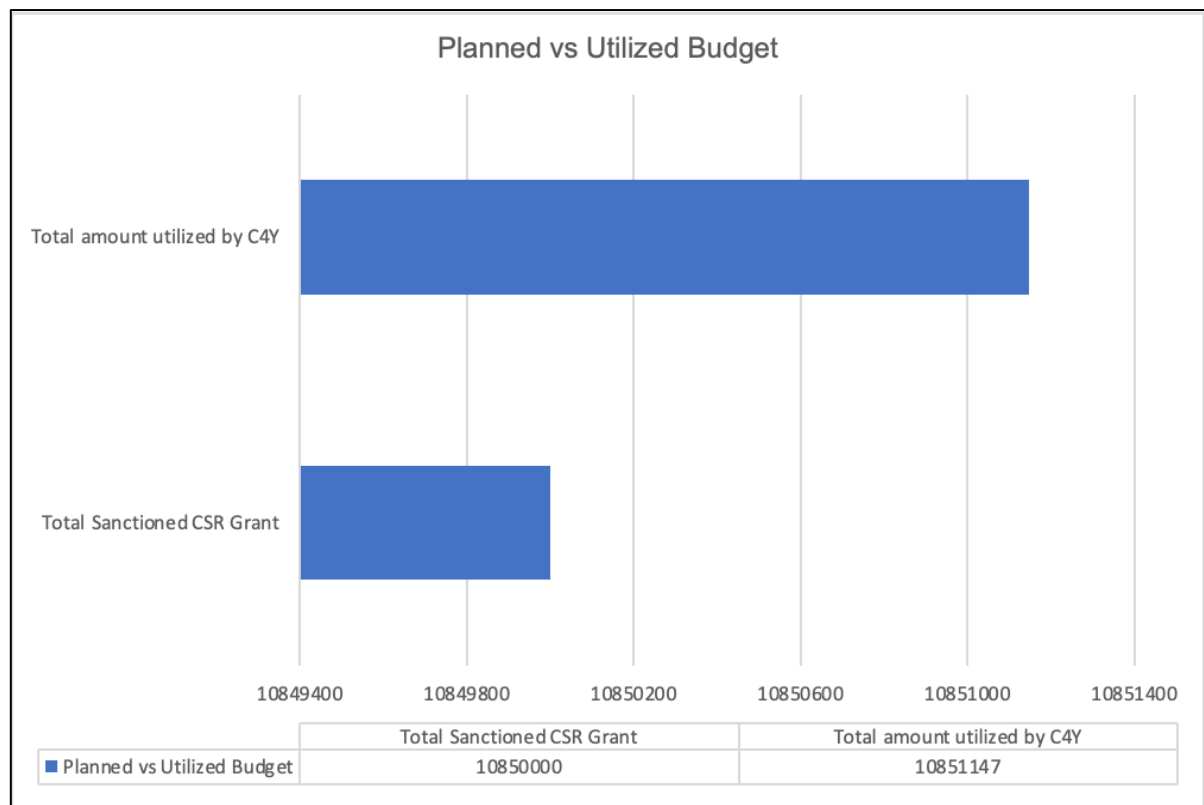


Figure 4: CSR Grant received and utilized in the Program

It's observed that from the mobilization of the students to the disbursement of the scholarships in two phases, C4Y has utilized its extensive reach in the community and made use of partnership with CGF in the timely and effective delivery of the Program outcomes. A total of 285 students studying across 40 educational institutes in more than 8 types of courses in 23 cities benefitted through the scholarships.

Through the collaboration approach between implementing partners, and the educational institutions, the program has delivered the objectives within the timelines and in a cost-effective manner.

Coherence

Coherence, the fifth criterion part of the framework, analyses the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions locally or nationwide.

Government scholarships and schemes for SC, ST, minority, and economically weaker sections (EWS) students in engineering, medical colleges, and industrial training institutes (I.T.I) are crucial in providing educational support. However, complex application procedures and delayed

disbursement of funds cause inconvenience and financial hardships for students, hindering their educational progress and increasing dropouts due to delayed disbursements.

In contrast, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program offers a streamlined application process. The simplified procedure saved students valuable time and effort, eliminating the need for navigating complex paperwork. This efficient approach allowed students to focus on their studies instead of dealing with bureaucratic procedures.

