

UNIVERSALISATION OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION UNDER
SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN IN MANIPURVoice of Research
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ISSN No. 2277-7733**H. Ibomcha Sharma**Principal, D.M. College of Teacher Education,
Government of Manipur, Imphal**Abstract**

One of the constitutional obligations of the Indian democracy is to provide universalisation of elementary education (UEE) in the country. However, due to various reasons and factors, this obligation could not achieve yet. After the formulation of National Policy on Education, 1986 and follow up POA-1986, certain steps and measures have been taken up in the form of meaningful partnership of Union and State Government. The scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has been launched since 2001 in order to make universalise elementary education for all children till they complete fourteen years of age all over the country. The present paper is to focus the status of Universalisation of Elementary Education under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the state of Manipur, and its constraint to achieve by 2010. This paper will be so useful for students and teachers in general for their academic purpose and for the researchers as a source of related literature in particular.

Keywords : *Universalisation of Elementary Education(UEE), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. (SSA) District Primary Education (DPE), Lok Jumbish Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) and Alternative and Innovative Education (AIE).*

Universalisation of Elementary Education (U.E.E.) is an educational term refers to make education available to all children in the age of group of 6-14 or in classes I-VII. It means the education for every child to complete the stage of Elementary or Primary education either formal or non-formal means of education. Here all children covered the children of every community castes, creed, religions, handicapped, orphans or destitutes and disadvantaged groups. It signifies that education is for all and not for a selected few. This concept accepts that education is the birth right of every child. This means all children belonging to the rich and the poor living in towns as well as rural areas or hills and plains, which are accessible with difficulty; have to be provided with facilities for elementary education. In short, universalisation of elementary education is the educational provision for all children to educate elementary education without any dropouts. Universalisation of elementary education also means free and compulsory elementary education for all children till they complete 14 years of age. Universalisation of Elementary Education involved the three years stages or steps, which are Universalisation of Provision, Universalisation of Enrolment, and Universalisation of Retention.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalise elementary education by community ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. The SSA programme is also an attempt to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities to all children, through provision of community owned quality education in a mission mode.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is an extensive scheme covering the entire country subsuming within itself all other major governmental educational interventions. All

programme like, the District Primary Education programme (DPEP), the Lok Jumbish, the operation Blackboard, etc. will be covered under the umbrella of the SSA. The SSA is an initiative to universalize and improve the quality of elementary education in a mission mode through district based decentralized, context specific planning and implementation strategy, considering the colossal dimensions of the project and the financial implications of the same, it is necessary that the project plans be appraised with an eye for details of the activities pertaining to the total school improvement interventions including quality dimensions, rationale, approach/strategy, utilization of existing resource budget requirements, etc.

The SSA is a comprehensive and integrated flagship programme of Government of India to attain UEE covering the entire country in a mission mode. SSA has been launched in 2001-2002 in partnership with the State Governments and local self Governments. The programme aims to provide useful and relevant, elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010. It is an initiative to universalize and improve quality of education through decentralizes and specific planning and a process based, time bound implementation strategy. The programme lays emphasis on bringing all gender and social category gaps at elementary education level with time bound objectives. On one hand, SSA is programme with its own targets, norms and processes and on the other it is an umbrella programme covering other programmes like DPEP. The gigantic dimensions of the programme and the financial implications call for a meticulous planning and a rigorous appraisal.

The meaning of SSA can be understood from the following features:

A programme with a clear time frame for Universal



Elementary Education.

A response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.

An opportunity for promoting social-justice through basic education.

An effort at effectively involving the Panchayati Raj institutions School Management Committees, Village and Urban Slum Level Education Committees, Parents' Teachers' Associations, Mother Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous Councils and other grass root level structures in the management of elementary schools.

An expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.

A partnership between the Central, State and Social Government.

An opportunity for States develop their own vision of elementary education.

Aims and objectives of SSA : The SSA aims to provide use till and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age groups by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. Following are the main objectives of SSA:

All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, Back to School Camp by 2003.

All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.

All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010.

Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.

Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary Education level by 2010.

Universal retention by 2010.

Basic features of SSA :

Institutional reforms in States

Sustainable financing in partnership with States (IX Plan 85:15, X Plan 75:25, After X Plan 50:50)

Community ownership of school based interventions through effective decentralization.

Institutional capacity building for improvement in quality.

Community based monitoring with full transparency in all aspects of implementation.

Community based approach to planning with a habitation as a unit of planning.

A mainstreaming gender approach.

Focus on the educational participation of children from the SC/ST, religious and linguistic minorities, etc.

Thrust on quality and making education relevant.

Recognition of critical role of teacher and focus on the human resource development needs of teachers.

Preparation of District Elementary Education Plans reflecting all governmental and non-governmental investments.

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Major areas of interventions in SSA : Education of out-of-school children (Educational Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education) as such Quality Improvement, Special Focus Groups, Research and Evaluation, Management Structure and Institutional Capacity Building, Community Mobilization, Civil Works, Monitoring and MIS, Financial Management and Procurement.

Universalisation of elementary education under sarva shiksha abhiyan in manipur : Manipur receive formal education, which is called modern education very late. With the establishment of Johnstone School in 1885. The people of Manipur began to receive modern formal education. But the progress of education was very slow. After the merger of Manipur to Indian dominion and the Manipur, also enter to follow Indian Constitution with the enactment of Indian Constitution on 26th January 1950. One of the Article enshrine in Indian Constitution in regard to education is Article 45 which is the provision for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years under the Directive Principle of State Policy. Most of the State Governments and the Union territories have enacted legislation relating to compulsory primary education. The Acts empower the concern governments and administrators to introduce compulsory education in particular area and establish a machinery for the enforcement of relevant provision of the act in this area. Manipur does not have such legislation to enact the Article 45 of the Indian Constitution. So Manipur



still lack behind in providing education to all children to achieve universalisation of education till date due to various factors and problems.

