

SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN IN KANGRA DISTRICT: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Building on the lessons learnt from the implementation of various programmes and keeping in view the needs, the Government has launched the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (S.S.A.) in 2000, the main objective being, to accelerate the achievement of UEE. It is a holistic and convergent programme targeting both primary and upper primary classes in all districts of the country. The present study sheds better understanding of the quality dimensions of elementary education which will help the field level functionaries of SSA to devise ways and means for recognizing classroom interaction, using suitable evaluation techniques and developing harmonious relationships with parents and community thereby leading to improvement in the quality of education at elementary stage. The study is taken to see whether the SSA is approaching to realize its objectives effectively. Therefore the investigator has selected to study the SSA in Kangra District, its existing position and future prospects.

Keywords: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Elementary, Universalisation, and Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION:

The National Policy of Education, 1986 and Programme of Action 1992 have given top priority to the achievement of goals of universal elementary education. Education of children of 6-14 years of age group has been made fundamental right by the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act. Many projects and programmes have been undertaken at macro and micro levels in past in this direction which, have resulted in considerable progress in providing access to elementary education, increase in enrolment and retention, improvement in school attendance and generation of strong demand for education, especially for girls. However, inter-state and inter-district differences in pupil attendance and their achievement level, continue to prevail. The pupil achievement has particularly been low, which has caused concern at every level.

In order to speed the achievement of the goal of universal elementary education, the National Elementary Education Mission (NEEM) was constituted in 2001 under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister and Vice-Chairmanship of the Minister of Human Resource Development, Government of India. Similar Missions have also been constituted at State levels under the chairmanship of Chief Minister of the state. A number of programmes and projects have over the years been implemented to provide experiences for achieving the constitutionally mandated goal. Illustration of these is – Area Intensive Education Project (AIEP) for Human Resource Development, Primary Education Curriculum Renewal (PECR), Developmental Activities in Community Education and Participation (DACEP), Comprehensive Access to Primary Education (CAPE) in the seventies and eighties and more recently in Andhra Pradesh Primary Education Programme (APPEP), Bihar Education Project (BEP), Lok Jumbish and District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as Mid-Day Meals, Operation Blackboard, Teacher Education Improvement, Non-Formal Education etc. were also launched to maximize the efforts in this direction.

Building on the lessons learnt from the implementation of various programmes and keeping in view the needs, the Government has launched the programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (S.S.A.) in 2000, the main objective being, to accelerate the achievement of UEE. It is a holistic and convergent programme targeting both primary and upper primary classes in all districts of the country. SSA is an effort to improve the performance of school system and provide community owned quality elementary education in the missionary mode. This programme has become particularly necessary because many states were not covered by any of the externally funded educational programmes such as DPEP, BEP, Lok Jumbish etc. thereby depriving them of the benefits. Even in case of state covered under externally funded programmes, all the areas did not benefit. For instance, the urban poor, particularly those living in slum areas have not received attention in these special programmes.

With a view to providing relevant and necessary input for enhancing the understanding of the educational administrators, field level functionaries and teachers, a need was felt by the researcher to examine various aspects of quality education in relation to SSA. Education is an

important instrument for bringing about desired change in society. To keep pace with the time and further advancements, researches are being conducted in field of physical, medical, social science, technologies etc. Research in the field of education has enabled us to move from traditional to modern approach, so as to educate not only the few but all.

The study may shed better understanding of the quality dimensions of elementary education which will help the field level functionaries of SSA to devise ways and means for recognizing classroom interaction, using suitable evaluation techniques and developing harmonious relationships with parents and community thereby leading to improvement in the quality of education at elementary stage. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is still at infancy stage. It is too early to comment upon the functioning of the programme. However, a case study can be taken to see whether the SSA is approaching to realize its objectives effectively. Therefore the investigator has selected to study the SSA in Kangra District, its existing position and future prospects.

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ To study the SSA in terms of
 - (i) Aims and objectives.
 - (ii) Enrolment and retention trend in primary and upper primary stages
 - (iii) Improvement of quality education.
 - (iv) Coverage of special focus groups.
 - (v) Innovative Education.
- ❖ To study the perception of teacher educators regarding the in-service training programmes.
- ❖ To examine the educational implications of SSA.

SAMPLE:

Since the case study method of research has been followed in the present case, therefore no sampling is required. One Institution i.e. DIET Dharamshala which has been entrusted for

implementing SSA in District Kangra has been taken as a case and 15 teacher educators who were present at the time of visit have been included in the sample.

