
EDUCATION SCHEME IN BIHAR: A STUDY



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Abstract

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. The programme seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants. Existing schools with inadequate teacher strength are provided with additional teachers, while the capacity of existing teachers is being strengthened by extensive training, grants for developing teaching-learning materials and strengthening of the academic support structure at a cluster, block and district level. SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills. SSA has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs. SSA also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide. Education is a tool that can play a vital role in improving the socio-economic condition of the nation. It empowers citizens with analytical abilities, leads to better confidence levels and fortifies one with will power and goal setting competencies. Education involves not only textbook learning but also a growth of values, skills and capacities. This helps individuals to plan for their career as well as play a useful part in building a new society with progressive values. Hence, education results in changing both individual lives as well as that of the entire community for the better. The education sector has been of vital importance to the Indian Government which has been regularly formulating provisions and schemes for promoting elementary education.

Keywords: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Education, Indian, Socio-economic

Introduction

As an intervention programme, it started on 2002 and SSA has been operational since 2000-2001. However, its roots go back to 1993-1994, when the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched, with an aim of achieving the objective of universal primary education. DPEP, over several phases, covered 272 districts in 18 states of the country. The expenditure on the programme was shared by the Central Government (85%) and the State Governments (15%). The Central share was funded by a number of external agencies, including the World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID) and UNICEF.^[4] By 2001, more than \$1500 million had been committed to the programme, and 50 million children covered in its ambit. In an impact assessment of Phase I of DPEP, the authors concluded that its net impact on minority children was impressive, while there was little evidence of any impact on the enrolment of girls. Nevertheless, they concluded that the investment in DPEP was not a waste, because it introduced a new approach to primary school interventions in India. The Right to Education Act (RTE) came into force on 1 April 2010. Some educationists and policy makers believe that, with the passing of this act, SSA has acquired the necessary legal force for its implementation.

Objectives of SSA

The SSA programme is an endeavour to provide an opportunity for improving human capabilities of all children, through the provision of community-owned quality education in a mission mode. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan had been set with specific targets. These are:

- All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School or 'Back-to-School' camp by 2003.
- All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007.
- 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 the primary stage by 2007 and at the elementary education level by 2010.
- Universal retention by 2010.

To achieve these objectives, strategies have been framed that include active involvement of local community groups and institutional capacity building for setting up of block level resource centres. These centres impart district elementary education plans. The framework of

SSA includes appointment of teachers, their training, motivating parents and students, provision of incentives, like, scholarships, uniforms, textbooks, etc. The programme also aims to open new schools in areas having inadequate schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through the construction of additional class rooms, provision of toilets, drinking water facilities and so on.

Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat

Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat is a nationwide sub-programme of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*. Children who fail to read in early education lag behind in other subjects.¹ The programme is designed to improve comprehensive early reading, writing and early mathematics programme for children in Classes I and II.

²Under this programme, ₹ 762 crore (US\$110 million) was approved to States. The programme will not only provide print rich environment, timely distribution of books but will also include new teacher mentoring and appraisal system.³ SSA has been operational since 2000-2001 to provide for a variety of interventions for universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in elementary education and improving the quality of learning. SSA interventions include inter alia, opening of new schools and alternate schooling facilities, construction of schools and additional classrooms, toilets and drinking water, provisioning for teachers, regular teacher in service training and academic resource support, free textbooks & uniforms and support for improving learning achievement levels / outcome.⁵

With the passage of the RTE Act, changes have been incorporated into the SSA approach, strategies and norms. The changes encompass the vision and approach to elementary education, guided by the following principles : Holistic view of education, as interpreted in the National Curriculum Framework 2005, with implications for a systemic revamp of the entire content and process of education with significant implications for curriculum, teacher education, educational planning and management.⁶ Equity, to mean not only equal opportunity, but also creation of conditions in which the disadvantaged sections of the society – children of SC, ST, Muslim minority, landless agricultural workers and children with special needs, etc. – can avail of the opportunity. Access, not to be confined to ensuring that a school becomes accessible to all children within specified distance but implies an understanding of the educational needs and predicament of the traditionally excluded categories – the SC, ST and others sections of the most disadvantaged groups, the Muslim minority, girls in general, and children with special needs.⁷ Gender concern, implying not only an effort to enable girls to keep pace with boys but to view education in the perspective spelt out in the National Policy on Education 1986 /92; i.e. a decisive intervention to bring about a basic change in the status of women. Centrality of teacher, to motivate them to innovate and create a culture in the

classroom, and beyond the classroom, that might produce an inclusive environment for children, especially for girls from oppressed and marginalised backgrounds. Moral compulsion is imposed through the RTE Act on parents, teachers, educational administrators and other stakeholders, rather than shifting emphasis on punitive processes. Convergent and integrated system of educational management is pre-requisite for implementation of the RTE law. All states must move in that direction as speedily as feasible.⁸

