ELEMENTRY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT THROUGH SARVA SIKSHA ABHIYAN IN GHATAL ELEMENTARY EDUCATION BLOCK OF PASCHIM MEDINIPUR DISTRICT IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

Primary education constitutes a very important part in the entire structure of education. It is in this stage that a child starts formal education. The education which the child receives from the formal institution provides the foundation of his physical, mental, emotional, intellectual and social development. Sound Primary education gives a strong basis for Secondary and Higher education. The Directive principles of the Indian constitution had laid down the provision for making available the opportunities for free and compulsory elementary education within 10 years of the adoption of the constitution for all children between the age group of 6-14 years. After Independence the successive five year plans of the government of India have brought about a phenomenal qualitative growth in the field of education.

The world declaration on Education for All - EFA (1990) adopted in Jomtien gave fillip to national commitment for reaching basic education for all children. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalize 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 of all children, through the provision of community owned quality education in a mission made. In this study analyse "Primary and Upper primary education development through Sarva Siksha Abhiyan in Ghatal elementary education block of Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal.

Keywords: Formal Education, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, 6-14 years and Community Development.

The progress and prosperity of a nation are intimately related to the maximum growth and development of its children. The maximum growth and development of children depend upon the type of education provided at pre-school period of the age group 3 to 5 or 6 years. As a matter of fact pre-school education of a' child begins even before his birth. Gandhiji stressed the importance of early childhood in these words "The real education begins from conception as the mother begins to take up the responsibility of the child. If a mother is correctly instructed and prepared for the coming responsibility, then that will be the education of the child as well".

It is well known that the age about 3 to 6 is the most impressionable period of children's growth and that the foundations of future adult personality are laid down in these impressionable years. Future social prejudices and social maladjustments are removed by the provision of a properly "controlled environment" of the children when they are at this stage. There is a general feeling that the prevailing educational backwardness of a large section of our children is due to the lack of a proper educational environment in most homes, especially in the villages and that can be met by providing necessary education. It can be suggested that to raise the education in total the entire environment of the locality should be improved.

The primary education is important for the children to become a good citizen of the nation. A citizen should understand his needs as well as to have the ability to meet them. Every individual in his daily life has several social, individual and domestic problems. In primary schools, children get necessary guidance and training for resolving these problems.

The main purpose of primary education is to create such an environment in schools as to ensure the development of healthy social tendencies in children. The child is a part of the society and needs healthy social ideas for building up his personality. The desired outlook in this respect may be created when a conscious effort is made to provide such environment at the primary schools which may help children to understand their environmental problems.

Primary education 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. According to the Indian Constitution, education is both a union and a state subject. The governments of the centre and the state are both responsible for the expansion and development of education.

The constitution made various provisions for education such as:

(1)   Free and compulsory education for all children up to 14 years of age (Article-45).

(2)   Right to education for all (Article-41)

(3)   Promotion for education of society (Article-46)

(4)   Provision for grant for education (Article-282)

(5)   Women education (Article-15 and 26)

The system of education in West Bengal in the early period is not properly known due to lack of materials and historical evidences. History is also silent in providing facts about it. But in Sankardeva's "Gurucharit" there was mentioned of the "Gurukula" system of education in ancient West Bengal where education was imparted in the house of Gurus. There were Tols' i The world declaration on Education for All   - EFA (1990) adopted in Jomtien gave fillip to national commitment for reaching basic education for all children. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an effort to universalize 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 of all children, through the provision of community owned quality education in a mission made.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is a programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is an opportunity for promotion of social justice through basic education. An effort at effectively involving the Panchayati Raj Institutions, School Management Committees, Village and Slum Level Education Committees, Parents and Teachers' Associations, Mother Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous Councils and other grass root level structures in the management of elementary schools. It is an expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country. It is a partnership between the central, state and the local government. It is an opportunity for states to develop their own vision of elementary education.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has two aspects

(a) It provides a wide convergent framework for implementation of elementary education schemes,

(b) It is also a programme with budget provision for strengthening vital areas to achieve universalization of elementary education.

With all investment in the elementary education sector from the state and the central plans will reflect as part of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan framework, they will all merge in to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan programme with the next few years. As a programme, it reflects the additional resource provision for UEE.n West Bengal. There was guru system in these tools.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in India: Features, Aims and Objectives

 Today nearly four out of five children in the age group 6-14 years are in the school. Two out of three persons are functionally illiterate. Progress achieved is by no means small. But it falls short of meeting the goal of education for all. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a programme for Universal Elementary Education. This 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. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country.

Main feature of SSA:

1. Programme with a clear time frame for universal elementary education.

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

3. An opportunity for promoting social justice through basic.

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

5. A partnership between the central, state and the local government.

6. An opportunity for states to develop their own vision of elementary education.

7. An effort at effective involving the Panchyati Raj Institutions, school management Committees, village and urban slum level Education Committees, parent's Teachers' Associations, Mother-Teacher Associations, Tribal Autonomous councils and other grassroots level structures in the management of elementary schools.