INSTRUMENTATION:

For collecting data following research tools were used :

- Interview Schedule for Teacher Educators
- Secondary Data which is collected from DIET Dharamshala.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Data collected with the help of the above mentioned tools were tabulated. The obtained data were subjected to necessary statistical computation. The data were mainly analysed in terms of frequencies and converted into percentages.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of analysis and interpretation of data:

- Universalisation of Enrolment and Retention

Upgradation of Primary School to Upper Primary Schools in the District

Sr. No.	Upper Primary School Made Functional 31-10-2010	Upgraded by Govt. but not made functional	Proposed for 2011-12	Total
1	25	nil	30	55

One of the main objectives of SSA is that all children within the age-group of 6-14 years of age will be enrolled in the schools. For this purpose various categories of schools such as Education Guarantee Schools (EGS), Alternative Schools, and mobile schools have been opened in the district for achieving 100 % enrolment.

Educational facilities are provided to all the children within a walking distance of 1Kms. New primary schools are being opened in the district.

Caste wise and Gender wise Enrolment in the School under the Department of Education in Kangra District

Schools	General			SC			ST			OBC			ALL		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary	2117 4	2077 9	41953	1300 5	1291 8	25923	191	171	362	99	88	187	3446 9	33956	68425
Up-Primary	1408 3	1354 2	27625	6985	6727	13712	159	138	297	64	103	167	2129 1	20510	41801
Total	3525 7	3432 1	69578	1999 0	1964 5	39635	350	309	659	163	191	354	5576 0	54466	11022 6
%age	50.67	49.33	63.12	50.44	49.56	35.96	53.1 1	46.8 9	0.60	46.0 5	53.9 5	0.32	50.59	49.41	

The enrolment data in respect of both primary school as well as upper primary schools reflect that there is no gender or social bias in the enrolment at elementary stage. The girls participation for all categories of students is 49.41 % at elementary stage where as it is 49.56 % for SC and 46.89 % for ST. The participation of general category students of both sexes in elementary stage make a part of 63.12 % of total population of students where as SC made 35.96 % participation and ST and OBC made their 0.60% and 0.32% respectively in the district.

Moreover the SC students comprise 35.96 % of the total students against the 27.13% SC population in the District, so as the elementary education (i.e. primary and upper primary) is concerned which show slight social bias. Thus there is a need to sustain the achievement of gender and social equity in terms of enrolment at primary level.

The following intervention programmes have been started in the district to achieve the target on universalisation of enrolment and retention

1. Provision of additional teachers:

Para teachers are being appointed in the district where there are vacancies of teachers.

2. Provision of Civil Works :

In the year 2009, 65 classrooms were constructed under the SSA and in the year 2010, 160 rooms are constructed where as the target of 441 rooms for the construction have been fixed.

3. Maintenance and Repair of School Buildings:

As per SSA norms all the schools are being provided with an annual grant of Rs. 5000/- per annum to meet maintenance requirements. During 2010, 2111 schools were covered under the maintenance grant and same are being covered in the current year.

4. Free Text books to the Students

In the year 2010 the number of books distributed to the general girl students was 35000 and in 2011 the number was 34921.

5. Improvement of Quality Education

The intensive in-service teacher training programmes are being organized by DIET Dharamshala equipping the teachers with necessary skills and knowledge as required for the implementation of SSA.

Training for BRCs and CRCs has been imparted by the DIET staff at Dharamshala, whereas the aforesaid group imparts the training for all the teachers in blocks/clusters.

In 2009-10, Rs. 107.16 Lacs were sanctioned for 7654 teachers for the purpose of training. Five days training for upper primary teachers and six days training for primary teachers were imparted.

6. School Support – Professional Support Structure:

The following support structures have been made functional for providing infrastructural support for the implementation of SSA in the district:

(a) DIET (b) BRCs (c) CRCs

7. Quality Teaching – School, Teacher Grants:

Strength of Teachers in Primary and Upper-Primary Schools

S.N.	Teachers in Pry. (Govt.)	Teaches in U-Pry. (Govt.)	Teachers for Upgraded and Aided Schools				Total
			Teacher for Upgraded and aided schools	Pry. Aided schools	U-Pry. Aided Schools	Teacher Against Vacant	
1	4944	4225	258	8	24	140	9599

Source: District Project Office, BRCCs and Deputy Director Office Dharamshala.

During the year 2009-10, 2111 schools and in year 2011, 2192 schools were covered with school grant and 9599 teachers has been provided TLM grants.