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in India: Features And Aims

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.⁹

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.¹⁰
3. An opportunity for promoting social justice through basic.¹¹
4. A expression of political will for universal elementary education across the country.
5. A partnership between the central, state and the local government.¹²
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.¹³

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, regional¹⁴
3. To allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in order to develop their potential both spiritually and materially.¹⁵
4. To inculcate value-based learning this allows children an opportunity to work for each other's well being rather than to permit mere selfish pursuits.¹⁶
5. To realize the importance of Early Childhood Care and education and looks at the 0-14 age as a continuum.¹⁷

Mission 2020 for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

Initiated by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the programme envisage at developing 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.¹⁸ The Government of India, in 2011-12 fiscal allocated Rs 21,000 crore for this project. In 2015, the funds sharing pattern of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was decided to be in the ratio of 60:40 between Centre and States (90:10 for the eighth NorthEastern States and three Himalayan States) with effect from the year 2015-

¹⁶. The revision has been done in view of the higher devolution of funds to the States from 32% to 42% as recommended by the 14th Finance Commission. Some State Governments namely Bihar, Odisha, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and West Bengal had raised their concern about interim reduction of the central share of funding in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) from 65% to 50%, which has subsequently been rationalized to 60% based on the report of the Sub-Group of Chief Ministers on Rationalisation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes.¹⁹ The programme set out with an objective to provide useful and elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age group and to bridge social, regional and gender gaps with the active participation of community in the management of schools, among others. As per the goals set in 2015 the programme sought to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional classrooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants.²⁰

Learning Outcomes

A frequent criticism against the RTE Act was that it did not adequately focus on issues promoting quality education in schools.²¹ Therefore, in a landmark step, the Rules to the RTE Act were amended in February 2017 to include, for the first time, the class wise, subject wise Learning Outcomes till Class VIII, thereby emphasizing the importance of quality education. In this regard, Learning Outcomes for each class in Languages (Hindi, English and Urdu), Mathematics, Environmental Studies, Science and Social Science up to the elementary stage have been developed.²² These are the basic levels of learning that children should arrive at the end of each class. All the States and UTs have translated the Learning Outcomes document in their regional languages, and they are circulating these to all the teachers, and also providing them with the requisite training. Posters for display of Learning Outcomes on the schools along with leaflets on Learning Outcomes for reference of parents have been developed and circulated to all States and UTs. An amount of Rs 91.20 crore has been released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India to all States and UTs for printing the Learning Outcomes documents, the Posters and the leaflets in regional languages, and for their distribution.²³

National Achievement Survey 2017-18

National Achievement Survey (NAS) which was earlier based on textbook content is now a competency based evaluation.²⁴ As compared to only 4.43 lakh students who were earlier tested across Classes 3, 5 and 8, this time around 22 lakh students from around 1,10,000 schools across 700 districts of India (including rural and urban) were assessed in the year 2017-18 (November 13, 2017) making it one of the largest sample surveys of student learning achievement. This survey is an improvement over the previous cycles of **NAS** as it will be completed in the one full academic year. It will reflect the scores of the students and will be able to suggest academic intervention in the same academic year.²⁵ District wise Result will be generated within 2 months of test conduction. NAS Reporting will show if the students' learning levels are as per the learning outcomes of a particular grade.²⁶

Progress towards the achievement of ssa goals**All children in school**

Table shows impressive, steady progress in this regard over the last four years,

Table : Access and enrolment

2014-15		2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Primary Enrolment	125 million	132 million	134 million	134 million
Upper Enrolment	Primary 43.7 million	47.5 million	50.9 million	52.3 million
Elementary Enrolment	168.7 million	179.5 million	184.9 million	186.3 million
GER Primary	104	111	114	113

NER Primary	84.5	92.8	95.9	97.0
GER Upper 59 Primary		64.7	69.9	71.6
NER Upper 43 Primary		48.4	52.6	54.5
Out of Children+	School 7 million	7.6 million	4.5 million	2.8 million