Aims of SSA:

1. To provide useful and elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010.

2. To bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of community in the management of schools.

3. To allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in order to develop their potential both spiritually and materially.

4. To inculcate value-based learning this allows children an opportunity to work for each other's wellbeing rather than to permit mere selfish pursuits.

5. To realize the importance of Early Childhood Care and education and looks at the 0-14 age as a continuum.

Objectives of SSA:

1. All children in school. Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003.

2. All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.

3. All children complete of elementary schooling by 2010.

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

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

6. Universal retention by 2010.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has two aspects:

1. It provides a wide convergent frame work for implementation of Elementary Education schemes.

2. It is also a programme with budget provision for strengthening vital areas to achieve universalization of elementary education.

Statement of the Problem:

The SSA has its goal to enrol all children in the age group 6-14 years by 2007. The central government initiative cannot help if the states do not have the vision to implement it. The intensive planning and regular funding is important feature of the SSA. The community participation in such a venture forms the major hurdle to implementing the scheme. Under SSA, there is a separate provision of opening new primary/elementary schools, enriching the existing schools in terms of teachers, modifying or extending/ repairing school buildings, recruiting more teachers and providing more books so that all children in the age group of 6-14 years can be enrolled and retained for achieving the target of UEE by 2010. For affective implementation, the scheme focuses on de-centralized planning up to village level. The formative evaluation of such a relevant scheme of UEE forms an important area of research so that the causes of failure if any can be identified in the context of Gathal education block in Pashim Medinipur district of West Bengal. It will also help the policy makers and implementing agencies to monitor their activities, so that the objectives of SSA at state level in general and in Pashim Medinipur district in particular can be achieved with available financial resources and time frame work. This status study will also help the planners to assess and evaluate the existing shortcomings if any in the scheme and suggest corrective measures to be adopted at district level for achieving the objectives within the fixed time framework of the scheme. No such specific study has been conducted in this area. This has motivated the investigator to take up this piece of research work. Statement of the Problem: "Elementry Education Development Through Sarva Siksha Abhiyan in Ghatal Elementary Education Block Of Paschim Medinipur District In West Bengal".

Objectives of the Study

The Major objectives of the study are:

1) To know the Present status of SSA and evaluate the progress made in implementation of the same according to the objectives and time framework.
2) To know the various infrastructural facilities such as school building, classrooms and books etc. Provided to schools under SSA.
3) To find out the number and type of teachers appointed under SSA.
4) To study the enrolment pattern in schools under SSA Programme.

5) To find the specific problems faced in the implementation of SSA in the GEEB of Pashim Medinipur district.

Methodology

Research Methodology is the systematic procedure of investigating a problem starting from its initial identification of the problem to the final conclusion. A sound methodology and procedure includes an appropriate strategy in carrying out each and every step of the investigation. The present study is descriptive in nature using survey method of research. The major focus of the study is to know the status of implementation in terms of its functioning and progress made in achieving the goal of SSA programme in Pashim Medinipur district of West Bengal.

Sources of Data

The objective of the study is to know the status of SSA Programme in the district of Pashim Medinipur. The study follows mainly descriptive survey method. The sources of data are generally two types. (a) Primary Source and (b) Secondary Source.

(a) Primary Source data are collected from the field by the researcher herself from the schools (b) Secondary data are collected, from different libraries, reports of mission offices at state and district level as well as reports published from various other agencies involved in SSA programme.

Analysis Technique

Depending on the data collected the appropriate statistical techniques such as percentage, average and as well as qualitative technique of analysis is used to interpret the data. The findings are reported accordingly.

Delimitations of the Study

The proposed study is delimited in scope on the following parameters:

(i) The study is limited to only one district i.e., Pashim Medinipur district of West Bengal.

(ii) The scope of the study is limited to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation

of SSA Programme and not to initiate or help in the process by the investigator.

(iii) The findings of the study will be useful or applicable to the schools and children of

Pashim Medinipur district.

Ghatal Elementary Education Block

Ghatal subdivision has alluvial soils. Around 85% of the total cultivated area is cropped more than once. It has a density of population of 1,099 per km2, but being a small subdivision only a little over a fifth of the people in the district reside in this subdivision. 14.33% of the population lives in urban areas and 86.67% lives in the rural areas. As per 2011 Census of India, Ghatal had a total population of 54,591 of which 27,882 (51%) were males and 26,709 (49%) were females. Population in the age range 0-6 years was 5,399.

TABLE – 1

Number of Elementary schools in Ghatal EEB (2011-12)

Type	Class I-VII	Class V-VII	Total
Upper Primary	M.V.=17	M.E.= 39	56
Lower Primary	Provincialized=09	Govt.= 187	196
UP Recg. and Pvt.	17	27	44
Total	43	253	296

Source: Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12).

N.B.: M.V.-Middle Vernacular, M.E.- Middle English, Prov.- Provincialised, Govt.- Government, Recog.-Recognised

As per Table -1, there are 56 Upper primary schools (MV: 17, ME: 39) and 196 lower primary schools (Provincialised: 09 and Govt.:187). Apart from this there are 44 recognised Lower and Upper primary schools in Ghatal Elementary Education Block.