8. Innovative Education:

MAINSTREAMING OF OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN:

Under SSA efforts has been made to bridge the social and gender gap through active participation of local community. Therefore, the major focus was the out of school children who were never enrolled, dropped-out, irregular students etc. The following strategies have been undertaken for main-streaming of out of school children under innovative project:

- Enrollment and retention drives are being conducted.
- Special camps and bridge courses are being conducted as per their needs.

9. Alternative Innovative Education:

There were 427 children in the district who were never enrolled in the age group of 6-14 years, but they were in a scattered form. In order to bring them in formal schools after giving them proper orientation, they are being taught one to one situation @ 845/- per students annually. The teacher has been engaged from the same locality.

10. Teacher Training Programmes

934 Anganwaries are working in Kangra district governed by the Health and Social Welfare Department of H.P. All the Anganwaries teachers are being provided training for ten days annually regarding of teaching to the age-group of children 0-5 years.

11. Pre-School Learning Material & Play Items

All Anganwaries have been provided learning material and play items such as : puzzle games, alphabet blocks, and story charts etc. Specific projects are being developed under innovative head.

12. Health Care and Awareness Activities

All children are being provided medical check-up and healthy child shows have been organized to make the mothers aware of the health care of the children. The prizes in the shape of incentives have been given to the mothers and children.

13. Management Structure of SSA in the State and District

Proper management structure has been created in the district to implement SSA in the district effectively for realizing the goals of SSA.

14. Perception of Teacher Educators regarding SSA In-Service Teacher Training Programmes

Responses of Teacher Educators on Interview Schedule

S.No.	Statement	Response	
		Yes	No
1	Before the introduction of SSA in the State, was there any teachers' training programmes organized for the teachers?	12 (80 %)	3 (20 %)
2	Do you find any change in teachers' performance who attended the programmes organized by SSA?	15 (100 %)	0 (0 %)
3	Do the teachers make sufficient use of TLM and other techniques to explain difficult concepts of teaching learning?	13 86.67 %	2 13.33 %
4	Do you find any change in teachers' questioning skills and receiving responses?	15 100 %	0 0 %
5	Do the teachers give more and individualized attention to students after attending the in-service training programme?	14 93.33 %	1 6.67 %
6	Have the teachers introduced new innovations in teaching-learning?	11 73.33 %	4 26.69 %
7	Do the teachers encourage students' participation?	15 100 %	0 0 %
8	Do the teachers relate subject matter with the life of community?	14 93.33 %	1 6.67 %
9	Do the teachers seek parents' co-operation in solving student's problem?	12 80 %	3 20 %
10	What is your perception/experience about the efficacy and usefulness of in-service training programmes? Excellent (2, 13.33 %) Very Good (8, 53.33 %) Good (4, 26.67 %) Satisfactory (1, 6.67 %)		
11	Have you ever used TLM while providing the training for the teachers?	15 100 %	0 0 %
12	Do the grants for TLM is sufficient or not?	15 100 %	0 0 %
13	Have you made any suggestions to improve upon the present curriculum ?	13 86.67 %	2 13.33 %
If yes, please specify :			
.....			
14	Whether training programmes or workshops conducted under SSA have any relevance or useful to the teachers for their professional growth or not.	15 100 %	0 0 %
15	Whether in-service training courses under SSA are adequate in achieving its objectives, i.e. quality improvement in education?	14 93.33 %	1 6.67 %
16	Do you find any improvement in teaching-learning processes of the teachers after attending in-service programmes?	12 80 %	3 20 %
17	Do you develop innovative attitude among the teacher trainees in the field of education ?	13 86.67 %	2 13.33 %

(a) Introduction of Teacher Training Programme

Before the introduction of SSA, there were also the in-service teacher training programmes conducted by DIETs at district level as well as by SCERT at state level and by NCERT national level.

(b) Change in Performance of Teachers after Attending the Programme

All teacher educators viewed quite significant change in the performance of school teachers who attended in-service teacher training programme organized under SSA.

(c) Sufficient Use of Teacher Learning Material and Other Techniques

86.67 % of the teacher educators indicated that teachers after attending the training made sufficient use of TLM and other techniques to explain different concept while teaching the course of studies.

(d) Change in Teacher's Classroom Questioning Techniques

All the teacher educators were positive in their responses that the teacher's perspective and questioning techniques got very significant change after the in-service training course.

(e) Difference in Paying Individual Attention towards Students

93.33 % of the teacher educators admitted that there are positive differences in paying attention to the students by those teachers who attended in-service teacher training programmes.