Statistics 2017-18

Source: DISE

Flash

Growth in primary enrolment has slowed, which is to be expected as the number of out of school children drops, the primary NER nears 100 percent, the growth of unrecognized private school enrolments (not fully captured by DISE) continues, and the total number of children of age to enter Class 1 begins to decline.²⁷

Table: Status of primary schools

Primary State	schools schools target	Primary schools completed	Primary completed (percent)
Arunachal Pradesh	941	806	86 percent
Bihar	17466	3735	21 percent
Chhattisgarh	10050	7120	71 percent
Haryana	902 788		87 percent
J&K	8204	4075	50 percent
Jharkhand	17842	14084	79 percent
Kerala	511	305	60 percent
Maharashtra	10497	6427	61 percent

Meghalaya	1495	981	66 percent
Orissa	7568	4073	54 percent
Punjab	545	405	74 percent
Tripura	1094	976	89 percent
Uttarakhand	2406	1592	66 percent

Table : Status of upper primary schools

State	Upper primary schools target	upper primary schools completed	Upper primary schools completed (percent)
Bihar	544	474	87 percent

Haryana	1151	791	69 percent
Jammu & Kashmir	1119	591	53 percent
Jharkhand	8175	2339	29 percent

MP	16323	11718	72 percent
Meghalaya	1261	306	24 percent
Nagaland	80	57	71 percent
Tamil Nadu	4644	2707	58 percent
Uttarakhand	1974	1117	57 percent
West Bengal	3300	446	14 percent

Source: TSG, MHRD. March 2018.

A closer analysis of these States reveals that they may have insufficient supervision structure or weak capacity to implement a programme at the scale of SSA. It is important to note here that Student Classroom Ratio (SCR) is also among the highest in some of the following States due to gap in infrastructure.²⁸

Table : Student classroom ratio

Percent of schools with SCR > =	
State	
60	

Assam

21 percent

Bihar

54 percent

Chhattisgarh	6
Jharkhand	23
Chandigarh	14
Uttar Pradesh	19
West Bengal	18

Source: DISE 2017-18, Flash Statistics²⁹

Conclusion

Education is one of the most powerful instruments in shaping the human race. Education is the only answer to all our socio-economic problems. Several global organizations and nations have been emphasizing the need for universalization of primary education. The economics Nobel laureate Prof. Amartya Sen has also pointed out that for sustainable development, even the poorest of poor should be provided proper education. Accordingly, steps have to be taken to bring primary education to the doorstep of the rural people since more than 75 percent of Indians live in rural areas. There is an imperative need to change the education pattern to achieve universal primary education in India. Even after 60 years of independence India is facing obstacles in providing education for all. Thus, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is premier program of the Govt. of India launched in 2001 to achieve the cherished goal of universalization of elementary education, a Fundamental Right. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a centrally sponsored integrated flagship scheme launched by the Central government of India in the year 2001-2002. The main thrust of SSA is on universalization of elementary education, community participation, decentralized planning and better quality of education. It covers the entire country in a mission mode and

provides useful and relevant, elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years including life skills. The objectives of the scheme are to enrol of all children in school, and retention of all children till the upper primary stage by 2010, bridging of gender and social category gaps in enrolment, retention and learning and ensuring that there is significant enhancement in the learning achievement levels of children at the primary and upper primary stages. The paper critically analyses the nature and scope of SSA scheme in India in the light of objectives and on the basis of data available.

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12. Norms for Interventions as detailed in the SSA Framework
13. Specified area is defined by the State Government as per Section 38 (b) of RTE Act. (usually 1 km for Primary School and 3 Km for Upper primary School)
14. Schedule of RTE Act, 2009 defines Pupil – Teacher Ratio
15. Annexure 12 of SSA Framework document deals with required Qualifications of the Teachers
16. As per SSA framework for text books Rs.150/- for each primary school girl and Rs. 250/- for upper primary school girl is the entitlement
17. Section 29 of RTE Act defines the Learning Enhancement Programme details
18. Norms for Intervention details about the budgetary support that SSA provides for Training
19. Point 13 of Norms for Interventions in the SSA Framework details about the support extended and budgets thereof are detailed

20. Point 14 of Norms for Interventions details Budgets available for TLEs
21. Point 16 of Norms for Interventions details Budgets available for School Grant
22. Point 17 of Norms for Interventions details the REMS Norms for receiving SSA support
23. Appendix – A of SSA Framework details about Financial Norms for KGBVs
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