Population of Manipur has also been increasing day by day. The number of schools has also been increasing, even though the State cannot provide free and compulsory education to all children to achieve universalisation of education.

The government of Manipur is committed to achieve the target of UEE by 2010 for the purpose the scheme of SSA has also been taken up after making elementary education Fundamental Right as per 86th Amendments of Indian Constitution 2002. Hence, the work for UEE had been taken up with active co-operation for all section of the people of Manipur.

In Manipur, the SSA scheme was introduced in July 2004. As per the directive of the GOI, the scheme has to be launched since 2001. However, due to some government problem the scheme started very late.

The Government of Manipur has been taken up the activities to achieve the target of S S A scheme with the following objectives:

All children in Manipur should be in School, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternative school, back to school camp by 2005;

All children in the State complete five years of primary schooling by 2007;

All children complete eight years of schooling in Manipur by 2010;

Focus should be made on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life in the State;

Bridge all gender and social category gaps at the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary level by 2010 in the State; and

Universal retention of children by 2020 in Manipur.

The target of SSA in Manipur is to bring about 60,000 children under different activities of out- of-school children in the year 2005-06 with Rs. 26,341 lakhs per year marked for this purpose. Accordingly, an autonomous society called the "Sarva shiksha abhiyan state mission authority manipur" had been formed and registered under the Manipur Societies Registration Act 1987 and the Manipur Societies Registration Act 1 of 1990 for the implementation of SSA to provide UEE.

The management structure of the society comprises of two bodies.

The governing body at the open for policy formulation with Chief Minister as ex- official president.

The Executive Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary to oversee the implementation of the programme.

Management Information System (MIS) is the support system of the SSA programme. Under this activity school-wise and village-wise information are collected through districts Information System in education. During the year 2005-06, a household survey was conducted under this programme to understand the actual problems and issues for school going and the out-of-school children, 20 days in- service training for 3,293 primary and upper primary teachers has been conducted in district level training for 1,750 teachers are in progress, 450 untrained teachers are ready for 60 days training programme under distance education Rs. 24.36 lakhs is allocated for this purpose. Various activities have to be taken up during the financial year 2006-07 for EGS and AIE 63,051 out-of-school children in 6-14 years had been identified in Manipur during the household survey conducted in 2005 under SSA. All the out-of-school children in the State would be covered during 2006-07 in which emphasis would be led on adolescent boys and girls in the age group 13-19 years. Voluntary agencies had been involved in a massive scale in the implementation of EGS and AIE under SSA programme in the State. 60 voluntary agencies have been selected for organization residential and non-residential bridge courses. 107 EGS schools would be upgraded to regular schools.

There are various constraints in the implementation of SSA programme in Manipur from 2004. Some constraints of the programme include difficulties in mobilization due to inhabitation of scattered remote hilly areas, problem of data collection among the different communities in habited in hilly areas, lack of transferred and communication facilities, insurgency problem, law and order situation, high rates of blockades, bandhs, agitation and uncertainty of personal securities in any development work mainly in the field of educational development work. Not only this there is frequent change of official and additional charges, frequent transfer policy at the State and district level and also double charges, so, they cannot discharge their duties fully to the SSA programme. Some other constraints in the progress of SSA programme are improper rationalization of teachers, poor infrastructure, and absence of

Experts resource persons and co-ordination among the intervention, coordinators and less exposure of programme.

Due to having various constraints and problems, the progress of SSA programme has not been far reaching till date. Therefore, it is difficult to predict the situation that whether the programme of SSA could be achieve or not within the target year of 2010 in Manipur. Therefore, the government, the authorities, and the public in general should have to make co-ordination and co-operation to the implementation of the programme of S S A success in near



future by considering as an obligation for everybody of the State and the Country.

Constraints in the implementation of SSA in manipur:

Delay in SSA implementation: S S A programme in Manipur from 2004.

Difficulties in mobilizing Data Collection at scattered remote hilly area: Out of 9 districts 5 are hill districts inhabited by the schedule tribes of different groups having their own identity of socio-culture, language, and faith and villages are scattered, communication and transport are mostly on foot.

Insurgency problems/law and order situation: High rate of blockades/bandhs agitations and uncertainty of personal securities affect in any development works mainly in the field of educational development.

Frequent change of officials and of additional charges: Frequent transfer and posting of officials at the State and District level and double charges, so they cannot discharge their duties fully to the SSA programme.

Improper rationalization of teachers: The post of teachers are state cadre, so teachers can be posted anywhere in Manipur irrespective of District/locality, etc.

Poor infrastructure like power, transport, communication, and irregularities of electricity during office hours handicapped in official works, which depend on the electronic devices. Absence of experts/resource persons and co-ordinations amongst the intervention coordinators and less exposure of the programme. Least knowledge of

community based planning.

Conclusion : Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is the provision of education to make education for all children to complete elementary education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is an effort to universalize elementary education by community ownership, which is a comprehensive and integral flagship programme of Government of India to achieve UEE by 2010. In Manipur SSA has been introduced since 2004. However, due to various reasons and constraints it could not achieve in the target period. There is need to draw serious attention and action to take up in achieving the scheme of SSA for achieving UEE in the state within short period.

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