By providing a user-friendly and efficient application process and continuous support throughout, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program aligned with existing scholarship initiatives with the help of the institute's administration in identifying the utmost financial needs for the students in continuing their education.

Impact

This criterion of the framework analyses the Impact of the intervention, The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level impacts.

Approximately 285 students have benefited from the program through two implementation phases, highlighting its effectiveness in meeting their needs and making a positive difference in their lives.

One notable achievement of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program was its ability to alleviate financial burdens. The program enabled students to prioritize their academic performance by providing essential financial support. With their college and technical institution fees covered, students feel a heightened sense of responsibility and dedication to excel in their studies. This increased motivation translates into improved focus and commitment, allowing students to seize educational opportunities with renewed enthusiasm—furthermore, the impact of the scholarship program extended beyond individual students and reached their families. By relieving the financial burden of college fees, the program empowered parents to redirect their attention and financial resources toward the education of other children.

For example, in one case, an engineering student from Ahmednagar whose family faced financial strain, the scholarship relieved this burden and enabled the family to allocate funds for the mother's healthcare expenses during the challenging COVID pandemic. Similarly, in Vadodara, the scholarship supported a family in focusing on the younger daughter's education while the

elder daughter pursued her pharmacy course. These examples demonstrate how the scholarship program not only aided in educational pursuits but also profoundly impacted the overall well-being of the students and their families.

In addition to its positive outcomes, the scholarship program's implementation has been well-organized and efficient. The program was conducted in multiple cycles and ensured a timely and fair selection process by assessing applications on a first-come-first-serve basis. Establishing a query mechanism and providing necessary information in advance streamlined the application process, while due diligence ensured a thorough and transparent assessment of all documents.

Overall, the impact of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program has been multifaceted, providing vital financial support, relieving stress, and empowering students to pursue higher education and achieve their aspirations. With its well-structured implementation and tangible benefits, the scholarship program represents a valuable investment in the future of deserving students, fostering a brighter and more promising tomorrow for them and their families.

Sustainability

The analysis focuses on evaluating the sustainability of the net benefits derived from the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program, specifically the sixth criterion of the REECIS framework. However, it acknowledges that assessing the program's sustainability immediately after its conclusion is not feasible. It requires a significant time gap of at least a year or more to observe if the positive impacts continue beyond the Program's duration.

The analysis also emphasizes the program's financial and operational sustainability, which currently relies on donors. To ensure the program's long-term effectiveness, stakeholders propose several key recommendations. Firstly, expanding the program's coverage to include more students within the college will increase its reach and impact, providing deserving individuals with greater opportunities for higher education.

Secondly, implementing direct disbursement of scholarship funds to students' accounts rather than the institution's account will enhance transparency and build trust among all stakeholders.

Another crucial improvement would be establishing a mechanism to provide scholarships to students before their enrolment in the institution. This proactive approach will eliminate financial barriers and encourage more students to pursue their educational aspirations without concerns about course fees, attracting a diverse pool of talented students.

Incorporating a performance-based criterion in the scholarship criteria will further motivate students to excel academically. Recognizing and rewarding academic excellence will foster a culture of achievement and drive among the recipients, enhancing the program's overall impact. Additionally, considering provisions for supporting academic needs such as laptops or tablets will enrich students' educational experience and equip them with essential tools for effective learning. This investment in technology will empower students to leverage modern resources and maximize their academic potential.

Finally, extending the scholarship program beyond a single academic year is recommended to provide ongoing benefits and support throughout the student's educational journey. Offering scholarships annually will ensure stability and enable effective financial planning for the students.

By implementing these recommendations, the scholarship program can enhance its sustainability and efficacy, fostering educational growth, empowerment, and success for deserving students.

Recommendations

Expand the horizons of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme.

To promote equal access to education across diverse disciplines, extending financial support to students pursuing courses in fields like commerce, arts, and other streams is recommended. This expansion will create a more inclusive program, offering a broader array of students the chance to receive scholarships and pursue their educational ambitions.

In addition to financial assistance, introducing supplementary support mechanisms such as mentorship and guidance programs would also be helpful. These additional resources can profoundly impact students' educational experiences and personal growth, fostering a more enriching learning journey.

Through the extension of financial support, the diversification of program streams, and the inclusion of valuable support mechanisms, Crompton can work towards achieving equal educational opportunities for all. The collaborative effort of gathering feedback and making continuous improvements will contribute to the program's success in empowering students and fostering talent across diverse academic disciplines.