(f) Introduction of Innovation in Teaching-Learning Process

73.33 % of the teacher educators disclosed that the teachers after attending the in-service training programmes used sufficiently the innovations in teaching learning.

(g) Encouraging Participation of the Students in Classroom

All the teacher educators are having the view that in majority cases who attended the training programmes encourage students to participate in classroom teaching learning process.

(h) Relating Learning with the Life of Community

93.33 % of the teacher educators are of the view that the teachers after attending in-service teacher training programmes have started to relate the subject matter with the life of the community.

(i) Co-operation of Parents in Solving the Problems of the Students

80 % teacher educators admitted that teachers have started to seek the cooperation of the parents/guardians in solving the problems of the students after attending the in-service training programmes.

(j) Perception and Experience about Usefulness of In-Service Training Programme provide under SSA

Majority of the teacher educators are of the view that the teacher training programmes envisaged are very good. They found that the teachers' perception and attitude has been changed after attending such courses. They are better equipped for the use of TLM and other techniques. Their professional knowledge is brushed and they become effective teachers.

(k) Views about TLM Grant and its Utilisation

All the teacher educators are of the view that they have been using TLM while providing the training for the teachers and this grant is sufficient at elementary level.

(l) Present Curriculum and its Validity

86.67 % of teacher educators have indicated the requirement of change of present curriculum and improvement in its validity and link the same with growing expansion of knowledge.

(m) Relevance of In-Service Teacher Training and its Usefulness

All the teacher educators found that in-service teacher training programmes and workshops conducted under SSA are quite useful and are relevant in the present day context.

(n) Adequacy of In-Service Teacher Training Programme under SSA

93.33 % of teacher educators have shown interest in the in-service teacher training programmes conducted under SSA, which is in their opinion are serving the cause of teachers and taught but they are also in favour of strengthening these programmes with better management, adequate TLM, computer training, training in new innovative techniques in the subject taught by the teachers. All round awareness of teachers is also required to be updated. The teachers should be given the knowledge about the preservation and saving of ecology and the environment.

(o) Improvement in Teaching-Learning Process after Attending the In-Service Training Programmes

80 % of the teacher educators are having the view that the teacher training programmes provided under SSA for in-service teachers bring effective improvement in the process of teaching learning.

(p) Development of Innovative Attitude among the Teacher Trainees

86.67 % of the teacher educators found that when they impart training to the in-service teachers, they are able to develop innovative attitude among the teacher trainees towards the effective teaching process.

Thus it has been found from the study that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in Kangra District is achieving its objectives effectively.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

The implications based on the findings of the study are given below:

1. Findings of the study indicate that Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in District Kangra is progressing well and achieving its objectives of universalisation of elementary education effectively. The target of 100 % enrolment and reducing the retention rate will be achieved soon. The primary schools are being opened within the walking distance of one km. in the district.

2. Another finding of the study indicate the fact that in-service teacher training programme organized by SSA have brought change in the opinion of teachers about different aspects of teaching-learning. These training programmes equip the teacher with better teaching methods and use of other techniques for creating better classroom environment. Hence it is suggested that such in-service teacher training programmes should be made integral part of the educational programmes for elementary school teachers.

3. In the change scenario the teachers' need to be given freedom and incentive for teaching aids to suit them and their pupils.

4. It can further be seen from the results that the curriculum of the teacher training programme should be changed and it should link with the latest knowledge. The teacher training programme should be need based and research oriented as well as participatory.

PERSPECTIVES FOR FURTHER STUDY:

The above observations show that qualitative research in teacher education needs to be undertaken on a much larger scale than what it is now. Since the teacher is one of the most important components in educational process, research on the status of variables affecting the performance is of great importance. The following are some suggested problems based on the findings of the study, which need further investigations:

- The present study can be replicated in other Districts of Himachal Pradesh studying the impact of SSA in achieving the target of universalisation of elementary education.
- A study of effectiveness of in-service teacher training programme not in the form of opinion of teachers' regarding various aspects of teaching learning but in the form of outcome of teaching learning process i.e. academic achievement of students may be conducted.
- Personality variables of the teachers may also be included while studying the effectiveness of the teachers through such programmes.
- Studies can be undertaken for preparing training modules for one week, two weeks, three weeks and one month duration in-service teacher training programmes.
- Evaluation study of SSA can be conducted in Himachal Pradesh.
- A study may be designed to confirm the findings of the present study.

It is hoped that the study will encourage other scholars to undertake further research and follow up work in this area as suggested.

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