TABLE – 2

Enrolment and Number of Teachers in Upper Primary and Lower Primary schools under Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12)

Type	Enrolment		Total	Teachers
	Boys	Girls		
Upper Primary	3346	5583	8929	342
Lower Primary	4791	4634	9425	388

Source: Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12).

According to above table-2, the enrolment and number of teachers are concerned, there are 8929 (Boys: 3346, Girls: 5583), and 9425 (Boys: 4791 & Girls: 4634) learners 342 and 388 teachers at upper primary and lower Primary stages respectively in this block.

Table-2.

Population of school going SC/ST/OBC/Minority/ General Children Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12)

Type	SC		ST		OBC		Minority		General		Grand Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Male	Female	Males	Females	
Upper Primary	901	1017	219	712	888	1590	297	616	1041	1648	8929
Lower Primary	912	819	601	710	1316	1420	500	522	1462	1163	9425
Total	1813	1836	820	1422	2204	3010	797	1138	2503	2811	18354

Source: Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12).

Table-2, gives the caste wise number of school going Children in Ghatal Elementary Education Block. At upper primary level, the enrolment of SC, ST, OBC, Minority and General Learners are 1918 (Boys: 901, Girls: 1017), 931 (Boys: 219, Girls: 712), 2478 (Boys: 888, Girls: 1590), 913 (Boys: 297, Girls: 616), and1, 2689 (Boys: 1041, Girls: 1648) respectively whereas number for the same categories at lower primary is 1731 (Boys: 912, G irls:819), 1311 (Boys:601, Girls:710), 2736 (Boys:1316, Girls:1420), 1022 (Boys: 500, Girls: 522) and 2625 (Boys:1462, Girls:1163) respectively. At both lower primary and upper Primary the number of Girls (10217) is quite high as compared to Boys (8137).

TABLE - 3

Number of Drop out Children under Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12)

Type	SC	ST	Minorities	OBC	General	Total
Upper Primary	31	19	21	22	11	104
Lower Primary	80	49	27	78	51	285
Total	111	68	48	100	62	389

Source: Ghatal Elementary Education Block, (2011-12).

Table-3, shows that the number of dropout at Up and LP is 104 and 285 respectively. The dropouts are high in both UP and LP in SC (111) and OBC (100) among all communities. The dropout rate is negligible and can be considered as zero for all practical Purposes.

TABLE – 4

Facilities / Equipment under Ghatal Elementary Education Block 2011-12

Upper Primary	Black Board, Map, Globe, TLM Box, Computer etc.
Lower primary	Black Board, Map, Globe, TLM Box, Kit Box etc.

Source: Ghatali Elementary Education Block, (2011-12).

Table-4 shows that apart from usual teaching aids the upper primary schools are provided with computer to enhance computer literacy among the upper learners.

TABLE – 5

New Buildings / Repairing/ Toilet under Ghatal Elementary Education Block (2011-12)

Type	Building	Repairing	Toilet	Total
Upper Primary	15	3	9	27
Lower Primary	151	6	-	157

Source: Ghatal Elementary Education Block, (2011-12).

Under SSA, there is a provision of constructing new buildings and at the same time repairing the old buildings which are in deplorable conditions. Under these activities, 15 and 151 new buildings are

constructed at upper Primary and lower primary stages respectively, apart from repairing 9 buildings in 2011-12 as shown in Table-5.

Suggestions for Further Research

All research work comes to an end with certain suggestions for further studies. On the basis of the nature of the study and experiences from the field work, the investigator suggests the following studies to be explored for the further research:

➢ The present study is conducted on Universalisation of Elementary Education and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in the district of Paschim Medinipur of West Bengal. A similar study can be done in other districts.

➢ Taking the feedback from elementary level similar studies at secondary levels may be conducted.

➢ The socio-economic conditions among the different people and their educational status in the district of Paschim Medinipur may have bearing on educational development. An independent study on socio-economic conditions relating to dropout and wastage at this level can be conducted.

➢ The mid-day meal has an impact on enhancing the enrolment of rural children. A study on mid-day meal in relation to socio-economic conditions and enrolment may be taken up at the state level.

➢ There is in general high dropout and wastage among the children of tea-garden and char areas communities which form a major labour force in tea industry. A study to motivate the children and parents of these communities may be conducted.

➢ The children of backward/underprized village's communities should be provided vocational education at upper primary stage so that they may earn their livelihood even if they leave after this stage. A study on their interests and vocational preferences will be useful in the context of rural areas of West Bengal.

➢ Further, there is scope to conduct research work relating to problems of adult and non-formal education in the district of Paschim Medinipur which directly or indirectly affect the primary education.

➢ A study can be conducted on the problems of the drop out wastage and stagnation at lower primary and upper primary stages in the district.

➢ There should be regular supervision and monitoring of the programme in every district for proper utilization of the funds and programmes under SSA. A study in relation to supervision and its effect on improvement of academic environment of the schools may be conducted at the district level.

➢ A study on problems related to girl education at elementary stage can be significant area of research in the district of Paschim Medinipur.

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