Empowering more female students through increased coverage

The current statistics reveal that only 22% of female students (64 out of 285) have been scholarship recipients. To address this gender imbalance and foster inclusivity, it is essential to prioritize including more female students in the upcoming phases of the program. The program can significantly enhance female education opportunities by amplifying support for female students, ultimately promoting gender equality and creating a balanced and inclusive learning environment.

Provide comprehensive financial assistance by covering full tuition fees.

To fully alleviate the financial burden on scholarship recipients, it is recommended to enhance the scholarship program by including a provision to cover the entire tuition fees of the recipients' courses. Partial financial support leaves some students dependent on education loans or struggling to cover remaining expenses. By addressing this gap and providing full coverage, the

program will enable students to focus wholeheartedly on their studies, thereby increasing their chances of academic success.

Expand the program's reach to include more educational institutions and build stronger relationships with the institutes.

To maximize the impact of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme, it is necessary to broaden the coverage of participating educational institutions. By collaborating with various colleges and universities across different regions, the program can ensure that more students can access the scholarship. This expansion will enable more deserving candidates to benefit from the program, enhancing inclusivity and fairness in the selection process.

Building and nurturing strong relationships with the educational institutions identified in Phase 1 and Phase 2 is vital for the success and credibility of the scholarship program. By fostering close collaborations, the program can ensure smoother implementation and reinforce the value of the scholarship. This ongoing partnership will contribute to a supportive academic environment and attract more students to enrol in these institutions, fostering a culture of academic excellence.

Embrace stakeholder feedback for continuous improvement.

Regularly seeking feedback from parents, educational institutions, and implementation partners is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship Programme. Through surveys, focus groups, and structured discussions, stakeholders can provide valuable insights into their experiences. Analysing this feedback will help identify any challenges, areas for improvement, or suggestions that can enhance the scholarship program's overall impact and effectiveness, ensuring that it meets the evolving needs of the students and stakeholders it serves.

Conclusion

The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program has left an indelible mark on the students proving to be a catalyst for change and empowerment. Through the impact assessment, we have gained valuable insights that reinforce the significance of this initiative and its role in shaping the lives of deserving students.

The assessment has illuminated the critical role of financial aid in enabling students to pursue higher education and fulfil their aspirations. The financial support helped students focus on education and participate in extracurriculars and academic events without worrying about the stress associated with financial strain.

The assessment confirms the transformative power of scholarships in shaping lives and creating a brighter future. The Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program's impact extended beyond the academic achievements of the scholarship recipients, as it helped the families prioritize health and focus on the education of other kids at home. It also observed that some students appeared for competitive exams and cleared the exams and acquired jobs, thanks to the financial support.

One other compelling finding from the impact assessment study is the undeniable potential and talent among underprivileged students. The program successfully showcases their academic excellence with the necessary resources and support. This realization underscores the importance of breaking barriers and providing equal opportunities to all students, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds.

In conclusion, the Ujjwal Deep Scholarship program exemplifies the profound impact of educational support on deserving students' lives. It emphasizes the immense potential within each individual and the importance of equal access to education. Investing in this program means investing in a brighter future, where education becomes the bridge to personal growth, societal progress, and lasting transformation.

About NuSocia

NuSocia was established in 2017 with the mission to enable the impact ecosystem by delivering programs with an evident impact. Incubated at the NSRCEL, IIM Bangalore, we are a team of consultants, social sector professionals, data scientists, and researchers with a common passion for generating ideas that matter to people and the planet. We work with corporations, governments, foundations, and non-profits to help them maximize, manage, measure, and communicate their social impact. Clients select us for our expertise and ability to connect at the grassroots level, thus creating and delivering practical solutions to their unique requirements. As a knowledge-driven organization, we focus on research and collaboration to design innovative solutions. We work across the entire CSR lifecycle, offering services in CSR strategy, needs assessment, program design, implementation, monitoring & evaluation, impact assessments, communication, and more. With a global consulting team, localized partnerships, and a 60% female workforce, we are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse environment focused on equality, empowerment, and mutual respect.

Today, NuSocia has strengthened its position as a social impact advisory built on the core pillars of design thinking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing. Through this Program, NuSocia and Crompton CSR Foundation has joined hands to bring about holistic development in the area of higher education.

Figure: NuSocia

